

# Asian Nuclear, Missile & Space Digest

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## A. US and Russia

### US cautious on removing nuclear arms from Europe: *Robert Burns*



The U.S. is taking a go-slow approach on one of the touchiest and least discussed national security issues: whether to remove the last remaining Cold War-era U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe. Some officials in Germany and other U.S. allies in Europe are advocating a withdrawal, citing President Barack Obama's call last year for a nuclear-free world. But the U.S. is putting off an early decision, preferring to consult within NATO, starting at a meeting of foreign ministers in April that Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton plans to attend, according to several Obama administration officials.

The officials discussed the matter on condition of anonymity because details are secret and the administration is in the midst of an internal review of the role and purpose of the U.S. nuclear arsenal. The estimated 200 weapons in Europe are a fraction of that total. Results of the review, originally due to Congress in December, have been delayed repeatedly and now aren't expected before April.

The study, known as the Nuclear Posture Review, is expected to call for a reduced role for nuclear weapons in U.S. national security strategy, as reflected in the substantial reductions being negotiated with Russia in a replacement for the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, or START. That negotiation does not apply to the U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe, which are categorized as "nonstrategic" because they are short-range bombs designed to be launched by fighter jets based in Europe—including by NATO members' jets.

Ivo Daalder, the U.S. ambassador to NATO, said on Feb. 23 that the review "will not make any decisions that preclude any option with respect to nuclear weapons and NATO." The START negotiations aim to reduce U.S. and Russian long-range nuclear weapons, such as intercontinental ballistic missiles carried on submarines. Talks have bogged down for months. The White House said Obama on Saturday had an "encouraging" telephone conversation with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev about prospects for an early end to the arms negotiations.

The bombs in Europe are a sensitive subject because they reflect a long-standing U.S. military and political commitment to the defense of its European allies, who have relied on the U.S. nuclear "umbrella" as an alternative to developing their own nuclear weapons. Washington has a similar commitment to Asian allies, including Japan and South Korea, but it has maintained that role with U.S.-based long-range nuclear weapons. Asia-based U.S. nuclear arms were withdrawn in the early 1990s by President George H.W. Bush.

The U.S. government as a matter of policy will not confirm the location of U.S.

nuclear weapons, but it is well known that the sites in Europe are in Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy and Turkey. The U.S. has had nuclear arms in Europe since the 1950s. Hans M. Kristensen, director of the Nuclear Information Project at the Federation of American Scientists, which advocates nuclear arms control, believes the administration is inclined to remove the nuclear weapons from Europe but wants to take a cautious approach.

“The Obama administration came in with a strong pledge to mend ties with the allies, and so the last thing it wants to be seen to do is to make a decision over the heads of the allies,” he said in an interview Sunday. “The U.S. would move these weapons tomorrow if this were just its own decision.” One apparent impediment to an early withdrawal of the weapons is the view of newer members of NATO—those closer to Russia, such as the Baltic states. They see the U.S. weapons as an important symbol of a NATO guarantee of their territorial integrity.

Older NATO members see it differently. Five of them—Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Norway—in February called for consultations on the question of a U.S. nuclear withdrawal, and NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen said this month that “a hot issue like our nuclear posture” will be on the agenda, beginning at the April foreign ministers meeting. The consultations are likely to last for months, possibly into 2011.

Parliament members from several European NATO countries are circulating a letter to be sent to Obama stating that the elimination of short-range nuclear weapons in Europe is an urgent matter and should be addressed once the U.S. and Russia complete their START treaty. “It is the sincere wish of the majority of people in Europe that tactical nuclear weapons are withdrawn from Europe and eliminated,” the letter says, according to a copy published by the Global Security Institute, an international group that advocates nuclear disarmament.

The traditional U.S. view of the nuclear bombs in Europe is that they are a pillar of NATO unity and that they link U.S. and NATO security. Even so, they are not targeted at any specific country and their aircraft used to launch them are not as ready for combat as in years past. An in-depth study of the issue by an expert panel assembled by Defense Secretary Robert Gates, made public one month before Obama took office, said that since 1995 the aircraft’s ability to go into combat with the bombs “is now measured in months rather than minutes.”

That study also revealed internal NATO divisions, saying that some senior U.S. officials at NATO’s military command headquarters in Mons, Belgium, do not support having U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe. It quoted one unnamed U.S. general as saying that the weapons are not needed because the American role of deterring a nuclear attack on its allies can be performed with weapons outside Europe.

Source: [http://www.mercurynews.com/breaking-news/ci\\_14674509](http://www.mercurynews.com/breaking-news/ci_14674509)

## **New START Deal Near Completion, Clinton Says**

The United States and Russia could soon reach agreement on a successor to the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, which expired in December, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said in an interview published yesterday.



A U.S. Trident D-5 submarine-launched ballistic missile takes off in a test. Washington and Moscow might be close to signing a new nuclear arms control agreement, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said in remarks published yesterday.

“I’m optimistic that we’ll be able to complete this agreement soon,” Clinton told the Russian magazine. “It’s a technically very complex treaty to accomplish. We share an interest in making real reductions in our strategic arsenals, and that is the most important point,” she added. Clinton is expected to discuss the status of the pending agreement with top Russian officials during a two-day trip to Moscow starting Thursday.

U.S. President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev pledged last July to cut their nations’ respective strategic arsenals to between 1,500 and 1,675 deployed nuclear warheads under the new treaty. Negotiators have reportedly also agreed to reduce each state’s arsenal of nuclear delivery vehicles — missiles, submarines and bombers — to between 700 and 800, down from the 1,100-vehicle limit

set by the leaders. Negotiators in Geneva, Switzerland, were working on a treaty with monitoring provisions that would be less expensive and easier to implement than its Cold War-era predecessor, Clinton said. Although the possibility of a worldwide nuclear conflict has decreased, the likelihood of individual nuclear strikes has grown, she said.

“By taking concrete steps such as the new START treaty, we can reduce our own stockpiles and encourage others to do the same,” she said. The latest round of negotiations began last week. Russia indicated that talks on the deal were proceeding smoothly. “We have never spoken of any disagreements. A normal process of negotiation is under way. This is a very voluminous document,” Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Nesterenko said.

The Obama administration’s plans to deploy missile defenses in Europe remains the top issue of contention, according to defense analyst Pavel Felgenhauer. Moscow wants the nuclear treaty to address the matter, but any restriction is not likely to gain approval from U.S. senators who must ratify the agreement. “They are trying to find a formula that could suit both sides,” Felgenhauer said. “The United States wanted to sign an agreement quickly to improve the atmosphere” between the former Cold War rivals, he added. “But this did not happen and instead of refreshing relations it’s been creating problems”.

One leading lawmaker in Moscow said today that failure to connect missile defense with nuclear weapons reductions could doom the new treaty’s chances for ratification in Moscow, Xinhua reported. The Russian lower house of parliament “will not ratify it, if it does not take into account the link between strategic offensive weapons and missile defense,” said Duma Speaker Boris Gryzlov. Meanwhile, Ukraine has offered itself as a site for a signing ceremony for the new treaty, according to the *Kommersant* daily.

Source: [http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw\\_20100316\\_3291.php](http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20100316_3291.php)

## Russia to Unveil New Nuke-Capable Submarine in May

Russia in May intends to unveil its modern atomic-powered and nuclear weapon-capable submarine, the *Severodvinsk*, United News of India reported. "A floating-out ceremony for Russia's new Severodvinsk nuclear submarine at the Sevmash shipyard has been scheduled for May 7," a shipyard official told RIA Novosti.

The Graney-class attack submarine has the capability to fire different types of nuclear-tipped cruise missiles that can travel as far as 3,100 miles. It is designed for combat against naval ships, other submarines and targets located on land. Its weapons supply includes 24 cruise missiles, along with mines and antiship missiles. The submarine is anticipated to be deployed within the Russian navy toward the end of year.

Development began in 2009 on the *Kazan*, the second submarine in the group that is expected to field more sophisticated modern armaments and technology. Navy chief Adm. Vladimir Vysotsky said building next-generation atomic-powered ballistic missile combat submarines was a high-level emphasis for the service.

Source: [http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw\\_20100316\\_4412.php](http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20100316_4412.php)

## PM Kevin Rudd's nuclear shift angers Japan

Diplomatic tensions between Australia and Japan are spreading beyond the emotional issue of whale hunting in the Antarctic, as Japanese resentment grows at Kevin Rudd's decision not to attend a nuclear disarmament meeting in Washington next month.

Tokyo's anger over the Rudd government's renewed threat to take it to the International Court of Justice over whaling has fuelled disappointment at the Prime Minister's shifting emphasis on nuclear non-proliferation.

Last week, senior Japanese officials circulated an assessment of Japan-Australia relations after the first visit of new Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada, which praised progress on trade, defence, disaster relief and nuclear non-proliferation. But the assessment contained blunt views about the Australian government's threat to take Japan to the ICJ and the refusal to cite the legal grounds for any action outside the International Whaling Commission talks.

It also stressed the importance of continuing discussions on the nuclear issue. Mr Rudd announced he still intended to take Japan to the international court only two days before Mr Okada's visit and has since said he will not attend the April nuclear non-proliferation talks hosted by US President Barack Obama in Washington.

The Prime Minister was to travel to the US to attend a summit on nuclear non-proliferation but dumped the plan in preference for the meeting with premiers to discuss health reform. The decision comes despite Mr Rudd having run an international campaign against nuclear weapons since taking power in 2007 and using the initiative in partnership with Japan to defrost relations after being seen to be paying more attention to China than Japan.

Opposition foreign affairs spokeswoman Julie Bishop, who has just returned from a visit to Japan, China and South Korea, said yesterday there was “a sour note in the Australia-Japan relationship caused not only by the Rudd government’s neglect but also by its repeated threats to take legal action against Japan over whaling”. Ms Bishop said there was also concern “that Mr Rudd’s commitment to the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament is waning, given that he will reportedly not attend an important meeting next month”.

“The commission is co-chaired by Japan and Australia and is working to make a constructive contribution to the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to be held in May,” she said. “Mr Rudd has an unfortunate habit of making big splash announcements and building high expectations but not following through.” She said Mr Rudd had been “slow to recognise the significance of the Japan relationship”.

Source:<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/politics/pm-kevin-rudds-nuclear-shift-angers-japan/story-e6frgczf-1225840648480>

## **B. Iran**

### **Documents show Iran’s quest for atomic bombs: R. Jeffrey Smith and Joby Warrick**

The father of Pakistan’s nuclear-weapons program has written an official account that details an Iranian attempt to buy atomic bombs from Pakistan at the end of the 1980s and also conflicts with the Pakistani government’s assertion that bombmaker Abdul Qadeer Khan proliferated nuclear know-how without government approval.



Pakistani nuclear scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan, center, talks to media last month in Islamabad. In official documents, Khan wrote of an Iranian attempt to buy atomic bombs from Pakistan in the late 1980s.

Khan states in documents obtained by The Washington Post that in lieu of weapons, Pakistan gave Iran bomb-related drawings, parts for centrifuges to purify uranium and a secret worldwide list of suppliers. Iran’s centrifuges, which are viewed as building blocks for a nuclear arsenal, are largely based on models and designs obtained from Pakistan. Khan’s narrative calls into question Iran’s long-standing stance that it has not sought nuclear arms. Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said last month that “we won’t do that because we don’t believe in having them.”

In interviews, two military officers whom Khan links to the bargaining with Iran denied that finished nuclear weapons were ever on the table. A top Pakistani government official at the time said Ali Shamkhani, the senior Iranian military officer named by Khan, came to Islamabad, Pakistan, seeking help on nuclear weapons. The former official also said Khan, acting with the knowledge of other top officials, then accelerated a secret stream of aid.

The U.S. ambassador to Pakistan at the time, Robert Oakley, separately said in an interview that he thinks Pakistan's top military officer urged and approved Khan's bomb-related assistance to Iran.

Khan is a controversial figure, and he has complained bitterly about long-standing restrictions on his movements by Pakistan's government, which says it seeks to ensure he does not restart his nuclear dealings. Several U.S. experts have noted that as a result, Khan is eager to depict others as more culpable than he was in those dealings.

#### **“Issues remain murky”**

Most observers now think Khan's work for Iran was directed by “senior elements of Pakistan's military, if not by its political leaders,” said Leonard Spector, director of the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies. “Khan is clearly out to vindicate his reputation, but the issues remain murky enough that you can't be certain when he is telling the truth and when he is embellishing.”

Khan's 11-page narrative, prepared in 2004 during his initial house arrest, states that “at no time did I seriously believe that they [Iranians] were capable of mastering the technology.” But Western intelligence officials say his assistance was meaningful and trace its roots to a deal reached in 1987.

Pakistan has said little about that deal. Iran later told international inspectors that a Pakistani “network” in 1987 offered a host of centrifuge-related specifications and equipment, and turned over a document detailing how to shape enriched uranium for use in a bomb. Pakistan's intelligence service sought to explain the cooperation partly by noting that “due to religious and ideological affinity, Pakistanis had great affection for Iran.” But Khan also cited Iran's promise of financial aid, as well as the government's ambition of forever thwarting Western pressure on both countries.

“It was a deal worth almost \$10 billion that had been offered by Iran,” Khan wrote. Khan's account and related documents were shared with The Post by former British journalist Simon Henderson, now a senior fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. The intelligence service's summary said Gen. Mirza Aslam Beg, a former army chief of staff who was arguably Pakistan's most influential figure, was “in favour of very close cooperation [with Iran] in the nuclear field in lieu of financial assistance promised to him toward Pakistan's defense budget.”

Khan's written statement to Henderson states that after Shamkhani's arrival in Islamabad on a government plane, he told the chairman of Pakistan's Joint Chiefs of Staff committee that “he had come ... to collect the promised nuclear bombs.” When the chairman, Adm. Iftikhar Ahmed Sirohey, proposed to discuss other matters first and then “see how Pakistan could assist the Iranians in their nuclear program,” Shamkhani reportedly became irate, Khan wrote. He reminded Sirohey that “first Gen. Zia [ul Haq, the Pakistani president until 1988] and then Gen. Beg had promised assistance and nuclear weapons and he had specifically come to collect the same.”

