

U.S.-Russia Initiative to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism

Российско-Американская инициатива по предотвращению ядерного терроризма

June-August 2016 Newsletter Информационный бюллетень за июнь-август 2016.



ИСКРАН

NEWS:

William Tobey and Matthew Bunn Look Beyond Nuclear Security Summits

Director of the U.S.-Russia Initiative to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism William Tobey [takes stock](#) of the past Nuclear Security Summits in a new policy brief published by the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. Although the nuclear security summits were a bold, innovative approach to the urgent problem of preventing nuclear terrorism—and generated substantial achievements—similar gatherings are unlikely to take place in the future because the circumstances that led to the meetings were unique, according to the brief, entitled “Descending From the Summits.” In Tobey’s view, such innovations of the past summits, as gift baskets and scenario-based discussions by leaders will continue to be useful tools. The brief recommends that the United States and Russia reinvigorate joint efforts and that states with nuclear weapons share best security practices. The IPNT director also suggests that the enduring nuclear security contact group be used to review progress and manage synergies between institutions responsible for carrying on the work of the summits. Tobey’s colleague and Harvard Kennedy School professor Matthew Bunn, who participates in the U.S.-Russia Initiative to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism, has also [offered](#) recommendations how to build upon legacy of the nuclear security summits in the summer 2016 issue of the Belfer Center’s newsletter. “The U.S. government and other interested states need to push hard to keep high-level attention focused on continuous improvement in nuclear security and on combating complacency,” according to Bunn.



Bunn Tobey

Russian Members of Elbe Group Weigh in on U.S.-Russian Security Relationship

Russian members of the Elbe Group General Anatoly Kulikov and General Valentin Korabelnikov have participated in a video conference with Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs’ senior fellow Dr. James Miller to discuss his forthcoming paper on how emerging technologies are driving the US-Russia security relationship. In addition to offering feedback on the preliminary draft of the paper, the Russian participants of the conference also called for U.S. and Russia to start cooperating in earnest against the Islamic State terrorist organization.



Kulikov Korabelnikov Miller

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Graham Allison on Why ISIS Fears Israel

Director of the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs Graham Allison has written a [commentary](#) for *National Interest* on how the United States and other countries can learn from



Israel when it comes to dealing with ISIS. Rather than try to destroy this terrorist organization, the Jewish state has chosen to deter it. “Adopting a page from the playbook the United States used to defeat revolutionary Soviet-led communism in the Cold War, Israel is preventing ISIS attacks through a strategy of patient, vigilant deterrence,” Prof. Allison writes in the August 8 op-ed. “It is not too late to begin a debate about how lessons learned by Israel’s security community can enrich America’s conceptual arsenal for countering terrorism in what promises to be a very long war,” he writes. Prof. Allison participates in the work of the U.S.-Russia Initiative to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism.

Indonesia Becomes HEU-Free

The U.S. Department of Energy’s National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) and Indonesian government agencies have completed a collaborative effort to down-blend Indonesia’s stocks of highly enriched uranium to low enriched uranium. With the completion of this operation, Indonesia becomes the 30th country plus Taiwan to be declared free of HEU, the NNSA [reported](#) on August 29.

Bunn and Samore Call for Abandoning the MOX Fuel Facility

HKS Professor Matthew Bunn and Belfer Center’s Executive Director for Research Gary Samore have [published](#) an op-ed in *The Hill*, in which they call for the cancellation of the completion of the MOX fuel plant in South Carolina. The Obama administration has attempted to discontinue construction of the facility, but the U.S. Congress has blocked these attempts. “It is time to call a halt to the MOX effort. Congress should obey the first law of holes: when you are in one, stop digging,” Bunn and Samore write in a July 18 op-ed. The authors acknowledge that cancellation of the MOX plant would require further modification of the U.S.-Russian Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement, which was signed in 2000 and amended in 2010. Russia has so far showed no interest in such modification, but Samore and Bunn hope that “Hard-headed negotiations might lead Russia to agree” to modifications. “Whatever we do with this plutonium in the long term, we should move to put it under international monitoring, and commit never again to use it in weapons, challenging Russia to do likewise,” according to Samore and Bunn. Both authors participate in the work of the U.S.-Russia Initiative to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism.