Although Pakistan exploded no nuclear bombs until 1998, the U.S. intelligence community concluded it had the capability to make weapons by 1986. Shamkhani, a founding leader of Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps, was long active in the

country's nuclear program, according to U.S. officials. A longtime defense minister and presidential candidate in 2001, he now runs a Tehran think tank.

Khan said that after hearing Shamkhani's demand for three finished weapons, Sirohey demurred and that other ministers backed him up. But Beg pressed then-Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and her top military aide "to honour [Beg's] ... commitment," Khan wrote. Under pressure, the aide asked Khan to "get components of two old [P-1] discarded machines and pack them into boxes with 2 sets of drawings," which were passed to Iran through an intermediary, he said. P-1 is the designation for the centrifuge model used in Pakistan.

### **"Make it yourself"**

A 2006 Associated Press article reported Beg's recollection of a 1990 visit by an Iranian delegation: "They asked, 'Can we have a bomb?' My answer was: By all means you can have it but you must make it yourself." But on a Pakistani television program in June, Beg said he has "always" urged the transfer of nuclear arms to Iran. The former Pakistani official said, "Shamkhani thought he had a deal when he came to Pakistan." Various top officials, the former officials said, were aware that Beg told the Iranians, "You have the money; we have the technology. Beg saw this as a win-win ... a way to take care of the Army's endless budget problems."

U.S. intelligence officials say Khan's initial exports of disassembled P-1 centrifuges disappointed his Iranian counterparts; the International Atomic Energy Agency states that Iran reported a 2003 offer of new parts by "the supply network." In his narrative, Khan states that his next direct contact with Iranian officials was at a meeting in 1994 or 1995, when some Iranian scientists complained about their lack of progress.

Khan said in a note to Henderson that he subsequently agreed to send centrifuge parts to Iran. The IAEA says Iran admitted that Khan's network in 1996 also turned over the design for a more advanced centrifuge that Pakistan had constructed, known as P-2. Malaysian police reported in 2004 — based on interrogations of a Khan associate — that the parts were shipped aboard an Iranian-owned ship after first passing through Dubai. In return, the associates were paid \$3 million.

The Pakistani intelligence- service report differs slightly: It said Iran paid \$5 million for drawings of equipment used in enriching uranium. Some funds were deposited in a Dubai bank account controlled by Khan and two associates under the name "Haider Zaman," the report said. Khan used that name in a government-issued passport to conceal some foreign travel.

Khan has told Henderson that the funds went to associates and that he never retained any, which some U.S. officials consider implausible. Khan also said in a separate note that he supplied "the names and addresses of suppliers" to the Iranians. Western officials say that act could have given Tehran access to companies that possessed drawings of Pakistani bomb parts and to components of the more advanced P-2 centrifuges used by Pakistan. Iran last month promised to install such advanced centrifuges, which it calls IR-2s, at two sites this year.

Source: [http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/nationworld/2011347873\\_paknuke15.html](http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/nationworld/2011347873_paknuke15.html)

## Iran tried to buy nuclear bomb from Pakistan as early as 1987: *Yossi Melman*

New documents reveal how a close ally of Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei bid \$10bn for ready-made weapons. Iran attempted to buy a nuclear bomb from Pakistan as early as 1987, a leading Middle East analyst has told Haaretz. Documents obtained by Simon Henderson, a research fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and a former journalist, offer crucial evidence that Iran's nuclear program is not wholly for civilian purposes as it claims - but aimed at developing an atomic bomb. Henderson told Haaretz he has acquired material written by the scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan - popularly known as the father of Pakistan's bomb program - while under house arrest between 2005 and 2009.

Khan was arrested by Pakistani authorities after it emerged he had for years been operating an 'atomic supermarket', touring the Middle East to peddle nuclear know-how to the highest bidder. During his detention, Khan provided Pakistani security services with a wealth of detail on his sale of nuclear secrets to Iran and Libya in the late 1980s and 1990s, much of which is now in the hands of British and American intelligence. But according to Henderson, Pakistan omitted to pass to its Western allies a sensitive report detailing visits to Pakistan in the late 80s by two Iranian officials, who Khan said offered \$10 billion in exchange ready-made atomic bombs.

While Libya in 2003 publicly declared its nuclear program at an end, Western powers still suspect Iran of seeking a bomb, a charge it denies. The report, obtained by Henderson, reveals that in 1987 or 1988 Admiral Ali Shamkhani, a former senior commander in Iran's Revolutionary Guard and minister of defense from 1997 until 2005, arrived in Pakistan with an entourage of officials. Shamkhani offered to buy the nuclear devices on the spot and came prepared to take them home with him, Khan said.

The newly revealed material appears to confirm speculation that Khan, who despite his arrest remains a popular hero in his home country, did not act alone in selling Pakistani nuclear expertise to Iran and Libya, as Pakistan has claimed. Shamkhani's meetings suggest that Pakistani intelligence was aware of Khan's activities, as may have been the prime minister at the time, Benazir Bhutto. Pakistan apparently refused Iran's offer - but Khan later traveled to the Middle East, where he auctioned his services as a private adviser. It was Khan who first provided Iran with designs for the centrifuges with which it continues to enrich uranium at its plant in Natanz.

Khan's other customer, Libya, eventually agreed to wind up its nuclear program and passed the CIA details of its transactions with the scientist. American intelligence was able to trace an elaborate smuggling operation in which the Pakistani had transferred bomb technology using front companies in Dubai. In the Gulf emirate, Khan opened bank accounts under a variety of false names, including 'Khaidar Zaman', through which Iran paid him \$5 million for his assistance.

As well as providing technical aid, Khan also gave the Iranians a list of Western suppliers of high-tech components vital to the enrichment process, who had helped Pakistan with its own bomb program. As

well as casting doubt on Iran's claims about the purpose of its nuclear research, Henderson's material could shed light on the thinking of Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Khamenei is believed initially to have opposed plans to acquire a bomb only to become convinced of its necessity in the early 1980s during a bloody war with Iraq, in which Saddam Hussein unleashed chemical weapons on Iranian troops. Shamkhani, who now heads the Center for Strategic Research in Tehran and has been touted as a candidate for the presidency, is thought to be a close confidant of the Supreme Leader. His role at the center of Iran's attempts to gain a bomb may point to Khamenei's personal role in an Iranian bomb program.

Source: <http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/1156533.html>

## Pakistan rejects U.S. daily report on Iran nuclear

Pakistan on Monday rejected a report in a U.S. newspaper about the renowned Pakistani nuclear scientist and Iran nuclear development. The Washington Post claimed that Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan states, in the documents obtained by the daily, that Pakistan gave Iran bomb-related drawings, parts for centrifuges to purify uranium and a secret worldwide list of suppliers, in lieu of weapons. "It is yet another repackaging of fiction, which surface occasionally for purposes that are self-evident," said Abdul Basit, Pakistani Foreign Office spokesman. A.Q Khan is a closed chapter, the spokesman said, adding that Pakistan's non-proliferation credentials are second to none and its export controls are foolproof.

Source: [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2010-03/15/c\\_13211711.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2010-03/15/c_13211711.htm)

## Can Iran's Accelerating Nuclear Program Be Stopped?: Leonard S. Spector

A common international position is needed to block Tehran's ambitions



Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad tours an exhibition on laser technology in Tehran on February 7, 2010.

In recent weeks, as Iran ratcheted up its sensitive uranium enrichment activities another notch, and outside observers voiced growing fears that it had intensified its work to design a nuclear warhead, reports surfaced for the first time of the North Korea-Iran nuclear connection. Meanwhile, opposition within the Security

Council to tough sanctions added to uncertainty as to whether Tehran's nuclear ambitions can still be checked.

In February, Iran announced that it had begun to enrich uranium to 19.75 percent, a significant step closer to the 80-to-90-percent level used in nuclear weapons, and a big jump from the 3.5 percent enrichment level used in nuclear power plants that it had previously held to.

Enrichment concentrates the easily split atoms of uranium, which comprise only 0.07 percent of natural uranium, to produce these enhanced materials. But

as with compound interest, the more one starts with—here, the higher the enrichment level of the feedstock—the faster one reaches one's goal. Once 3.5 percent enriched material is used as feedstock, the incremental enrichment process starts to move faster, and it moves faster still if 19.75 percent material is the feed, permitting rapid production of bomb-grade material.

Although the quantities of uranium Iran has enriched to 19.75 percent are at the moment insignificant, Tehran has now demonstrated to the world that it has mastered the underlying technology to improve uranium to any level it chooses.

### **Iran's Research Reactor**

Iranian officials claim the country needs the 19.75 percent enriched material to fuel the Tehran Research Reactor, which is used to produce medical isotopes. But Tehran has announced plans to enrich its entire stock of 3.5 percent material—more than 2,000 kilograms—to the 19.75 percent level. The plan is raising suspicion because this is much more than might actually be needed for the reactor in the next several years, leaving Iran with a surplus of 19.75 percent material that could be rapidly upgraded to be usable for at least one nuclear weapon. Iran likely received the design of a highly-enriched-uranium nuclear warhead from Pakistani nuclear scientist A.Q. Khan, which could avert the need for a nuclear test.

The added enrichment work needed to produce bomb-grade material from the 19.75 percent enriched uranium Iran is now making, moreover, could be performed in a very small enrichment facility that might evade detection by International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) monitors and foreign intelligence services. In late 2009, Iran revealed the existence of a considerably larger enrichment facility at Qom that had gone undetected for several years. And, it has announced it plans to build 10 more enrichment plants at as yet undisclosed locations.

Adding to suspicions is that Iran is not known to possess the technology to manufacture the finished fuel elements for the Tehran Research Reactor, which must meet exacting safety specifications. Today, only France, Argentina, and Chile have fuel fabrication lines to produce such fuel. Tehran has rejected a Western offer brokered by the IAEA that would have allowed it to ship its 3.5-percent enriched material to Russia for further enrichment and then on to France to be made into fuel elements. If Tehran really has an urgent need to produce medical isotopes and is not simply using this as a rationale to justify enriching uranium to higher levels, one would have expected Iranian officials to pursue the Western offer more seriously.

As these events unfolded, the IAEA and the United States appeared increasingly concerned that Iran was continuing to work on the design of a nuclear warhead, a view long held by several Western European countries and Israel. Departing from the more cautious findings of his predecessor, the IAEA's new Director General Yukiya Amano, stated in February that the Iranian nuclear program "raises concerns about the possible existence in Iran of past or current undisclosed activities related to the development of a nuclear payload for a missile." In Washington, press reports stated that Obama administration officials are revising a mid-2007 U.S. National Intelligence Estimate that concluded this work had stopped in late 2003 and now believe it is continuing.

## Nuclear Weapons Goal

What are the goals of the Iranian government? With each passing month a nuclear arsenal must look more attainable and the government's hold on power more certain, notwithstanding the uproar over last June's elections. It is hard to imagine that Tehran will curb its nuclear ambitions short of acquiring nuclear weapons. Recent political support from Brazil, Lebanon, and Venezuela, all wary of Western pressure, may make Iran more confident it can weather any sanctions regime the United States and its allies can bring to bear.

The Obama administration in attempting to implement a set of powerful new sanctions to pressure Tehran to comply will target enterprises run by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps, said to be leading the country's nuclear program, and possibly the Iranian central bank. Sanctions that hit too hard, however, risk injuring the Iranian economy as a whole, potentially causing a backlash that could shore up support for the Ahmadinejad government and its apparent aspirations for a nuclear-armed Iran. Russian and Chinese support for an effective sanctions regime could also be undermined with Security Council requirements. The first step is to command Iran's attention by placing what its leaders value at risk.

To stop a runaway nuclear program, the international community needs to push the brake pedal with both feet. As committed as the Obama administration may be to this endeavor, without broader international support, it is difficult to be sanguine about its chances for success.

Source: <http://www.theepochtimes.com/n2/content/view/31386/>

## Watch out if Iran becomes the 10th nuclear power: Sol Sanders

Gossips report when Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu gifted Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. with a glass-framed photograph taken in Israel of his recently deceased Zionist-sympathetic mother, the Israeli leader accidentally crushed it. Apparently, in an apologetic malapropism, the usually suave Bibi blundered again. Psychobabblers would conjure up a subconscious working overtime.

It wasn't meant to go that way. On the eve of Passover, the Jews' ancient feast of liberation, Mr. Biden had been sent with words of support to salvage a deteriorating relationship. But the vice president had nothing the Israelis wanted to hear. In essence, his message was that President Obama's efforts, first to appease the Tehran mullahs, patently had failed. And then Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton's "crippling sanctions" came a cropper. Penciled in bottom line: The Israelis must not move unilaterally unleashing Armageddon; the world was going to have to live with an Iranian bomb.

For Mrs. Clinton's efforts were stymied. Never mind the Chinese and Russian U.N. Security Council vetoes — even Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva publicly lectured the secretary on how she should play nice with the mullahs. Mr. Lula da Silva, like Brazil, is on a roll with enormous new deepwater oil discoveries. (BP petroleum is now desperately trying to buy in.)

Almost forgotten were U.S. blocks on Brazilian ethanol imports — designed to protect Midwest corn producers — and all the other frictions nearing trade-war proportions. The Brazilians could smirk at the Obama administration’s “green energy” subsidies after their decades of dumping billions into developing sugar-based fuel. Now Brazil, soon to be a net oil exporter, wants to play with the big boys, including Iran, with the world’s second-largest fossil fuel reserves. Old roustabouts recall how, way back under the Shah, Tehran was a prime mover in calls by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries for higher-priced energy.

If Washington really believes it is going to cobble together sanctions against the bloody Revolutionary Guard — Mrs. Clinton publicly guessed they are now in the Tehran driver’s seat — the mist really has closed in on Foggy Bottom. Many Iranian exiles in the U.S. — traditional Persian-speaking merchants and hawala money launderers on the west bank of the Persian Gulf — are in bed with the Revolutionary Guards. Even the New York Times found out that major U.S. corporations are violating U.S. sanctions through dummy corporations cluttering every new skyscraper directory in bankrupt Dubai and its neighboring sugar-teat, Qatar.

There may be as much dispute within the Israeli government as among American TV talking heads about whether the Jewish state will launch a military strike to slow Iranian bomb and missile development. But President Mahmoud Ahmadenijad’s threats to wipe Israel off the map may matter less than how the very existence of a “mullah bomb” could reconfigure Middle East geopolitics.

The Saudis, whose only foreign policy is to try to buy whomever, and the feckless oil-rich emirates, would likely knuckle under to Persian dominance if and when Tehran succeeds. Mercurial Syrian dictator Basher al-Asaad already publicly threw personal insults at Mrs. Clinton during a kumbayah with Mr. Ahmadenijad only days after she refurbished diplomatic relations and dropped some sanctions. At the other end of the Middle East, Egypt totters on in a succession crisis having long since lost Sunni leadership.

Following in Bush administration footsteps, Mr. Obama is behind the time curve in its refusal to aid Iranian dissidents in Cold War fashion. Washington could well face a strengthening regime. The 20th century taught us just how far terror would go in castrating much more sophisticated societies. Add nationalist fervor if and when Iran becomes the world’s 10th nuclear power, and you have a recipe for dramatic erosion of America’s influence in the region.

Tehran holding a bomb could wield enormous power on world energy markets. The Obama administration’s green plans for independence from energy imports is at best a distant mirage. New technologies to develop abundant domestic gas face the same old environmentalist fury. The matriarch Golda Meir’s lament that Israel was the only place in the Middle East without fossil fuels is no longer true. An American outfit has struck gas off the Mediterranean coast. It’s enough to limit Israel’s dependence on Egypt and end airy-fairy tales of underwater pipelines from Turkey carrying water and Central Asian crude.

But none of this solves the pressing problem of how to get U.S.-Israel relations back on track. One could hope Mr. Obama would turn away from his Palestinian-Syrian-Pakistani friends who thought his efforts to block settlements, which

never had been an a priori consideration in the endless negotiations, would carry the day. Mr. Netanyahu, stronger in part because of his Washington nose-thumbing, can't and won't buy it. It's striking how self-evidently fruitless are negotiations with a divided, unrealistic Palestinian leadership that includes Gaza's jihadists. But when does realism set in at the State Department?

Source: <http://washingtontimes.com/news/2010/mar/15/watch-out-if-iran-becomes-the-10th-nuclear-power/>

## **Finally, we put nuclear nuts on notice: Michael**

### **Goodwin**

Finally someone said it. Now we must do something about it.

In his major speech in Israel, Vice President Joe Biden was refreshingly direct and straightforward: "The United States is determined to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons, period." Even the "period" was important, for it eliminates wiggle room. There are no mushy "but" or "however" caveats.

Assuming Biden was not wandering off the White House reservation, he has rescued a policy that was drifting toward disaster. President Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton caused enormous confusion and concern about whether the United States was ready to accept a nuclear-armed Iran. Both talked tough previously, but had gone soft in their endless engagement efforts. They kept the world guessing about our bottom line, especially after Clinton suggested we were getting ready to live with Iranian nukes.

As I discovered on my recent trip to Israel, such talk led many Israelis to fear the United States had thrown in the towel. The result was a heightened expectation Israel would undertake a military strike of its own. "What is happening is that Obama is forcing Israel to take action by not doing anything to stop Iran," one top political insider told me. It was a sentiment shared across the Israeli political spectrum, which is otherwise splintered. Whether Biden changed the dynamics depends on what we do next. Our movement toward modest sanctions seems half-hearted, and there is no reason to think China will agree to those. Even then, it's not likely any sanctions will stop the mad mullahs' march to Armageddon.

Biden, to his credit, spoke directly to those fears and the stakes. After declaring the US intentions to stop Iran from getting nukes, he said: "I know that for Israel, there is no greater existential strategic threat. Trust me, we get that." He went on to acknowledge that a nuclear Iran "is also a threat to the security — short-term, mid-term and long-term — [of] the United States of America" and would start a nuclear arms race in the Mideast.

All those statements are accepted as fact by nearly every major country in the world, and yet, by its behavior, the White House looked to be ducking them. Even French President Nicolas Sarkozy felt the need to scold Obama that his dreams of a nuclear-free world were daffy if we weren't going to confront Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (above).

Of course, it's easy for the French and our Arab allies to talk tough, knowing that the solution, if it involves the use of force, will come mostly from America. But such are the burdens of the world's lone superpower, whether we like it or

not. The rocky part of Biden's trip was about whether Israel and the Palestinians will start serious talks, especially after Israel embarrassed him with a plan to build 1,600 new homes in disputed East Jerusalem.

Biden was understandably livid, but he goes too far in continuing to link the Palestinian issue to Iran. The link buys into the radical Muslim claim that US and Israeli policies are the root cause of Islamic terrorism and that if those policies were changed, terrorists would drop their weapons and pick up plowshares. If only Iran and the terrorists were so rational. In truth, they are madmen bent on destruction. They don't want a seat at the table. They want to blow up the table, and us with it. We forget that at our peril.

Source:[http://www.nypost.com/p/news/international/finally\\_we\\_put\\_nuclear\\_nuts\\_on\\_notice\\_3jZ0JgifOIYaowXKccXyOJ](http://www.nypost.com/p/news/international/finally_we_put_nuclear_nuts_on_notice_3jZ0JgifOIYaowXKccXyOJ)

## Gulf Nations Urged to Press China on Iran Penalties

Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates must exert greater pressure on China to back a fourth U.N. Security Council sanctions resolution against Iran over its disputed nuclear activities, U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates said yesterday.



*U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates, left, speaks today with UAE Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed al-Nahayan in Abu Dhabi. Gates this week encouraged Middle Eastern nations to seek Chinese endorsement of new U.N. sanctions against Iran.*

Beijing has rebuffed calls by Washington and other Western governments to endorse additional U.N. penalties against Iran, a nation the West fears could develop a nuclear weapon with help from its current atomic activities. Tehran has maintained it is only interested in pursuing peaceful nuclear enterprises. Gates said there appeared to be increasing "willingness" in Riyadh to exploit its economic position in seeking support for new sanctions from China, a permanent Security Council member with veto authority over the body's decisions, the *Wall Street Journal* reported. Saudi Arabia exports more petroleum to China than any other nation, and it purchases Chinese commodities that include weapons and consumer items.

"What I would like for them to do because of the nature of their economic relationship is to say that it's important to the kingdom of Saudi Arabia that China be supportive of the U.N. Security Council resolution," said Gates, who made a case for increasing penalties against Iran in talks this week with Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah and UAE Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed al-Nahayan.

Russia has also resisted some past calls for new Iran penalties, but it is "already there" in backing the latest call for new punitive measures, Gates said. "There is an understanding that we have to try this, that this is the next step. The engagement policy served to expose the Iranian government to the rest of the world," he said.

Various Middle Eastern states have skirted calls to exert independent pressure on Iran while indicating they would comply with additional U.N. penalties on the country. The United Arab Emirates, which

maintains strong economic ties with Tehran, should avoid taking sides in the nuclear standoff due to its proximity to Iran, some officials from Abu Dhabi have argued. Despite lingering reservations about pressuring Iran, Gates said Washington could win an international consensus on new punitive measures against the Middle Eastern country. "The prospects of success are certainly better than in a lot of other situations where sanctions worked," he said, referring to CIA studies of past cases in which economic pressure successfully changed a country's behavior.

U.S. Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg and National Security Council staffer Jeffrey Bader had "good discussions" last week in Beijing, where they urged officials to back a new U.N. resolution on Iran, *The Economist* yesterday quoted a high-level Obama administration official as saying. Incriminating intelligence on Iran is unlikely to sway China's position on Tehran's nuclear program, an analyst wrote in the *Christian Science Monitor* yesterday.

Rather, the United States should seek Chinese support by first establishing a consensus against Iran's nuclear work among Middle Eastern countries and other Security Council member nations, wrote Stephanie Kleine-Ahlbrandt, Northeast Asia director for the International Crisis Group in Beijing.

Some Chinese policy planners believe that a strong Iran can serve as a bulwark against U.S. influence in China's "grand periphery," Kleine-Ahlbrandt wrote, noting that Beijing and Tehran both resent Washington's involvement in their affairs. China receives a significant amount of oil from Iran and the two states have strong business ties. In addition, Beijing doubts Iran could soon produce nuclear-weapon material and believes the United States would dissuade Israel from launching attacks on Iranian nuclear facilities, she wrote.

Still, Beijing wants to be considered a supporter of international nonproliferation efforts and could fall behind new U.N. sanctions if the rest of the world appeared to do so, Kleine-Ahlbrandt suggested. China could also be swayed if continuing to block U.N. sanctions would seriously diminish ties with its other Middle Eastern energy suppliers, she added. France yesterday expressed optimism about the Western push for new U.N. penalties on Iran, AFP reported. "Economic sanctions on bank accounts, insurance, we are working on them. But we must not have them vetoed by a permanent Security Council member. We must have a majority, and we are working on that," French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner said. "We will achieve this in the reasonably near future," he said.

Meanwhile, seven U.S. senators were named to a conference committee for resolving differences in Iran sanctions legislation passed by the Senate and House of Representatives, *Politico* reported yesterday. The bill would penalize non-U.S. firms doing business with Iran's energy sector. The senators appointed to the panel were Christopher Dodd (D-Conn.), John Kerry (D-Mass.), Joseph Lieberman (I-Conn.), Robert Menendez (D-N.J.), Robert Bennett (R-Utah), Richard Lugar (R-Ind.) and Richard Shelby (R-Ala.), congressional staffers stated in an e-mail.

The House has not yet named representatives for the committee; Representative Howard Berman (D-Calif.) is expected to manage the appointments. Washington's efforts to discourage international trade with Iran have run up against opposition in Europe, the *Washington Post* reported.

The Iran sanctions bills moving through Congress “envisage the extraterritorial application of U.S. legislation and would therefore be contrary to the EU-U.S. understanding of 1998, under which it was agreed that such sanctions would not be applied to the EU in the light of the EU’s commitment to work with the U.S. to counter the threat that Iran poses to international security,” EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton wrote in a Feb. 26 letter to U.S. Secretary of State Clinton.

Iran continues to rely on 130,000 barrels of imported gasoline each day due to the nation’s limited ability to refine its own oil, according to the *Post*. Iranian firms have acquired a portion of the material from Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates, while some Iraqi third parties have helped purchase it for Tehran. “All you are doing is transferring sales from one company to another,” one Kuwaiti dealer said. Elsewhere, Iranian representatives have left Niger after a military coup changed the country’s leadership, United Press International reported yesterday. Iran had sought a deal with Mamadou Tandja, Niger’s former president, to purchase uranium from the African nation, according to the French Web site Intelligence Online.

Source: [http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw\\_20100312\\_1510.php](http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20100312_1510.php)

## **Gates Turns to Gulf Allies in Drive for Iran Sanctions:** *Dan De Luce*

US Defence Secretary Robert Gates flew to Abu Dhabi on Thursday seeking support from oil-rich Gulf allies for tough sanctions on Tehran, drawing an angry response from Iran’s hardline president. Gates was due to hold talks with Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed al-Nahayan, who is also the deputy commander in chief of the armed forces in the United Arab Emirates, as part of high-stakes diplomacy designed to tighten pressure on Iran over its nuclear programme.

The defence secretary’s visit came a day after Gates appealed to Saudi leaders to back the US-led drive for punitive measures in discussions in Riyadh, the latest in a series of high level visits to the region by President Barack Obama’s deputies. The American focus on the Gulf prompted a warning on Thursday from Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who accused “corrupt” powers of destabilising the Gulf.

“What are you doing in our region?” Ahmadinejad said in a speech in the Gulf port of Bandar Abbas. “Why have you sent your armies to our area? If you think you can control the oil of Iraq and the Persian Gulf, you are mistaken,” he said. The Iranian president has traded barbs with Gates this week, as Ahmadinejad’s visit to Afghanistan overlapped with the US defence secretary’s trip there.

In an earlier stop at a US military base in Southwest Asia en route to Abu Dhabi, Gates expressed amusement about how he and the Iranian president had “exchanged a few words through the media” this week over Afghanistan. Before his meeting with the crown prince, Gates toured the vast Sheikh Zayed mosque in Abu Dhabi, named after the founder of the UAE, and told reporters the United States and the UAE had been “close partners” for years.

With Washington striving to disrupt funding of Iran's nuclear work, Gates planned to discuss with UAE leaders how "to increase pressure" on companies doing business in Dubai with links to Iran's powerful Revolutionary Guard, a US defence official told reporters. The UAE has a large Iranian expatriate community and is a major conduit for Tehran's trade with the outside world. Gates' visit also highlighted Washington's lobbying of Gulf states to use their oil resources to sway China, which has been reluctant to back sanctions at the UN Security Council. The Americans have asked the Saudis and Abu Dhabi leaders to reassure Beijing that they would be prepared to offset any shortfall in Iranian crude shipments. The Washington Post has reported that Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud al-Faisal travelled to Beijing early this month to discuss the issue.

The role of the Gulf states is pivotal for the US diplomatic strategy, as they can exert genuine economic pressure on Iran while also ensuring a smooth flow of global oil supplies in the case of a possible cutoff of Iranian oil exports. On Wednesday, Gates told the Saudis that after Iran had "largely rebuffed" US overtures for a conciliatory dialogue, the Obama administration was now focused on ramping up pressure on Tehran, the defence official said.

But Gates stressed in his talks that the United States wanted to see financial sanctions targeted on Tehran's Revolutionary Guard and not the country's population. Gates also was expected to discuss a broader US effort to boost air and missile defences in the Gulf in the face of Iran's growing arsenal of ballistic missiles, a serious concern for Abu Dhabi. The United States has promised to speed up weapons sales to the UAE and other Gulf states, which have bought billions of dollars worth of American weapons in recent years. US officials believe the arms buildup in the Gulf sends a clear signal to Iran that its nuclear and missile programmes are counter-productive.

Source:<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gOJx0C60IZKwKPyRAy6OuVAJSnqQ>

## **Iran Six Discuss Draft Proposals on Iran's Nuclear Issue**

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said on Tuesday the Iran Six were discussing a possible new UN Security Council resolution imposing further sanctions against Tehran over its nuclear program. Last week, diplomats from the United States, France and Britain said they had sent draft proposals to the Russian and Chinese delegations at the United Nations. The five countries, along with Germany, comprise a group of international mediators negotiating with Iran on its nuclear program.