Samore

Attempted Coup in Turkey Raises Questions about Security of U.S. Nukes There

The attempted coup in Turkey has raised questions about security of some 50 U.S. nuclear weapons stationed at this country’s Incirlik Air Force Base. The base was reportedly blocked during the July 16 events as the Turkish government claimed that the coup plotters were based at

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Incirlik and flew sorties from there. “Whether the US could have maintained control of the weapons (at Incirlik) in the event of a protracted civil conflict in Turkey is an unanswerable question,” according to authors of a [report](#) published by the Stimson Center on August 15. According to U.S. expert Amy Woolf, however even if someone gained access to the nuclear storage at Incirlik, it would be difficult to move the B61 nuclear bombs without proper equipment. “Most experts agree that the weapons at Incirlik are not, at this time, vulnerable to theft or loss of control,” [according](#) to Woolf.

Russia’s New Program for Management of Spent Fuel

Russia has developed a new program for management of used nuclear fuel. The 2016-2020 program, which has been crafted by Rosatom’s Research Institute for Nuclear Power Plant Operation, provides for accumulation of fuel the Mayak Production Association in Ozersk and Mining and Chemical Combine (MCC) at Zheleznogorsk for reprocessing, World Nuclear News [reported](#) on August 26.

Chemical-Metallurgical Plant to Be Shut Down

A Rosatom plans to shut down the Chemical-Metallurgical Plant of the Siberian Chemical Combine in 2017, a plant representative [told](#) Nuclear.ru on August 4. The plant was established in 1961 to produce uranium and plutonium components for nuclear weapons, according to International Panel on Fissile Materials (IPFM). More recently, it has been involved in reprocessing HEU.

Clandestine GAO Team Manages to Buy Components for Dirty Bomb

The U.S. Congress’ Government Accountability Office has set up a clandestine group to ascertain whether components of a dirty bomb can be ‘legally’ obtained in the United States. The group, which was formed in April 2014 and included fewer than 10 people, discovered that getting a license and then ordering enough materials to make a dirty bomb was “strikingly simple,” according to Washington Post’s [account](#) of the secret effort. “GAO’s covert testing of NRC requirements showed them to be effective in two out of our three cases; in a third case, GAO was able to obtain a license and secure commitments to purchase.... a quantity of a radioactive material considered attractive for use in a “dirty bomb,” according to GAO’s own July 2016 [report](#).

Ukraine’s NPPs Host Anti-Terrorism Exercise

Ukraine’s Rivnenskaya nuclear power plant (NPP) hosted an anti-terrorism exercise by the country’s National Guard and Security Service on July 29. The exercise featured simulation of blocking and eliminating groups of saboteurs, according to a statement posted on the web site of the national NPP operator, Energoatom August 1. The country’s Khmelnytsky nuclear power plant has hosted an anti-terror exercise this past summer. The full-scale exercise of response

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teams and forces took place on May 31-June 2 and was designed to practice prevention, response, protection, and assistance measures, according to Energoatom.

FSB General To Become Advisor at Rosatom

Former director of the Russian Federal Security Service's economic security department Yuri Yakovlev is set to become first advisor to the director general of Rosatom and then his deputy, Kommersant [reported](#) on August 5. General Yakovlev will supervise the military component of this corporation's activities, a Rosatom official told Kommersant.

Russia Supplies HEU to A German Reactor

Russia has officially confirmed that it is supplying HEU for the fuel of the FRM-II research reactor, operated by the Technical University of Munich in Germany, according to a July 18 report [posted](#) in the blog of the International Panel on Fissile Materials. Information about the supplies can be found in the 2015 annual [report](#) by Rosatom's company TVEL. The 2015 report also confirms that production of uranium for export was one of the reasons Rosatom has [reopened the HEU production line](#) at the Electrochemical Plant in Zheleznogorsk, according to IPFM.

Two Dozen Convicts and Suspects in Georgian Jails for Nuclear Smuggling

Prisons in the Republic of Georgia are holding 24 individuals either convicted of or charged with smuggling radioactive materials. Eighteen of them are Georgian citizens, five are Armenian and one is Russian, Eurasianet [reported](#) on July 8, citing Georgian authorities.

National Guard Established to Guard Nuclear Facilities

Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a law in July to establish a National Guard. According to the law, the new force will be charged with enforcing emergency-situation regimes, combatting terrorism, and protecting state facilities. The new force, which has been established on the basis of the Interior Ministry's troops and its commando units, will guard Russia's civilian nuclear facilities.