"The issue is being discussed," Lavrov said. "There has been no draft resolution as such. Our Western partners are discussing the ideas that they think could comprise such a resolution." Lavrov reiterated Russia's stance on Iran's controversial nuclear program. Moscow insists the problem should be resolved by diplomatic means and new sanctions against Iran, if adopted, should be a "balanced" last resort.

The Russian foreign minister said, however, that the Iranian nuclear issue would be discussed in the Security Council if the Islamic Republic did not provide

a “constructive response” to IAEA proposals on uranium enrichment. Under a plan drawn up by the IAEA last October, Iran was to ship out its low-enriched uranium to Russia, where it would be enriched and then sent to France to be made into fuel rods and returned to the Islamic Republic for use in its research reactor in Tehran.

The proposal was approved by the six international mediators on Iran’s nuclear program but then rejected by Tehran, which suggested it could consider a simultaneous swap of its low-enriched uranium for 20%-enriched uranium, but that the exchange would have to take place on its own territory. Last week, Iran threatened to withdraw up its counter-proposal if new sanctions were adopted. Western powers suspect that Iran’s nuclear program is aimed at making weapons, while Tehran claims it is pursuing nuclear technology for its civilian energy needs.

Source:<http://en.rian.ru/world/20100309/158136041.html>

## U.S. General Sees Slowdown in Iranian Nuclear-Weapon Work

There has been “a bit” of a slowdown in Iranian efforts to produce a nuclear bomb, the head of U.S. Central Command said.



*U.S. Central Command head Gen. David Petraeus today said an Iranian effort to build a nuclear weapon has encountered delays.*

Questioned by a Senate panel on the possible time line for Tehran to possess such a weapon, General David Petraeus said that “it has, thankfully, slid to the right a bit and it is not this calendar year, I don’t think,” Reuters reported. Washington and other Western governments suspect Iran’s nuclear program is geared toward weapons development, but Tehran has maintained that the effort is strictly peaceful in nature. While the United States is emphasizing use of sanctions to pressure Iran to give up its disputed nuclear operations, President

Barack Obama “explicitly stated that he has not taken the military option off the table,” Petraeus said.

The general would not address plans being made for the possible use of force against Iran. Iran has more than 8,000 uranium enrichment centrifuges at its Natanz site. However, the facility is dealing with “some problems” and only about half of the machines that could be used to produce nuclear-weapon material are operational, U.S. National Intelligence Director Dennis Blair said in February.

It was not immediately known whether Petraeus was discussing the Iranian technical troubles in his comments, according to Reuters. A bipartisan group of U.S. senators yesterday pressed President Barack Obama not to seek a loophole for the five permanent U.N. Security Council member nations in legislation aimed at penalizing non-U.S. firms supporting Iran’s energy sector

The Obama administration has reportedly sought such an exemption in a bid to win support for a fourth round of Iran sanctions from China, which has expressed opposition to additional international penalties against Tehran. “As crucial as it

is to work with our international partners to eliminate Iran's nuclear weapons program, explicit exceptions for certain countries would weaken the effect of our sanctions. Such exemptions would also make it easier for countries like China to undermine international efforts to sanction companies that support key sectors of Iran's economy," states the letter, signed by Senators Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.), Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.), Richard Burr (R-N.C.) and Jon Kyl (R-Ariz).

Even without the modification, the bill would provide the president with "ample waiver authority," the lawmakers contended. "Our standard for sanctions should be uniform across the board, unless the president decides that granting a waiver in a particular case is in the national security interest of the United States," the letter's authors wrote. In response to a *New York Times* report that the federal government has worked with contractors also doing business with Iran, the senators urged Obama to order a General Services Administration review aimed at catching potential violators of the 1996 Iran Sanctions Act.

Meanwhile, British Foreign Secretary David Miliband said the five permanent Security Council members — China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States — "agreed ... that Iran must not become a nuclear weapons state." "And we agreed on a dual-track strategy which is on the one hand engagement with Iran and at the same time pressure," the Associated Press quoted him as saying during a visit to China. "We are coming to the phase where there should be sanctions against Iran," German Chancellor Angela Merkel said in Lebanon. "Iran has not accepted the constructive offers we have made and has even rejected them," Merkel said. China noted increased concern over the nuclear standoff while reaffirming its opposition to additional economic penalties against Iran, AFP reported.

"Regarding the Iranian nuclear issue, I wish to point out that this issue is the subject of widespread attention in the international community. China has become more concerned about the current situation," Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi said after meeting with Miliband. "We will have even closer contact with members of the P-5+1 mechanism and other related parties," he said, referring to the five permanent Security Council member nations and Germany. "We will continue to make efforts to bring about a diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear issue".

"I have said before that sanctions do not provide a fundamental solution to the Iranian nuclear issue, ultimately this issue has to be resolved through peaceful negotiations, Reuters quoted Yang as saying. Beijing is aware of the steps it could take to help contain Tehran's nuclear ambitions, Saudi Arabia's top diplomat said in remarks published yesterday. "China is perfectly aware of the scope of its responsibilities and its obligations, including in the position it holds on the international stage and as a permanent member of the (U.N.) Security Council," Saudi Foreign Minister Saud al-Faisal told the newspaper *Al-Riyadh*, according to AFP. He was responding to reports that Saudi Arabia had indicated a willingness to lobby for Chinese endorsement of a new Security Council resolution on Iran.

Beijing is part "of the six-party international group dealing with the Iran nuclear crisis," he noted, adding that Saudi Arabia backed the group's work to resolve the nuclear dispute. "We hope that Iran would cooperate with those efforts, and to see an end to the crisis in a way that would serve in making the region free of all weapons of mass

destruction, nuclear weapons in particular,” the official said. Iran’s economic ties to China have eclipsed the Middle Eastern country’s other trade relationships, AFP reported. The nations carried out \$21.2 billion in trade in last year, an increase of roughly one-third since 2006

Western efforts to economically isolate Tehran have prompted Iran to depend more heavily on its economic relationship with Beijing, according to AFP. Meanwhile, Iran yesterday denied report that it had sought finished nuclear weapons from Pakistan in the 1980s, the Xinhua News Agency reported. “Such reports show the United States and the West’s failure in an attempt to put pressure on Iran (over its nuclear program),” state media quoted Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Ramin Mehmanparast as saying. Elsewhere, Iran has bolstered its gasoline reserves by roughly 250 million gallons over the last year, United Press International reported. The nation’s limited oil refining capacity has forced it to import up to 40 percent of its gasoline, prompting speculation that a gasoline embargo might pressure Tehran to halt its disputed nuclear activities.

Source: [http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw\\_20100316\\_8072.php](http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20100316_8072.php)

## **Israel: Outlook for Tough U.N. Steps on Iran**

**“Grim”:** *Louis Charbonneau*

The outlook for imposing tough new U.N. sanctions on Iran is increasingly grim, as Russia and China work to slow down a U.S. and European drive for swift action, Israel’s U.N. envoy said on Tuesday. The United States, Britain, France and Germany have agreed on a watered-down proposal for a fourth round of U.N. sanctions against Iran over its nuclear program and given it to Russia and China for comments. Russia’s initial reaction has been negative and China has not reacted, Western diplomats say.

“It now seems that Russia and China are still dragging their legs and they are still looking to the diplomatic track,” Israel’s U.N. Ambassador Gabriela Shalev told reporters at U.N. headquarters. “We are more than suspicious because these diplomatic overtures took over the last years and the Iranians are mocking them,” she said. Western diplomats say they had hoped to get a sanctions resolution through the Security Council next month but that timeframe is now looking increasingly unrealistic.

Iran denies Western allegations that its nuclear program is a covert quest to develop the capability to produce atomic weapons and has resisted international calls to curtail it. Tehran says the program is for electricity, not bombs. Shalev said that Russia had initially appeared supportive of efforts to impose a new punitive measures against the Islamic Republic for defying five U.N. Security Council resolutions demanding that it halt nuclear enrichment.

But Moscow does not appear very supportive, she said. “The chances now seem grim regarding sanctions that will be crippling,” she said. Shalev defined “crippling” sanctions as steps that would not hurt the Iranian people but Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and key firms and individuals. Three earlier sanctions resolutions imposed travel bans and asset freezes on a small group of Iranians and Iranian companies and one bank.

### **Military Option “On The Table”**

She reiterated that if the 15-nation Security Council fails to agree on sanctions, or passes weak measures that are more symbolic than painful, Israel hopes the United States, European Union and others will impose their own sanctions on Iran. Shalev added that non-permanent council members Turkey, Brazil, Bosnia-Herzegovina and others remained “mysterious,” adding that Israel was lobbying all of them to support new sanctions. Diplomats say Turkey, Brazil and Lebanon do not support new steps against Iran and might abstain or vote no.

Originally the United States, Britain, France and Germany had hoped to persuade Russia and China to agree to a U.N. blacklisting of Iran’s central bank. But the latest draft, written to make it more palatable to Moscow and Beijing, only urges states to be “vigilant” regarding Iran’s central bank. The proposal also includes no sanctions against Iran’s oil and gas sectors, as France had pushed for.

It does, however, call for restrictions on new Iranian banks abroad, a full arms embargo, a crackdown on insurance and reinsurance for cargo coming in and out of Iran, and a black listing of at least one shipping firm. It would also include a new focus on the IRGC and firms controlled by it. Shalev made clear that the military option remained “on the table” as a means of dealing with Iran’s nuclear program. However, she added that a military solution, like allowing Iran to press ahead with its nuclear program, was a “bad option.” Still, she said that the military option was a focus of discussion between the United States and Israel, though she declined to say whether the administration of President Barack Obama was arguing for or against it.

Source:<http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory?id=10056596>

### **NYT Report on Iran Raises US Lawmakers’ Ire**

US lawmakers are stepping up efforts to tighten sanctions on Iran after a report revealed that Washington had awarded 107 billion dollars in payments to American and international companies doing business with the country. “We need to send a strong, clear signal to Iran that until it halts its nuclear ambitions, the dangerous state will be denied the benefits of access to the global economy,” Democratic Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said in a statement Monday.

“Company offenders whose profits serve to fuel Iran’s nuclear ambitions should not be allowed to do business with the US, period,” said Gillibrand. Iran, a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), says its nuclear work is directed at the civilian applications of the technology. However, the US and its allies accuse Tehran of pursuing a military objective in its nuclear program, despite affirmation by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) of Iran’s non-diversion in its activities.

Under the allegation, western countries have imposed three rounds of UNSC sanctions on Iran and are currently lobbying for a fourth. The US, meanwhile, has opted to impose unilateral sanctions on Tehran for its nuclear enrichment program. Senator Gillibrand called for the immediate adoption of a pending bill

that could deny US government contracts to companies that provide Iran with gasoline or invest in the country's energy sector.

She also called for imposing a three-year ban on government contracts for companies that falsely claim they do not do business with Iran's refined petroleum sector. On Saturday, The New York Times reported that while pushing for tougher sanctions on Tehran, the US government has given more than 107 billion dollars in contract payments, grants and other benefits over the past decade to foreign and multinational American companies doing business in Iran.

The sum included nearly 15 billion dollars paid to firms that breached the law on US sanctions against Iran by making large investments that helped the country develop its vast oil and gas reserves, said the paper. In response, US representatives called for toughening a 1996 law aimed at punishing companies that invest more than 20 million dollars in Iran's oil and gas sectors, noting it has never led to sanctions on any company. "The US government should be enforcing the Iran Sanctions Act, not rewarding firms that violate it," said Republican congressman Mark Kirk.

Source:<http://www.presstv.ir/detail.aspx?id=120416&ionid=351020101>

## Turkish PM against Iran Sanctions

Recep Erdogan, the Turkish prime minister, has cautioned against further UN Security Council sanctions on Iran over its nuclear programme during a visit to Riyadh in Saudi Arabia. "I don't believe that any further sanctions will yield results," Erdogan told journalists, adding that earlier rounds of sanctions "have never yielded results." Turkey, which has good relations with its neighbour Iran, has offered to host an exchange of Iran's low-enriched uranium (LEU) with 20 per cent enriched uranium to be supplied by world powers to Tehran as part of a UN-drafted deal.

Tehran and members of the UN Security Council are locked in a stalemate over the deal, which envisages shipping out Iran's LEU to France and Russia for further conversion into higher-grade uranium.

### Sanctions debate

Iran has said that its nuclear programme is purely for peaceful purposes and denies that it is trying to build a nuclear weapon. But the US and other nations have been pressing the UN Security Council to impose a fourth set of sanctions against Iran on the issue. The UN Security Council has said it is considering the matter after Yukiya Amano, the chief of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), said last month that he could not verify that all of Tehran's atomic activities were peaceful.

At a meeting of the IAEA's 35-nation board in Vienna, the Austrian capital, in February, Amano said he could not "confirm that all nuclear material in Iran is in peaceful activities". Amano also accused Iran of failing to co-operate with the IAEA and said he wanted Tehran to clarify issues about its nuclear programme. "We would like to have a discussion with Iran to clarify the outstanding issues and issues that have a possible military dimension," he said.

In October, Erdogan accused Western nations of hypocrisy in criticising Iran's uranium enrichment programme while remaining silent on Israel, which is

believed to have an undeclared nuclear arsenal. He made the remarks during a visit to Tehran where he held bilateral talks with Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the Iranian president. Erdogan had told journalists travelling with him in Iran that the country's nuclear programme "is an energy project with peaceful, humanitarian purposes". The same month he told *The Guardian*, a British newspaper, that Western powers were treating Iran unfairly and referred to Ahmadinejad as a "friend".

Source: <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/middleeast/2010/03/201039133146904308.html>

## C. DPRK

### UN chief ready to visit Pyongyang to restart Korean nuclear talks



UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said he is ready to visit North Korea if it helps to restart the six-party talks on the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. "I myself, as secretary general, will do whatever I can to facilitate the resumption of the six-party talks, so that the six-party talks' members will be able to discuss the

denuclearization process of the Korean Peninsula," Ban told RIA Novosti in an exclusive interview.

"When and if an opportunity arises, I'm prepared to visit Pyongyang myself," added the secretary general, who is due to start a three-day visit to Moscow on Wednesday. The South Korean, who is the second Asian to head the United Nations, said he had been encouraged by recent diplomatic moves on the peninsula.

"Lynn Pascoe's visit as my special envoy to the DPRK [North Korea] was quite encouraging. It was the first such high-level dialogue with DPRK authorities since 2004. The dialogue and partnership between the United Nations and DPRK should further be strengthened," Ban said.

He said the country "and its people are suffering from difficult economic situation," and described the humanitarian situation as "very worrisome," declaring that the UN was ready to send assistance, and could cooperate with Pyongyang in other areas as well.

The six-party talks, involving North and South Korea, Russia, Japan, China and the United States, came to a halt last April when Pyongyang pulled out of the negotiations in protest against the United Nations' condemnation of its missile tests. The North has hinted it would be willing to return to the talks, but insists it first negotiate directly with the United States to repair "hostile relations." Russia considers the resumption of the six-party talks essential, and Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said in late December that the prospects for a return to the negotiating table had improved slightly.

Source: <http://en.rian.ru/world/20100315/158196392.html>

## North Korea's Reform Will Fail if Nuclear Ambition Persists: Minister

North Korea's limited economic reforms will fail unless the country chooses to abandon its nuclear weapons ambition, South Korea's unification minister warned Thursday. "North Korea is seeking changes at present, but not at the level that is expected by the international community," Minister Hyun In-taek told a forum on the South's resort island of Jeju, according to a script released by his aides here.

"The fundamental reason the North is still suffering from food shortages is that its economy is not improving," the minister said, citing U.N. sanctions as another underlying factor. Hyun went on to say that the international community wishes to provide cooperation and support for the North to develop its economy after the country drops its nuclear arms programs. North Korea went ahead with a surprise currency revaluation last year in an effort to tame inflation and reassert government control on market activities, but the currency reform has reportedly caused severe inflation, social unrest and starvation. The country, whose food shortages are expected to worsen this year according to outside analysts, is also reportedly wooing foreign investment to revitalize its economy that has been hamstrung by tight U.N. sanctions slapped on it for nuclear testing.

South Korea has said that it will not resume its massive food assistance to North Korea unless Pyongyang recognizes Seoul as a full partner in nuclear negotiations and makes progress in denuclearization. On Thursday, North Korea reaffirmed its refusal to allow its nuclear arms programs to be discussed in talks with the South, arguing the issue must be addressed between Pyongyang and Washington. Inter-Korean talks remain largely stalled despite several meetings between officials of the two countries this year on joint economic ventures. Tension heightened this year when the North fired hundreds of artillery shots along their Yellow Sea border in late January. The sides remain technically at war after the 1950-53 Korean War ended in a truce.

Source:<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2010/03/11/79/0401000000AEN20100311008300315F.HTML>

## U.S. won't pay North Korea to Return to Six-Party Talks: Kissinger

The United States will not pay North Korea to return to the six-party talks, although it is sincerely committed to negotiations on ending the North's nuclear program, former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger said. Kissinger noted, however, that the countries involved in the nuclear talks, including the United States, will have to decide when negotiations will stop if North Korea continues to develop nuclear arms and refuses to give them up.

"I think (Barack) Obama is trying to find an end to the North Korean nuclear issue, partly for reasons of South Korea, partly reasons for Asia, but also for reasons of the world," Kissinger said during a lecture organized by the Asan Institute for Policy Studies, an independent think tank in Seoul. "They (the United States) are sincerely interested

in finding a solution,” he added. Kissinger said that Washington sincerely wants to rid North Korea of its nuclear weapons program not because it poses a serious threat to the United States, but because of the “overwhelming” example it could set for other states with nuclear ambitions if the country is allowed to develop and proliferate nuclear weapons. “We have very little fear from North Korea’s nuclear capability. The kind of weapons that North Korea can produce we can surely handle with whatever defensive system we have,” he said.

“But the real danger is, if North Korea, a state which has no significant resources, by starving its population can create nuclear capability, the temptation for other countries to follow that road would be overwhelming.” North Korea recently demanded the removal of U.N. sanctions and the start of talks on a peace treaty as conditions for its return to the six-nation negotiating table. Kissinger said if North Korea really wants to solve the issue through negotiations, it must show its willingness by returning to the talks without any preconditions. “My general view is that unless all parties are equally interested in the outcome, you can’t make them interested by paying them a price for entering the negotiations,” he told the forum. The top U.S. diplomat of the Nixon administration noted North Korea’s continued boycott of negotiations might cause its dialogue partners to consider other options. “If no progress is made, at some point, it’d be obvious that negotiations have not succeeded,” he told reporters later.

Source:[http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html\\_dir/2010/03/12/201003120035.asp](http://www.koreaherald.co.kr/NEWKHSITE/data/html_dir/2010/03/12/201003120035.asp)

## **Japan Seeks DPRK’s Denuclearization Along with Resolution of Abduction Issues: *Japanese***

### ***Ambassador***

The Japanese Ambassador to Seoul said Japan is seeking denuclearization of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) along with the resolution of abduction issues between the two countries, local media reported Wednesday. “If North Korea (DPRK) moves toward the resolution of abduction issues based on agreements between Tokyo and Pyongyang, Japan will also take action in response,” Toshinori Shigeie told a local defense forum, referring to issues of Japanese civilians believed to have been kidnapped to the DPRK, according to Yonhap News Agency.

The ambassador also voiced support for South Korea’s so-called “grand bargain” proposal aimed at achieving the DPRK’s denuclearization at once, rather than gradually approaching the goal in phases, in return for international aid and other incentives for the DPRK. He added that the DPRK’s return to the stalled six-party nuclear talks and ending the nuclear programs in a verifiable manner remain a priority, calling the multilateral disarmament talks a “very realistic framework,” according to Yonhap. The ambassador reportedly spoke against the DPRK’s recent proposal to reach a peace treaty to replace a truce that ended the 1950-1953 Korean War, which left the two Koreas technically at war, saying the proposal will sway attention away from Pyongyang’s denuclearization process.

Source:[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2010-03/10/c\\_13204860.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2010-03/10/c_13204860.htm)

## U.S. Not to Attempt to Change DPRK through Force: *U.S. Ambassador*

The United States is not seeking to bring down the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) government, and is ready for dialogue between the two sides within the six-party framework, U.S. ambassador to Seoul said Wednesday. "The United States has no hostile intent towards the people of North Korea (DPRK) nor are we threatening to change the North Korean regime through force," Kathleen Stephens was quoted as telling a forum by South Korea's Yonhap News Agency.

"Our aim is to find diplomatic solutions to working with North Korea," she added. Her remarks came after the DPRK threatened to halt its denuclearization process and strengthen its nuclear deterrence in protest of the ongoing annual joint South Korea- U.S. military drills, codenamed the Key Resolve and Foal Eagle, which begun Monday. The exercises, which Pyongyang denounces as preparation for invasion, is said to be aimed at rehearsing the defense of South Korea in case of emergencies and improving combined and joint operational posture between the two militaries.

Stephens also said Washington is willing to engage in bilateral talks with Pyongyang within the framework of the stalled six-party process over the DPRK's denuclearization, noting that the DPRK has shown "positive signs" hinting at a possible return to the negotiation table despite its conventional threats. "The language has become more positive," she said, adding the DPRK now needs to show action.

Expectations run high that the suspended talks will soon resume, following a recent exchange of high-level visits between Beijing and Pyongyang and a flurry of diplomatic efforts for reopening the talks. The six-party talks were launched in 2003 but reached an impasse after Pyongyang in April last year unilaterally quit them in protest against UN sanctions triggered by its second nuclear test. Officials here repeatedly said efforts to bring Pyongyang back to the disarmament talks are ongoing through various diplomatic channels among member countries, namely China, the two Koreas, the U.S., Japan and Russia, but cautioned against predicting when exactly the talks would reopen.

Source:[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2010-03/10/c\\_13204793.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english2010/world/2010-03/10/c_13204793.htm)

## D. Nuclear Terrorism

### Suspected N.J. al-Qaeda terrorist Sharif Mobley worked at nuclear power plants



*Friend says former classmate at Buena High School was a 'normal, nice guy': ALICIA CRUZ*

An old high school friend of the South Jersey man arrested by Yemeni counter terrorism forces during an Al-Qaeda suspect roundup in Sa'naa, Yemen earlier this month has asked that we pray for the family of Sharif Mobley. The man, who asked that he only be identified as "Chad" said that he attended high school with Mobley and was very close to him during their school days. Chad described Mobley as a "normal, nice guy" with whom he went to wrestling matches with.

Chad said that Mobley moved to Yemen two years ago to learn Arabic and that he never heard Mobley recite any radical statements nor did he know of his former friend having any ties to extremist groups.

He added that Mobley, who is the son of Somalian Muslim immigrants, was an average kid who liked girls and video games and never bothered anyone. He reportedly earned a black belt in karate. "He was an overall nice person who would do anything for you." Chad and Mobley attended Buena Regional High School together. When asked if other former friends of Mobley had discussed his arrest, Chad replied, "we were all shocked when we learned of his arrest. He was such a nice guy. This is all so weird."

Chad, who admitted he hadn't spoken to Mobley in seven years, said that the former nuclear plant worker came from a great family. He worked as a laborer at facilities in Maryland, Pennsylvania and New Jersey, including reactors in Salem County. "They were absolutely the greatest people you'd ever meet. They were very kind. They were the nicest people in the world. I just hope everyone prays for them and keeps them in their thoughts," said Chad.

While in custody in Yemen, Mobley complained about a metal rod that had been implanted in his leg and was taken to Republican Hospital in Sana'a where he spent a week before he tried to escape. Mobley, 26, feigned friendship with security officers guarding him. On the day of the shooting he asked one of the guards to unshackle him for prayer. The guard went into the latrine to begin the required purification ritual for prayer, ablution and left his gun unattended.

Mobley shot the guard once in the head and chest as he returned from the latrine. Two guards heard the gunfire and headed to Mobley's room where they were shot and wounded. The shootout ended when a smoke grenade ignited a fire forcing Mobley to barricade himself in a hospital room. Mobley once worked at Hope Creek and Salem nuclear power stations as well as another. Officials at the plants he worked for said Mobley was supervised and did not breach security.

Investigators learned that Mobley, 26, had been communicating with radical cleric, Anwar al-Awlaki, who Federal authorities have linked to Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, the Nigerian man who tried to blow up a U.S. flight on Christmas Day as well as Philadelphia native "Jihad Jane" and Fort Hood shooter, Major Nidal Malik Hassan. Awlaki, who fled the United States, is said to have taught at a Virginia mosque visited by 9/11 hijackers Nawaf al-Hazmi and Hani Hanjour. Mobley, a natural-born U.S. citizen, remains detained in Yemen after the hospital shooting. There is no word if he was injured during the shooting or if American Embassy officials have made contact with him.

Source: <http://www.newjerseynewsroom.com/state/suspected-nj-al-qaeda-terrorist-sharif-mobley-worked-at-nuclear-power-plants>

## 'Al-Qaeda facing fantastic pressure'

*Holbrooke terms improvement in Pak-US ties a 'very big step forward'*

The Obama Administration's Special Representative, Richard Holbrooke, on Sunday described improvement in US-Pakistan cooperative relations as a "very big step forward". He applauded Islamabad's successes against local and Afghan

Taliban and noted that al-Qaeda along the Pak-Afghan border region faced “fantastic” pressure.

“In the last 13 months, since this (Obama) Administration took over, there has been a significant improvement across the board in the relationship between our government and the Government of Pakistan,” Holbrooke told CNN’s GPS programme aired on Sunday. The American diplomat saw largely based on models and designs obtained from Pakistan. Khan’s narrative calls into question Iran’s long-standing stance that it has not sought nuclear arms. Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said last month that “we won’t do that because we don’t believe in having them.”

The account also conflicts with the government’s assertion that Khan proliferated nuclear know-how without government approval. Pakistan has never disclosed Khan’s written account. A summary of interrogations of Khan and four others in 2004, conducted by intelligence service and later provided to the US and allied intelligence officials, omitted mention of the attempt to buy a nuclear bomb. But Pakistan’s former top military official in 2006 publicly hinted at it.

In interviews, two military officers whom Khan links to the bargaining with Iran denied that finished nuclear weapons were ever on the table. Spokesmen for Iran’s mission to the United Nations and the Pakistani Embassy in Washington did not respond to requests to comment. However, a top Pakistani government official at the time said Ali Shamkhani, the senior Iranian military officer named by Khan, came to Islamabad seeking help on nuclear weapons. The former official also said Khan, acting with the knowledge of other top officials, then accelerated a secret stream of aid.

The US ambassador to Pakistan at the time, Robert Oakley, separately said in an interview that he thinks Pakistan’s top military officer urged and approved Khan’s bomb-related assistance to Iran. AQ Khan is a controversial figure, and he has complained bitterly about long-standing restrictions on his movements by Pakistan’s government, which says it seeks to ensure he does not restart his nuclear dealings. Several US experts have noted that as a result, Khan is eager to depict others as more culpable than he was in those dealings.

Most observers now think Khan’s work for Iran was directed by “senior elements of Pakistan’s military, if not by its political leaders,” said Leonard S Spector, director of the James Martin Centre for Non-proliferation Studies. “Khan is clearly out to vindicate his reputation, but the issues remain murky enough that you can’t be certain when he is telling the truth and when he is embellishing.” Khan’s 11-page narrative, prepared in 2004 during his initial house arrest, states that “at no time did I seriously believe that they [Iranians] were capable of mastering the technology.” But Western intelligence officials say his assistance was meaningful and trace its roots to a deal reached in 1987.

Pakistan has said little about that deal. Iran later told international inspectors that a Pakistani network in 1987 offered a host of centrifuge-related specifications and equipment, and turned over a document detailing how to shape enriched uranium for use in a bomb. Pakistan’s intelligence service sought to explain the cooperation partly by noting that “due to religious and ideological affinity, Pakistanis had great affection for Iran.” But Khan also cited Iran’s promise of financial aid, as well as the government’s ambition of forever thwarting Western pressure on both countries. “It was a deal worth almost 10 billion dollars that had been offered by Iran,” Khan wrote.

Khan's account and related documents were shared with the newspaper by former British journalist Simon Henderson, now a senior fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. The documents have been independently verified by the newspaper. The intelligence service's summary said General Mirza Aslam Beg, a former army chief of staff who was arguably Pakistan's most influential figure, was "in favour of very close cooperation [with Iran] in the nuclear field in lieu of financial assistance promised to him toward Pakistan's defense budget."