U.S. Researchers Develop Methods to Detect Fake Nukes, Real HEU

U.S. researchers are busy developing a 'physical cryptography' that would improve governments' capabilities to conduct secure and accurate accounting of other countries' nuclear arsenals, [according](#) to MIT News. The method, which is being developed by a team led by R. Scott Kemp in MIT's Department of Nuclear Science and Engineering, would allow the government to detect the replacement of plutonium parts of a nuclear weapon. "It is easier to make a replacement nuclear weapon from scratch than to try to pass off a fake object as a weapon," Dr. Kemp said of the method, which involves nuclear resonance fluorescence. In a separate project, two researchers of the Clemson University's College of Engineering and Science in South Carolina

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are working to create a sensor that would pick up signatures of tributyl phosphate, a solvent used to enrich uranium, including for use in a nuclear weapon. Mark Blenner and Sapna Sarupria hope to eventually create a sensor that could be deployed remotely, possibly disguised as a leaf, or attached to a uniform, [according](#) to Clemson University.

NNSA Delegation Visits Belarus

A delegation of the National Nuclear Security Administration has visited the head office of Belarus' State Customs Committee for talks on the supply of radiation detection equipment. Five more border checkpoints in Belarus might be equipped with radiation detectors in 2017, BelTa [reported](#) on July 14.

Radiation Monitors Destroyed in Course of Conflict in Donbass

Officials at NNSA's Nuclear Smuggling Detection and Deterrence (NSDD) have noted that the conflict between the Ukrainian government and separatist groups has led to the destruction of 29 radiation portal monitors. NSDD officials do not know whether those could be fixed or replaced. To mitigate this challenge, NSDD plans to deploy additional radiation detection equipment at key locations outside the conflict area, according to a June 17 [report](#) by GAO.

Siegfried Hecker's New Book on U.S.-Russian Lab-to-Lab Cooperation

Siegfried Hecker, a Stanford professor and former director of the Los Alamos weapons lab in New Mexico, has edited a new book, in which he details U.S.-Russian lab-to-lab nuclear cooperation. Entitled "Doomed to Cooperate" and released this summer the book tells the story of the collaboration through the words of American and Russian scientists. It was this cooperation among the scientists that allowed the two former superpower enemies to "get past the sensitivity barriers" and make "the world a safer place," Hecker [told](#) Stanford News. "We can only guess how many catastrophes were avoided by the remarkable cooperation between dedicated scientists, military, and other government officials in the United States and Russia to prevent nuclear weapons and materials from falling into dangerous hands in the years following the Cold War," ex-U.S. Senator Sam Nunn [said](#) of the U.S.-Russian lab-to-lab nuclear cooperation, which Dr. Hecker helped to initiate. Dr. Hecker participates in the work of the U.S.-Russia Initiative to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism.



NNSA Works to Improve Detection of Nuclear Smuggling

The National Nuclear Security Administration is working on developing a more comprehensive plan for its nuclear smuggling detection and deterrence program, with the aim of finishing it this year, NNSA Administrator Frank Klotz [said](#) in a response to a draft Government Accountability Office report. NNSA's Nuclear Smuggling Detection and Deterrence cannot measure its progress toward completing key activities and achieving goals, according to a June 17th report by GAO.

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Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism Turns 10

Russian President Vladimir Putin has [sent](#) his greetings to the participants of a high level meeting timed for the tenth anniversary of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. In his message to the participants of the June 15-16 meeting in The Hague, the Russian leader noted the need “to guarantee the safe keeping of nuclear materials, prevent their illegal circulation and protect them from encroachments by terrorists.” GICNT Co-Chairs were represented at the event by Ms. Rose Gottemoeller, Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and Nonproliferation of the United States Department of State, and

Mr. Mikhail Ulyanov, Director of the Department for Non-Proliferation and Arms Control of the Russian Federation Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Under the leadership of Russia and the United States, GICNT has grown to include 86 partner nations and five official observer organizations, held over 80 multilateral activities, and produced seven important foundational guidelines documents, according to a statement [posted](#) on the



U.S. State Department’s website on June 16. Former Belfer Center fellow Tytti Erästö has used the anniversary to co-author a report that takes stock of GICNT. Entitled “Ten Years of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism,” the report places the partnership in the broader international nuclear security framework, and describes its membership, operational structure, and evolution over the years, according to Erästö’s June 14 [post](#) in the Nuclear Security Matters blog.

Russian Organization Trains for Spent Fuel Emergency

SevRAO, Rosatom’s nuclear waste handler in Northwest Russia, has staged an exercise at Andreeva Bay to simulate an emergency situation, in which a helicopter careens out of control, striking a truck carrying casks of spent nuclear fuel. The purpose of the June exercise at Andreeva Bay was to improve the cooperation of these various agencies in dealing with medical crises, rescue operations, and other emergencies that could occur in the course of transporting spent nuclear fuel assemblies, [according](#) to Bellona.

Japanese Nuclear Materials Arrive in U.S.