Khan's written statement to Henderson states that after Shamkhani's arrival in Islamabad on a government plane, he told the chairman of Pakistan's Joint Chiefs of Staff committee that "he had come . . . to collect the promised nuclear bombs." When the chairman, Admiral Iftikhar Ahmed Sirohey, proposed to discuss other matters first and then "see how Pakistan could assist the Iranians in their nuclear programme," Shamkhani reportedly became irate, Khan wrote. He reminded Sirohey that "first General Zia ul Haq, and then General Beg had promised assistance and nuclear weapons and he had specifically come to collect the same."

Such a transfer was theoretically feasible. Although Pakistan exploded no nuclear bombs until 1998, the U.S. intelligence community concluded it had the capability to make weapons by 1986. Shamkhani, a founding leader of Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps, was long active in the country's nuclear programme, according to US officials. A longtime defense minister and presidential candidate in 2001, he now runs a Tehran think tank. The Iranian mission in New York did not respond to questions about him.

Khan said that after hearing Shamkhani's demand for three finished weapons, Sirohey demurred and that other ministers backed him up. But Beg pressed then-prime minister Benazir Bhutto and her top military aide "to honour [Beg's] . . . commitment," Khan wrote. Under pressure, the aide asked Khan to "get components of two old (P-1) discarded machines and pack them into boxes with two sets of drawings," which were passed to Iran through an intermediary, he said. P-1 is the designation for the centrifuge model used in Pakistan.

Asked to comment, Sirohey said he did not recall the meeting "or ever hearing about a deal to sell nuclear weapons to Iran." In an interview, Beg denied bartering nuclear weapons for cash. He said that when an Iranian delegation "asked me about nuclear technology" in 1988, he advised discussing it with Bhutto. A 2006-Associated Press article reported Beg's recollection of a 1990 visit by an Iranian delegation: "They asked, 'Can we have a bomb?' My answer was: By all means you can have it but you must make it yourself." But on a Pakistani television programme in June, Beg said he has "always" urged the transfer of nuclear arms to Iran.

The former Pakistani official said, "Shamkhani thought he had a deal when he came to Pakistan." Various top officials, the former official said, were aware that Beg told the Iranians, "You have the money, we have the technology. Beg saw this as a win-win . . . a way to take care of the Army's endless budget problems."

US intelligence officials say Khan's initial exports of disassembled P-1 centrifuges disappointed his Iranian counterparts; the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) states that Iran reported a 2003 offer of new parts by "the supply network." In his narrative, Khan states that his next direct contact with Iranian officials was at a meeting in 1994

or 1995, when some Iranian scientists complained about their lack of progress. Khan said in a note to Henderson that he subsequently agreed to send centrifuge parts to Iran. The IAEA says Iran admitted that Khan's network in 1996 also turned over the design for a more advanced centrifuge that Pakistan had constructed, known as P-2.

Malaysian police reported in 2004 — based on interrogations of a Khan associate — that the parts were shipped aboard an Iranian-owned ship after first passing through Dubai. In return, the associates were paid three million dollars. The Pakistani intelligence service report differs slightly: It said Iran paid five million dollars for drawings of equipment used in enriching uranium. Some funds were deposited in a Dubai bank account controlled by Khan and two associates under the name "Haider Zaman," the report said. Khan used that name in a government-issued passport to conceal some foreign travel.

Khan has told Henderson that the funds went to associates and that he never retained any, which some US officials consider implausible. Khan also said in a separate note that he supplied "the names and addresses of suppliers" to the Iranians. Western officials say that act could have given Tehran access to companies that possessed drawings of Pakistani bomb parts and to components of the more advanced P-2 centrifuges used by Pakistan. Iran last month promised to install such advanced centrifuges, which it calls IR-2s, at two sites this year.

Source:[http://www.thenews.com.pk/top\\_story\\_detail.asp?Id=27790](http://www.thenews.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?Id=27790)

## **The deadly current toward nuclear arms: James Carroll**

Think of Niagara Falls. Think of the onrushing current as the river pours itself toward the massive cascade. Imagine a lone swimmer a hundred yards or so upstream, desperately stroking against the current to keep from being swept over the precipice. That swimmer is President Obama, the river is the world, and the falls is the threat of unchecked nuclear weapons. Henry James used the image of Niagara to describe the rush into World War I: ". . .the tide that bore us along." Hannah Arendt defined the wars of the 20th century as events "cascading like a Niagara Falls of history." Jonathan Schell used Niagara as an organizing metaphor for his indispensable critique of war, "The Unconquerable World."

But now the image has entered the lexicon of strategic experts who warn of a coming "cascade of proliferation," one nation following another into the deadly chasm of nuclear weapons unless present nuclear powers find a way to reverse the current. The main burden is on Russia and the United States, which together possess the vast majority of the world's nuclear weapons, but President Obama deliberately made himself central to the challenge when he said in Prague, "I state clearly and with conviction America's commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons."

Now the Niagara current is taking him the other way. Here are the landmarks that define the swimmer's momentum.

- The US-Russia Treaty. Negotiators in Geneva are late in reaching agreement on a nuclear arms treaty to replace START, which expired last December. Obama is threading a needle, having to meet Russian requirements (for example, on missile defense) while anticipating Republican objections in the

US Senate (for example, on missile defense). **Warning:** Bill Clinton was humiliated when the Senate rejected the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in 1999. Republicans' recalcitrance on health care is peanuts compared to the damage their rejection of a new START treaty would do.

- The Nuclear Posture Review, the Congress-mandated report on how the administration defines nuclear needs today. This, too, is overdue, probably because the White House has been pushing back against the Pentagon on numerous issues. Are nukes for deterrence only? Will the United States renounce first use? Having stopped the Bush-era program to build a new nuclear weapon, will Obama allow further research and development? What nations will be named as potential nuclear threats? **Warning:** The 1994 Nuclear Posture Review was Clinton's Pentagon Waterloo. It affirmed the Cold War status quo, killing serious arms reduction until now.
- Although usually considered apart, the broader US defense posture has turned into a key motivator for other nations to go nuclear. The current Pentagon budget (\$5 trillion for 2010-2017) is so far beyond any other country, and the *conventional* military capacity it buys is so dominant, as to reinforce the nuclear option abroad as the sole protection against potential US attack. This is new.
- In April, a world leaders nuclear summit will be held in Washington, but both nuclear haves and have-nots will be taking positions based on the US-Russia Treaty (and its prospects for ratification) and the Nuclear Posture Review. **Warning:** if China sees US missile defense as potentially aimed its way, a new nuclear arms race is on.
- In May, the signatories to the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty will hold their eighth regular review session in New York. Since the nations that agreed to forego nuclear weapons did so on the condition that the nuclear nations work steadily toward abolition, the key question will be whether Obama has in fact begun to deliver on his declared intention. If not, get ready for the cascade.

In truth, the current rushing toward Niagara cannot be resisted. Not seven nuclear nations, therefore, but 17, or, ultimately, 70. But beware an analysis like this. The falls are an analogy, not a fact. Obama warned of such fatalism, calling it in Prague, "a deadly adversary, for if we believe that the spread of nuclear weapons is inevitable, then in some way we are admitting to ourselves that the use of nuclear weapons is inevitable." Therefore, reject the analogy. Obama is not a lone swimmer, but a voice of all humanity. The nuclear future is not pre-determined. Human choices are being made right now to define it anew.

Source: [http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial\\_opinion/oped/articles/2010/03/15/the\\_deadly\\_current\\_toward\\_nuclear\\_arms/](http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial_opinion/oped/articles/2010/03/15/the_deadly_current_toward_nuclear_arms/)

## ***E. Nuclear Cooperation***

### **Taking a Risk with Nuclear Technology:** *James Kanter*

As concerns intensify about countries like Iran and North Korea and their nuclear capabilities, this may be a risky time to sell more of the technology to the developing world. Yet furthering nuclear exports is what several governments are seeking for their industries amid talk of a renaissance for the technology. Take the promotion by the French government of a nuclear conference in Paris last week.

France said it wanted to help representatives of delegations that reportedly included those of Syria and Libya overcome “the challenges of finding financing, obtaining access to the technology and the latest research and training people to satisfactorily conduct their projects.” The “peaceful use of nuclear power should not be confined to a handful of states that already hold the technology,” the government added in the message, posted at the Web site for the conference of which President Nicolas Sarkozy of France was host. That will be a tall order.

France first must reconcile a number of competing objectives, including encouragement of the spread of nuclear expertise while preventing proliferation of military applications of the technology; building plants that are both affordable and safe enough to convince skeptics that there can be no recurrence of accidents that blighted the industry in the 1970s and 1980s; and convincing citizens that burying radioactive waste deep underground is an environmentally sound trade-off for generating nuclear power free of greenhouse gases.

The stakes are high. The number of reactors worldwide could approximately double between now and 2030, to more than 800, according to industry figures. France should be well placed to stake a claim to that market. It is the world’s second-biggest nuclear power producer after the United States, and France already generates almost all of its own electricity from atoms. France also is home to Areva, a state-controlled company that is the world’s biggest reactor builder and is a leader in fuel reprocessing.

But Areva faces stiffening competition from its archrival Westinghouse, owned by Toshiba of Japan; G.E.-Hitachi, based in the United States; Rosatom of Russia; and up-and-coming international vendors like Korea Electric Power of South Korea. Mr. Sarkozy called last week for international training schools with funding by France so that a new generation of technicians and designers in countries like Jordan could learn the skills required to run those new reactors safely. José Manuel Barroso, the European Commission president, also sought to help, by pressing for global application of nuclear safety standards set by the European Union. Those initiatives could reduce opposition to nuclear power and exports of the technology by reducing accidents and by preventing technology from falling into the hands of terrorists. The initiatives could also help European companies like Areva with designs that already meet those specifications.

The primary market for nuclear vendors is China, which probably will build three-quarters of the world’s new reactors through 2020. But Westinghouse already has a firm foothold in China with its AP1000 model, and Chinese companies will soon start building those models using a “production line” approach, said Jeremy Gordon, an analyst for the World Nuclear Association, an industry group. India is another one of the world’s most promising markets for nuclear power. But Mr. Gordon said there was no guarantee that India would become a major business hub for a single vendor like Areva. The company is already smarting after being beaten to a contract worth \$20 billion in the United Arab Emirates by the South Koreans, who offered a much lower price.

Indeed, the biggest challenge for Areva in coming years may be overcoming the cost and complexity of its so-called E.P.R. model, which is loaded with multiple safety systems. The competing Westinghouse model relies more on so-called

passive systems for safety, and it may prove simpler to build. Another possible advantage for Westinghouse is that it has been more willing than other vendors to allow buyers to adopt aspects of a reactor's design and allow them to develop a homegrown industry, Mr. Gordon said.

That means Areva's most promising markets could be in the United States and Europe, where France and Britain will be refreshing their arrays of reactors, and where Italy has begun the process of reintroducing nuclear power after a break of more than two decades. But large numbers of Europeans remain skeptical about the safety and environmental consequences of nuclear power, particularly the industry's highly radioactive waste. That could limit Areva's sales closer to home.

Günther Oettinger, the E.U. commissioner for energy, reiterated Friday that the European Commission would propose legislation promoting the permanent burial of high-level waste deep underground in geologically stable areas by the end of the year. That move is designed to address worries about the waste, which is currently stored on an interim basis in pools of water or in casks, many near ground level and in some cases is exported. But Mr. Oettinger also acknowledged that the issue of nuclear power would remain fraught in Europe, and he stressed that the European Commission recognized there were limits to how far it could push any nuclear agenda.

"We accept that the president of France, in nuclear plants, is seeking as many contracts as possible, both in the E.U. and beyond," Mr. Oettinger said, but the Union had to "accept France's energy mix just like Austria's." He said Austria, which banned nuclear power in the late 1970s, already was able to generate most of its electricity without producing greenhouse gas emissions — by using hydropower.

Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/15/business/energy-environment/15green.html>

## **BJP, Left parties to oppose nuclear liability**

**Bill:** *Sandeep Dikshit*

*Government is keen to get Bill passed to tie loose ends of pact with U.S.*

*BJP, Left to seek its referral to Standing Committee for closer scrutiny*

The government has scheduled for Monday the introduction of a Bill in the Lok Sabha limiting compensation in case of a nuclear accident. The Bharatiya Janata Party and the Left parties have resolved to oppose the Bill and seek its referral to the Standing Committee for closer scrutiny.

"I don't think they should try to force through the Bill. In case they try to get it passed amidst the din in the Lok Sabha as they did with the Commercial Benches of High Courts Bill, we will ask that it be referred to the Select Committee when it comes up in the Rajya Sabha. It violates constitutional validity according to many jurists," said Communist Party of India leader D. Raja.

The BJP, the Left parties and environmental organisations are opposed to several clauses, including compensation from foreign companies in case of an accident. They are also against another clause

that frees operators from any liability if the accident was due to grave national disaster of exceptional character, armed conflict or act of terrorism.

The passage of the Bill is crucial to operationalise the India-U.S. civil nuclear agreement and allow the entry of private U.S. companies which have already been assigned land for a nuclear park. France and Russia have also been informed of land being earmarked for their companies and the Bill will also benefit them, said Department of Atomic Energy Secretary Srikumar Banerjee.

The government is keen to get the Bill passed to tie the loose ends of the India-U.S. agreement from New Delhi side following reports that the U.S. has concurred on Indian sensitivities on the reprocessing aspect. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will be leaving for Washington to attend a summit meeting on nuclear non-proliferation and could interact with U.S. President Barack Obama on bilateral civil nuclear cooperation.

Agencies reported Communist Party of India (Marxist) Polit Bureau member Sitaram Yechury as saying the Opposition would seek to examine in the Standing Committee clauses such as limiting the liability amount in case of each nuclear accident to Rs. 300 crore. "At the introduction itself we will oppose unless the government assures us that it would be sent to a Parliamentary Standing Committee. All these issues are there and we will discuss all that in the standing committee," Mr. Yechury was quoted as saying by PTI. The Opposition also feels several other provisions of the Bill need to be discussed and clarified which should be done by the Standing Committee. These include the proposed Nuclear Damage Claims Commission and a time limit of 10 years for claiming relief.

Sorabjee's note

The Left leaders refer to a note by jurist Soli Sorabjee for Greenpeace to support their contention that the draft Bill violates constitutional provisions. "Any such move [to limit compensation] will be in defiance of Supreme Court judgments and will be contrary to the interest of people of India and their fundamental rights under Article 21 of the Constitution," he wrote.

Source: <http://www.hindu.com/2010/03/15/stories/2010031554591200.htm>

## **Obama is losing India: *Martin Walker***

The Obama administration is trying to play catch-up in its relations with the country that could become its most important long-term ally. But it may be leaving it too late, after India last week agreed a \$7 billion deal in arms, nuclear reactors and space technology with Russia.

India's strategic importance can hardly be exaggerated. More than just the other Asian economic giant after China, India is a democracy where English is an official language. It shares with Washington the same love-hate attitude toward China, hopeful but deeply suspicious at the same time. And with a much healthier demographic profile than China, most extrapolations of long-term trend suggest that India's economy will outgrow China's by the second half of this century.

U.S. President Barack Obama himself seems to have understood this. The first state dinner he hosted was for India's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. And then were strong foundations on which to build. His Democratic predecessor

Bill Clinton had started the courtship of India in the 1990s and President George W. Bush's commitment to India was one of the few successes of his troubled foreign policy.

Bush's legacy was a nuclear cooperation agreement, which allowed India to escape the nuclear isolation into which it was plunged after testing a nuclear weapon outside the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Bush's deal also opened the way for the United States to sell nuclear power stations, fuel and other technology to India and to forge a lasting strategic partnership. But for a host of reasons the Obama administration has let India slip down the list of its priorities. Not all of these reasons relate to Islamic terrorism, the war in Afghanistan and consequent urge to focus on Pakistan.

The economic crisis has emphasized China's importance, as the country with the biggest trade surplus with the United States and as the second leading holder of U.S. securities after Japan. China's diplomatic role, as a member of the U.N. Security Council and thus wielding a veto, has also underlined China's pivotal position in U.S. attempts to curb the nuclear ambitions of Iran and north Korea. India understandably chafes at the sense that it plays second fiddle in Washington, lacking that network of institutional ties and official relationships that cement connections to other leading powers.

"The U.S.-Indian relationship remains constrained," notes Evan Feigenbaum, senior fellow for Asia at the Council on Foreign Relations and former U.S. deputy assistant secretary of state for South Asia and Central Asia. "Although U.S. officials hold standing dialogues about nearly every region of the world with their counterparts from Beijing, Brussels and Tokyo, no such arrangements exist with New Delhi." Other states, notably Russia, have not let India slip to the back burner. Last week's visit to New Delhi of Russia's Prime Minister Vladimir Putin has seen the signing of a number of strategic deals. They included an aircraft carrier, MiG-29 fighters, defense and space technology and at least 12 civilian nuclear reactors. Putin also said he wanted the current \$8 billion in annual trade with India to more than double to \$20 billion.

The deal to buy the Soviet aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov has been in the works for years, delayed by the need for an almost complete overhaul of the ship and by haggling over the terms. The initial price tag was \$1.5 billion, which Russia increased to \$2.5 billion but has now settled for \$2.3 billion, to include its complement of 45 MiG-29 warplanes. This is still a fraction of the price of an air fleet-equipped modern U.S.-built carrier, even if one were available, or even of the smaller British and French carriers now being developed. But India's current carrier, the Viraat, is the former British vessel HMS Hermes, built in 1959. Obsolete and usually in dock, its obsolescence means India needs another carrier quickly if it is to maintain the complex skills essential to carrier deployment. India's first domestically produced carrier, the Vikrant, now under construction in Cochin, is unlikely to be operational before 2015.

What Putin did not get was any commitment that India would pick Russian warplanes for its planned \$11 billion purchase of 126 state-of-the-art fighters, intended to give the country's air force the technological edge over China and Pakistan in the current Asian arms race. It is the deal that everyone wants to

win, from the Eurofighter to Boeing's Super Hornet and Russia's MiG-35. But that arms deal is just a fraction of the estimated \$150 billion that India will be spending on energy technology, from nuclear reactors to oil and gas exploration and wind and solar. American hopes of winning a major slice of these contracts have been stalled over an elusive agreement on reprocessing nuclear fuel.

Robert Blake, the senior State Department official dealing with India and its region, is hopeful that a deal can be concluded by this summer. Indian officials are less optimistic and query U.S. insistence that India's parliament enact a limited liability rule on compensation for nuclear accidents, an issue that does not seem to worry Russian and French suppliers. There is a pattern here. Two far-reaching agreements on U.S.-Indian military cooperation have stalled, as have other projects for hi-tech and space research cooperation.

The real problem is fundamental. Indians complain that the Obama administration still sees India less as a great power in its own right, than as a walk-on player in two issues that worry Washington more. The first is the Afghan-Pakistan imbroglio and the second is U.S.-China relations. Obama's suggestion, during his cap-in-hand visit to Beijing, that China help the United States "manage" the Indo-Pakistan problem "led to the mistrust of Obama that today pervades the Indian establishment," argues influential Indian commentator Professor Madhav Nalapat.

"President Obama's policy of downgrading India to the level of a South Asian power is pushing Delhi closer toward Moscow and Beijing," Nalapat adds. "If such an axis takes place, the 'credit' will go to the Obama administration. India sees itself as an Asian power with a global focus. Those unwilling to accept this cannot be defined as friends."

Source: [http://www.upi.com/Top\\_News/Analysis/2010/03/15/Walkers-World-Obama-is-losing-India/UPI-20701268648820/](http://www.upi.com/Top_News/Analysis/2010/03/15/Walkers-World-Obama-is-losing-India/UPI-20701268648820/)

## The unfinished business of the nuclear deal

The Putin visit and the India-Russia nuclear agreement have pushed the unfinished business of the India-US nuclear deal to the background. The benefits of the deal are already evident in the multiple agreements we have signed not only with Russia and France, but also with Mongolia and Canada.

But much remains to be done before Prime Minister Manmohan Singh can persuade the US Administration to be more liberal when it comes to transfer of dual use technology to us. The Washington Summit on Nuclear Security in April and the NPT Review Conference soon thereafter will be important sign posts in assessing the global impact of the nuclear deal and the way President Obama wishes to play it as part of his overall nuclear strategy. An Obama visit later in the year has also added urgency to tying up the loose ends.

The two sides have just met in Washington to 'cross the t's and dot the i's' on the reprocessing arrangements, but they found much more to do than just linguistic changes. The white smoke is yet to emanate from the Washington conclave. But State Department officials appeared optimistic that problems would be resolved at the next session, if not at the present meeting itself. The reprocessing agreement, if finalised, will be a major advance, given the position of the Obama administration on reprocessing.

On the Indian side, the much awaited bill on nuclear damages has run into rough weather basically because of the presumption that it was being pushed to satisfy US companies. France and Russia did not require such a legislation. But no one seems to give attention to the fact that there is indeed a worldwide nuclear liability regime consisting of the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage, the Paris Convention on Third Party Liability in the Field of Nuclear Energy and the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage. India has been contemplating to join this regime as the number of our reactors goes up and the regime has its benefits.

India needed the passage of the bill to sign the Supplementary Compensation Convention. One important provision of this Convention is that the parties to the Convention shall make public funds available beyond the amount made available by the Installation State in accordance with the UN rate of assessment. This point was repeatedly stressed by representatives of US companies at a seminar in February in Washington, but this beneficial aspect has gone unnoticed in India. This means, of course, that India, as a contracting party, will be liable to provide public funds in the case of accidents in other countries.

The points made by the legal luminaries as well as the public activists and the position of the opposition have prompted the government to defer the bill. The bill is likely to be delayed beyond April and even beyond the Obama visit. No one will dispute the need to reassure the public about the legitimacy of the legislation and its benefit to the people. The bill is likely to be amended in the light of the various points made. A process of education rather than politicisation is essential. India will, however, be seen to be unable to deliver on our part of the unfinished business if this step is delayed.

On the US side, there lurks a Civil Nuclear Exports Guide, which threatens to delay, if not diminish the chances of nuclear exports to India. The guide clearly states that a 123 Agreement does not commit the US to any specific exports or other co-operative activities, but rather establishes a framework of conditions and controls to govern subsequent commercial transactions, if any. Part 110 of the code of Federal Regulations and Part 810 of the same Regulations require pledges from the recipient government to use the technology exclusively for peaceful purposes and the only authority that determines whether authorisations are required in the case of India is the Department of energy of the United States.

The Government of India has implicitly given this assurance already to the US government, but the need to give it in specific cases for suppliers may present an impediment. If such authorisation is required even before manufacturing the products for India, the clock will be set back on nuclear cooperation. Someone had cynically suggested at the time of the Hyde Act controversy that the way out was for India to use the opening provided by the deal to trade with countries other than the US. It was to remove such apprehensions that India not only gave assurances of imports from the US, but also earmarked construction sites for the US in India. But nuclear trade with the US is still some distance away because of problems in both countries.

The quest is on, however, for means and ways for the two countries to cooperate in non-proliferation efforts, now that India is a partner and not a target for the US to impose restraint. India has expressed willingness to work with the US in the new context. Apart from the Global Zero effort, strengthened by President Obama's Prague pledge to move to a nuclear weapon free world, steps are being suggested for India to be helpful. In Vienna, there are several proposals for the establishment of fuel banks as a measure to guarantee availability of nuclear fuel for peaceful uses. A Russian proposal was actually adopted with an abstention from India. Some of the developing countries see the fuel bank idea as designed to restrict enrichment by them, even though NPT does not prohibit enrichment.

India had taken the position right from the beginning that the fuel banks might not be of interest to India since we already had a full fuel cycle. But the US is urging India to have a fresh look at the fuel banks to see whether India can contribute to their operation. Similarly the US expects India to support the World Institute of Nuclear Security (WINS), which promotes nuclear safety and related issues. India is yet to take a view on this issue. Nuclear safety and security are motherhood issues for India, but we also believe that the dangers should not be exaggerated to increase the allergy in certain countries to nuclear power. The unfinished business of the nuclear deal looms large in India-US relations as it is a test of the willingness of both sides to move further into a strategic relationship. A strategic relationship entails mutual faith and confidence, which seem to be lacking at present. The developments at the Security Summit and the NPT Review will determine the future of nuclear cooperation between India and the United States.

*Source: <http://news.rediff.com/column/2010/mar/15/column-t-p-sreenivasan-on-the-unfinished-business-of-the-nuclear-deal.htm>*

## **Putin Steps into the India Breach**

The Obama administration's neglect of New Delhi is starting to have serious foreign-policy consequences: SUMIT GANGULY

India's prime minister declared Russia a "key pillar of our foreign policy and a valuable strategic partner" Friday. There's no stronger signal that the Obama administration's neglect of India is starting to have real foreign-policy consequences. If the United States doesn't act quickly, much of the progress in U.S.-India relations over the past decade will be lost. Mr. Singh is simply renewing long historical ties with Russia; ties that flourished most strongly during the Cold War. Back then, India relied on the Soviet veto to protect itself from possible censure at the United Nations Security Council concerning the Indo-Pakistani dispute over Kashmir. India also depended on the Soviets to supply cheap, sophisticated military technology, and counted on them to counter China in the event of renewed conflict along the disputed Himalayan border.



**Associated Press**

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, right, with Prime Minister Vladimir Putin in New Delhi. The Soviets, in turn, saw the diplomatic advantage of limiting American influence in India. It was a major diplomatic coup: Moscow could boast of excellent relations with the world's largest democracy and a leader of both the Group of 77 developing nations and a founding member of the Non-Aligned Movement. Later, in the wake of a disastrous invasion of Afghanistan, the Russians could also count on India's studious

silence at the U.N. General Assembly during debates about the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

Prime Minister Vladimir Putin's visit to New Delhi last week underscored the renewed significance of this bilateral relationship. This makes sense: India's economy is thriving, and so are its investment opportunities. Thanks to the arduous efforts of the Bush administration, which helped forge the historic Indo-U.S. civilian nuclear accord, India can now engage in the global civilian nuclear trade. Ironically, the Russians are now cashing in on it. During Mr. Putin's visit, the two sides agreed on a road map for the construction of two new 1,000 megawatt nuclear reactors at Kudankulam in the southern state of Tamil Nadu.

The Russians are also eager to revive the arms relationship. They have already bagged the sale of a refurbished Soviet-era aircraft carrier, the Admiral Gorshokov, which is due to be delivered to India by the end of 2012. While in New Delhi last week, Mr. Putin successfully negotiated the sale of more of the naval versions of the MiG-29 fighter aircraft which can use the Gorshokov as a platform, and pitched the sale of new MiG-35 multi-role combat aircraft. Currently, the Indian Air Force is in the market to acquire as many as 126 such aircraft, for the sum of about \$12 billion. An active bidding war between American, European and Russian military aircraft manufacturers is underway.

Finally, Mr. Putin's 24-hour visit also underscored the reaffirmation of the significance of Indo-Russian diplomatic ties, which drifted under his predecessor, Boris Yeltsin. Mr. Yeltsin was predominately occupied with domestic politics, and when he did focus attention abroad, it was on courting the West, not India. At that time, India had fewer investment opportunities and its arm sales opportunities weren't attractive to Moscow. All that has now changed.

Russia's renewed push into the subcontinent stands in sharp contrast to U.S. neglect, which has left many policy makers in New Delhi both frustrated and bewildered. Mr. Singh's state visit to the U.S. in October was conducted with much fanfare. There has been pitifully little effort from Washington to follow up on matters of substance such as cooperative ventures in trade, counterterrorism and military-to-military ties. The U.S.-India civil nuclear deal has been passed, but there's an outstanding dispute concerning the potential liability of American suppliers. Mr. Obama has spent far more time courting states like North Korea, China and Pakistan than he has India.

Good Indo-Russian relations need not necessarily come at the cost of a robust

Indo-U.S. relationship. However, bilateral ties aren't formed or maintained of their own accord. If Mr. Obama continues to neglect India, other powers—many of which see the U.S. has a strategic competitor—will step into the breach. Given all the authoritarian regimes, terrorism and the tenuous economic recovery in Asia, can Mr. Obama really allow U.S.-India relations to backslide into the mutual neglect last seen during the Cold War? We may be about to find out.