Some 331 kilograms of plutonium from Japan arrived on June 6th at a South Carolina nuclear site. The shipment arrived despite objections from South Carolina’s Gov. Nikki Haley to her state being used as storage for such materials, Associated Press [reported](#). The plutonium went to the U.S. Department of Energy’s Savannah River Site near Aiken, S.C, according to a June 6 [statement](#) by NNSA. Japan has also shipped HEU, which has been stored at a facility in Tokai-Mura along with plutonium, to the U.S. and that material was to have been placed at Y-12 National Security Complex near Oak Ridge, Tennessee, according to NNSA. Pr. Matthew Bunn

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of the Harvard Kennedy School has earlier [put](#) the quantity of HEU stored at FCA art 214.5 kilogram, noting that “for terrorists, this would be some of the best material that exists in any non-nuclear-weapon state. “

Luxembourg Forum Experts on ISIS’s WMD Threat

Tension between Russia and the West may be distracting them from cooperating to prevent a dirty bomb terrorist attack, Reuters reported, citing participants of an event organized by the Luxembourg Forum on Preventing Nuclear Catastrophe in June 2016. Head of the forum and wealthy businessman Moshe Kantor noted chemical weapons attacks carried out by Islamic State in Iraq, their stated desire to carry out more attacks in Europe, and evidence that militants linked to the attacks in Paris had also been studying a Belgian nuclear power plant. “This, combined with poor levels of security at a host of nuclear research centers in the former Soviet Union means the threat of a possible ‘dirty-bomb’ attack on a Western capital is high,” Kantor was [quoted](#) by Reuters as saying in June. Retired Russian general Vladimir Dvorkin, who participates in the forum and works as a senior researcher at the Center for International Security at the Russian Academy of Sciences' Institute of World Economy and International Relations, is also concerned about ISIS’ interest in WMDs. “There is a lot of illegal activity, trafficking in illegal natural material...so [ISIS] could either pull off a purchase for a significant amount of money or intercept illegal trafficking. Plus, they seem to have enough money to recruit scientists to build a rudimentary nuclear device. Not a nuclear warhead, but an explosive nuclear device; it may, in fact, only weigh a few tons but it's still something you could assemble close to an urban area, or on a vessel that could then be brought to U.S. or European shores,” Gen. Dvorkin [told](#) RFE/RL. Gen. Dvorkin participates in the work of the U.S.-Russia Initiative to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism.

Security Firm that Employed Florida Shooter Guards Nuclear Sites

Omar Mateen, who killed 49 people in a gay nightclub in Florida in June, pledging allegiance to the Islamic State group, has worked as a guard for G4S, which [says](#) it provides security at many U.S. nuclear sites. Mateen has not been employed at a nuclear site, but his GF3 employment highlights potential vulnerabilities at the nation's nuclear sites, according to U.S. News and World Today. “We've been concerned about the insider threat for quite some time, but the issue of people becoming radicalized adds a new dimension,” William Tobey, a deputy administrator at the National Nuclear Security Administration from 2006 to 2009 and a senior fellow at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, told the newspaper in relation to the revelations about Mateen.

U.S. State Department on Russia’s Counter-Terrorism Efforts

The U.S. State Department’s [report](#) on terrorism in 2015 notes that “the Russian government has expressed a willingness to work with the United States and multilaterally on counterterrorism issues.” However, some of the bilateral counter-terrorism activities had to be suspended in the wake of what the U.S. agency termed as “attempted annexation” of Crimea.

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Country Report on Terrorism-2015, notes that the number of terrorist crimes registered in Russia increased from 1127 in 2014 to 1531 in 2015, citing statistics by the Russian General Prosecutor's Office. The report also notes that the Russian government estimated 2,900 Russian citizens were fighting with ISIL in Syria and Iraq as late 2015. Russian courts convicted at least 80 individuals for fighting with ISIL or for the "opposition" against the Syrian government in 2015, according to the report.

NOTABLE STATEMENTS ON NUCLEAR TERRORISM AND NUCLEAR SECURITY:

- Laura Holgate, the new U.S. Representative to the IAEA: "The U.S. and Russia share many non-proliferation goals... I am not going to accept (the) premise of Nunn-Lugar being over... we are very sad that Russia had chosen to truncate the good work that we were doing there... That having been said, we are still finding ways to work together in third countries to address the challenge of nuclear material security — in Central Asia, Eastern Europe, some other countries where Russia had provided material or where Russia has technology and equipment that is suited to managing those concerns... I hope we can continue to work appropriately on it." (Russia Direct, August 24th, 2016)
- India's Deputy Permanent Representative at UN Tanmaya Lal: "We are fully cognizant of the catastrophic dangers that the transfer of weapons of mass destruction to non-state actors and terrorists could entail." (Indo-Asian News Service, August 24, 2016)
- Former American senator Richard Lugar: "Today, of course, we have Russians who do not want to work with us on nuclear and chemical arms control... I went over to Russia in summer 2012 to visit the foreign office. They were amenable to try and think of how the timeline might be extended, but over at the war office they were not interested. They really wanted the U.S. to wrap things up and move on, and there was a lack of appreciation for our work together." (Nukes of Hazard, August 17, 2016)
- Former speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Newt Gingrich: "The worst-case scenario is losing an American city to terrorists armed with weapons of mass destruction. Instead of losing 3,000 people in one morning, we could lose more than 300,000. Instead of losing two great buildings, we could lose block after block after block to a nuclear event," said. (Huffington Post, July 20, 2016)
- U.S. Congressman Bennie G. Thompson: "Radiological and nuclear terrorism remains a threat to our nation's security." (CONGDP, July 15, 2016).
- U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration head Frank Klotz: "Countries such as Russia, China, and North Korea are now modernizing, expanding, and diversifying their nuclear arsenals. State and non-state actors continue to pursue nuclear and radiological capabilities... This environment requires a credible deterrent appropriate for advanced military competitors, regional WMD states, and non-state terrorist networks." (CONGDP, July 14, 2016).
- Chair of Russian Senate's international affairs committee Konstantin Kosachev: "All (of West's) disagreements with Russia on Ukraine would appear not serious if terrorists, God forbid, seize power in a country that possesses weapons of mass destruction. This would be a

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nightmarish scenario for the entire world and to prevent it we need to cooperate on countering terrorism and proliferation of nuclear weapons.” (Lenta.ru, July 12, 2016)

- Former U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry: “It’s imperative for both the U.S. and Russian governments to find a way to repair this bad relationship. I think it would be a good idea for the U.S. and Russia to set up a joint working group to reduce the danger of nuclear terrorism.” (Rossiyskaya Gazeta, July 11, 2016)
- U.S. Congressman Duncan Hunter: “We’re at a threshold of having nuclear material available worldwide” that could find its way into the hands of terrorists who are willing to use it. (FCW.com, July 6, 2016)
- Russia’s ex-ambassador to U.S. Vladimir Lukin: “There are some problems of a cybernetic nature; [that is] when information about the orders given to use (nuclear) weapons could be deliberately corrupted.” (Interfax, June 8, 2016).
- U.S. President Barack Obama: “Nuclear weapons, as in North Korea, and the specter of nuclear terrorism still threaten us all.” (Whitehouse.gov, June 2, 2016).
- The 2016 edition of the U.S. Department of Defense’s Nuclear Matters Handbook: “The goal of preventing and responding to the loss of control of a nation-state nuclear weapon or to a nuclear terrorist attack is best accomplished through an integrated, whole-of-government approach and close cooperation and collaboration with international partners.” (Office of the Deputy Assistant of Defense for Nuclear Matters, 2016).

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- October 19-20, 2016. ATOMEX 2016 International Forum and Exhibition to take place in Moscow.
- November 25, 2016. 25th anniversary of the Nunn-Lugar bill passing the U.S. Senate.
- December 12, 2016. 25th anniversary of President George WH Bush signing the Nunn-Lugar bill into law.
- December 25, 2016. 25th anniversary of the dissolution of USSR.
- 2016. Regional Nuclear Security Training Center to open in Kazakhstan.
- 2016. Russian state nuclear corporation Rosatom plans to complete a program being carried out with the United States to retrieve spent nuclear fuel.
- September 2017. IAEA fuel bank to open in Kazakhstan.

CALL FOR PAPERS, ARTICLES AND COMMENTARY:

[The U.S.-Russia Initiative to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism \(IPNT\)](#) solicits papers, articles and commentary on nuclear terrorism and nuclear security from readers for inclusion in the newsletter and publication on the Initiative’s web site. Contact IPNT Assistant Director Simon Saradzhyan at (phone) +1-617-496-8228, (fax) +1-617-495-8963, or simon_saradzhyan@hks.harvard.edu.

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The Working Group of the U.S.-Russia Initiative to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism includes the following institutions:

В рабочей группе по осуществлению Американо-Российской инициативы по предотвращению ядерного терроризма состоят следующие организации:

- *Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University [W. Tobey, william_tobey@hks.harvard.edu, 1- 617-496-0518]*

- **Белферовский центр науки и международных отношений** Института государственного управления имени Джона Ф. Кеннеди Гарвардского университета. [Уильям Тоби, william_tobey@hks.harvard.edu, 1- 617-496-0518]

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