Source:[http://online.wsj.com/article/](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703780204575120743519494102.html?mod=WSJ_latestheadlines)

[SB10001424052748703780204575120743519494102.html?mod=WSJ\\_latestheadlines](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703780204575120743519494102.html?mod=WSJ_latestheadlines)

## **Putin Eyes Multi-Billion Dollar Deals with Old Ally India:** *Anna Smolchenko*

Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin heads to India Thursday to strengthen the close partnership Moscow and New Delhi have enjoyed since the Soviet era with an estimated 10 billion dollars of new deals. The highlight of the visit is set to be the signing of deals to sell Russian military hardware, including an accord on a Soviet-era aircraft carrier whose troubled history had raised fears over the future strength of relations.

Other deals will include a contract to sell India 29 MiG fighter jets and an agreement to install additional nuclear power units in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, Putin's foreign policy aide Yury Ushakov told reporters. "A preliminary estimate shows that the volume of the business deals in monetary value will top 10 billion dollars," Ushakov said, estimating that at least 14 agreements would be signed. "We have an enormous interest in India."

The sale of the Admiral Gorshkov has been marred by a series of price disputes and delayed deliveries, compounding concerns in Moscow that India could be tempted to end its dependence on Russian military equipment. An Indian government source told AFP Putin was keen to use the trip to sort out all remaining sticking points related to the vessel's sale. Ushakov pledged the new agreement would help the two countries put the dispute behind them.

"Judging by everything, we are approaching an agreement that will suit both sides," he said. Russia supplies 70 percent of India's military hardware but New Delhi has in recent years also looked towards other military suppliers including Israel and the United States. Russian business daily Vedomosti reported earlier this month that officials had hoped to sign three military agreements worth some four billion dollars.

These will be for the refurbishment of the Admiral Gorshkov, worth 2.35 billion dollars; a 1.2-billion-dollar contract to sell India 29 MiG-29 carrier-based fighters; and a deal to jointly develop a transport aircraft, said the report. Ushakov declined to give a breakdown of the 10-billion-dollar package. An official with state aircraft holding United Aircraft Corporation (UAC) confirmed to AFP that UAC and India's HAL planned to sign a deal to create a "new joint venture" to develop the transport aircraft.

Russia and India have already pledged to commit 300 million dollars each to the project. The strong ties between Moscow and New Delhi date back to the 1950s after the death of Stalin. But India has in recent years also taken care to balance this friendship with close ties to the United States. Together with Brazil and

China, Russia and India are part of the so-called BRIC grouping of major developing economies seeking to promote a multipolar world economy not dominated by the United States.

At just over 7.5 billion dollars in 2009, trade turnover is miniscule and the two countries will aim to increase it to 20 billion dollars by 2015. Russia is already building two nuclear power units in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu and agreed to install four more nuclear reactors there as part of an agreement signed during President Dmitry Medvedev's visit to India in 2008.

Putin, who last visited India as Russian president in 2007, is set to meet his counterpart Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Indian President Pratibha Patil. This will be Putin's first trip to India in his current capacity. Ushakov said Russia hoped tighter ties with India would help Russia diversify its hydrocarbons-based economy. "Relations with India are also important with an eye to conducting reforms in the Russian economy, with an eye to securing a quality technological breakthrough," he said.

Source: <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jVDgSas1nSU85NtvqRJS05AYREZw>

## India, Russia to build 12 nuclear plants

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh described on Friday as very fruitful a brief visit paid to New Delhi by his peer from the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin in which six agreements were inked.

The deals are aimed at consolidating the strategic alliance forged by both countries 10 years ago were signed during Putin's barely 22-hour stay. Ours is not only a unique relationship. Its significance has grown as time has gone by, said Singh in remarks to journalists at the end of Putin's visit. Agreements signed include the construction of at least 12 nuclear plants by Russia in India in the next few years.

The field of defense, a pillar in bilateral relations as Russia supplies 70 percent of weapons and military equipment available in India, also played a predominant role in the talks, with the parties cutting a deal for New Delhi to buy 26 MiG-29K planes from Moscow. Both parties ratified their intention to increase current exchange worth \$7 billion to \$20 billion in ten years. During their meeting of little over two hours, Singh and Putin also discussed issues of regional and global interest, mainly Afghanistan and terrorism in the region.

Source: <http://www.dailynews.lk/2010/03/15/wld03.asp>

## India May Join Russia in Establishing Angarsk Nuclear Fuel Bank

India may join Russia's nuclear center of a low-enriched uranium (LEU) reserves project in Angarsk, the chairman of India's Atomic Energy Research Commission said. "India is interested as a donor country and we are looking into it," Srikumar Banerjee said. Russia's state-run nuclear power corporation Rosatom said on Monday that Russia would provide by the end of 2010 the first batch of low-enriched uranium for an international nuclear fuel reserve bank under the control of the UN nuclear watchdog.

Banerjee said India considers the participation in the project to be an “attractive” possibility, however he added that it “requires a very detailed techno commercial dealings which have not been completed.” “We have to evaluate the facility, and economics here comes as a major factor,” Banerjee said. “It is not just a political arrangement, so I cannot straight away say that India is joining just now, but India has a capability of joining as an equal partner in some of these activities.”

Russia has earlier proposed to establish international reserves of LEU to ensure stable fuel supplies to IAEA member countries in case of emergency, including “insurmountable political difficulties.” Russia proposed in 2007 the creation of a nuclear center with LEU reserves in Angarsk, 5,100 km (3,170 miles) east of Moscow, to enable countries including Iran to develop civilian nuclear power without having to enrich their own uranium.

Russia has pledged to give access to the reserves “to any IAEA member country that honors its non-proliferation commitments.” The IAEA Board of Governors approved the establishment of a nuclear fuel reserve bank in November 2009. Rosatom’s head Sergei Kiriyenko said a detailed agreement between Russia and the IAEA on the nuclear fuel bank could be signed in April-May.

Source:<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20100310/158147430.html>

## **Vietnam Attends International Conference on Nuclear Power**

A Vietnamese delegation led by Minister of Science and Technology Hoang Van Phong attended the International Conference on Access to Civil Nuclear Energy in Paris on March 8-9. Initiated by France and jointly held by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development’s Nuclear Energy Agency (OECD/NEA), the conference aimed to encourage the responsible use of nuclear power for peaceful purposes. It took place as part of the lead up to the Global Summit on Nuclear Safety scheduled for April 12-13 in Washington, D.C.

Speaking at the event, French President Nicolas Sarkozy, IAEA General Director Yukiya Amano and OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría emphasised the important role of nuclear energy in sustainable development, especially in the context that the world is struggling against climate change and facing the exhaustion of fossil fuel resources. The French President called on delegates to look toward cooperation and solidarity among nations for a stronger, cleaner and fairer world economy.

On the sidelines of the conference, the Vietnamese delegation had several bilateral meetings with the Japanese delegation and French partners such as Electricity of France (EDF) and the Atomic Energy Commission (CEA). Minister Phong spoke highly of cooperation and assistance from countries, including Japan and France, as well as international nuclear organisations such as IAEA and NEA.

International cooperation and assistance are very important for the successful implementation of Vietnam’s civil nuclear energy programmes, he said, adding that the country wishes to receive more international support to accelerate its civil nuclear development for

peaceful purposes. Representatives of the Japanese delegation, EDF and CEA expressed their desires to strengthen cooperation with Vietnam in this field, especially nuclear safety, human resources training and the development of support industries.

Source:<http://english.vovnews.vn/Home/Vietnam-attends-intl-conference-on-nuclear-power/20103/113336.vov>

## **F. Nuclear Energy**

### **Experts Say Earthquakes Shouldn't Hinder**

#### **Chile Nuclear Power: Anthony Esposito**

Despite a devastating 8.8-magnitude earthquake that rocked Chile's central-southern regions, experts believe a nuclear power plant could be safely built and operated in the country. On Feb. 27, one of the strongest earthquakes on record and an ensuing tsunami wave rocked the Andean nation, snapping bridges, toppling buildings and claiming hundreds of lives throughout the Maule and Bio Bio regions.

In the wake of the disaster, neither of Chile's two test nuclear reactors, located in the Santiago Metropolitan region, suffered damage or operational errors, according to the Energy Ministry. Chile's government is studying the possibility of using nuclear power as it seeks to diversify its sources of electricity, as it's been vulnerable in the recent past. A few years ago, Argentina cut off natural gas supplies, forcing Chile to import more expensive fuels, while droughts have reduced hydroelectric production.

President-elect Sebastian Pinera, who takes office Thursday, will continue those studies but isn't likely to decide on the construction of a nuclear power plant, Ricardo Raineri, incoming Energy Minister, previously told Dow Jones Newswires. Any plant built in Chile would necessarily have to be prepared for earthquakes. The entire 4,300 kilometers of this Andean country's extension lie along major tectonic plates which generate earthquakes and volcanos.

According to a 2009 study by the University of Chile's geology department, the probability of catastrophic natural events shouldn't rule out the use of nuclear power in Chile. Plants are designed taking into account topography, geology and proximity to fault lines, flood zones and areas prone to sea swells, as well as peak ground acceleration—a measure of how much the earth shakes in a given geographic area, said Antonio Godoy, seismic expert at the International Atomic Energy Agency.

“Engineers are very conservative and we incorporate the possibility of earthquakes of magnitudes greater than historical values,” said Godoy, who is the acting head of the IAEA's International Seismic Safety Centre. That means in the case of Chile, a power plant located in the Maule or Bio Bio regions would be designed to safely withstand an earthquake greater than 9.5-magnitude, which is the strength of a 1960 earthquake, the strongest on record, which flattened the southern city of Valdivia.

The risks associated with a nuclear reactor are still less than that of a hydroelectric dam or even something as rare as the impact of a meteorite, said Julio Vergara, a professor at the Universidad Catolica de Chile and a former board member of Chile's Nuclear Energy Commission. Construction costs are typically between 10% to 20% higher when designing a plant to withstand earthquakes, Vergara said.

One way of decreasing the risk of damage is by installing multiple medium- or small-sized nuclear reactors, Vergara said. Reactors of less than 700 megawatts are considered medium-sized, and less than 300 megawatts are considered small. Engineers, however, have sometimes overlooked or underestimated external hazards, as was the case with Japan's Kashiwazaki-Kariwa 7,965-megawatt nuclear power plant, the world's biggest, which was walloped by a magnitude-6.6 earthquake in July 2007.

The earthquake "very significantly exceeded" the level of seismic activity for which the plant was designed. While the plants shut down as planned, some radioactive water spilled into the ocean, although the level wasn't considered dangerous. Nuclear power plants, which are often located near the coastline because of the large amounts of water required for operation, are also at risk to being damaged by ocean swells and tsunamis.

After the devastating December 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami, which killed almost a quarter of a million people and caused widespread damage, two power units at the the Kalpakkam nuclear power plant in India were hit by giant waves. Plant designers had never planned for a tsunami, but did take cyclone storm surges into account, so the Kalpakkam plants performed well under duress, an IAEA report stated. "With an adequate design basis and proper planning, the hazard of a tsunami won't preclude you from building a power plant on the coast," Godoy said.

*Source: [http://online.wsj.com/article/BT-CO-20100310-714871.html?mod=WSJ\\_World\\_MIDDLEHeadlinesAmericas](http://online.wsj.com/article/BT-CO-20100310-714871.html?mod=WSJ_World_MIDDLEHeadlinesAmericas)*

## **India, US Iron out Key Differences over Reprocessing**

India and US have bridged key differences towards finalising a pact on the arrangements and procedures for reprocessing US-origin spent fuel. The text, sources said, was almost sealed at expert-level talks last week and the negotiations are practically over with no more meetings likely to be held now. It is, however, learnt that the text agreed between the negotiating teams still has to obtain formal approval of the political leadership in both countries. The text will have to be cleared by the Cabinet Committee on Security here while Washington too will need to play it back to the White House.

Given that each phase of the talks were being closely monitored by top officials in respective governments, sources said the two sides were hopeful of an early closure to the negotiations. With Prime Minister Manmohan Singh slated to visit the US next month for the Nuclear Security Summit, the government is keen that this last step of the Indo-US civil nuclear initiative be completed in time.

Once done, the agreement will allow India to reprocess US-origin spent fuel for its civilian programme and, more importantly, it will serve as a

template for other foreign-origin spent fuel too. Under the Indo-US 123 agreement, US had agreed to grant India the right to reprocess but it was stipulated that this could only be operationalised after a bilateral agreement on arrangements and procedures for reprocessing such fuel had been reached. These negotiations were aimed at finalising this pact.

To ensure that political exigencies do not force US to hold back on this commitment later, India had also won an assurance to conclude the negotiations within one year of starting the talks. The conversation started last July and there was hope that these would be concluded by last November itself when the PM travelled to Washington on a state visit. However, both sides got stuck on tricky issues with US officials insisting that India give the non-proliferation assurances as enshrined in the US Atomic Energy Act. New Delhi, on its part, made it clear that it would not step beyond the template of assurances enshrined in the 123 agreement, which itself had been arrived at after tough negotiations.

While this was resolved subsequently by way of introducing language acceptable to both sides, the other issue was that of the termination clause. This appears to have been more tricky than expected but, sources said, a way forward has been achieved in the meeting held in India last week.

The talks were led by R B Grover of the Department of Atomic Energy on the Indian side while the US delegation was led by Richard Stratford, the non-proliferation and disarmament expert in the State Department. The third issue pertained to the number of fuel storage and reprocessing facilities as well as their security. It may be noted that the understanding reached during the 123 negotiations was that India will set up a dedicated reprocessing facility for US and other foreign-origin fuel under IAEA safeguards. During these negotiations, India proposed that it be allowed to set up not just one but multiple facilities. The US, sources said, does seem to have accepted this proposal. Given that the government is pushing for a quick passage of the Civil Nuclear Liabilities Bill in this session, indications are that all key government processes linked with the nuclear deal will be concluded soon, as prioritised by the PM himself.

Source:<http://www.expressindia.com/latest-news/India-US-iron-out-key-differences-over-reprocessing/588605/>

### Contribute Articles

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Manuscripts submitted for the consideration of the Indian Pugwash Society should be original contributions and should not have been submitted for consideration anywhere else. Please confirm to the guidelines prescribed in the website before submitting the manuscript for consideration.

Details are available at: [http://www.pugwashindia.org/contribute\\_articles.asp](http://www.pugwashindia.org/contribute_articles.asp)

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