

U.S.-Russia Initiative to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism

Американо-Российская инициатива по предотвращению ядерного терроризма

June – July 2011 Newsletter

Информационный бюллетень за июнь – июль 2011 года



ИСКРАН

NEWS:

U.S. and Russian Forces to Stage a Nuclear Terrorism Drill

U.S. and Russian forces will hold “Crimson Rider,” a nuclear terrorism prevention exercise, at the U.S. Army’s Camp Guernsey in Wyoming in early August. The drill scenario, which is organized within the framework of the U.S.-Russian bilateral working group for military cooperation, will have U.S. and Russian teams counter the proliferation of terrorist improved explosive devices (IEDs) and repel a terrorist attack on a military vehicle carrying nuclear warheads. Member of the U.S.-Russia Initiative to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism (IPNT) and deputy director of the Institute for the U.S. and Canadian Studies (ISKRAN) Pavel Zolotarev said of the drill: “Certainly, this does not mean that there actually is the threat of anyone capable of seizing a nuclear shell either in Russia or the U.S. But this scenario cannot be ruled out in other nuclear or threshold states, particularly those affected by internal instability. In this case, reciprocal and decisive action on the part of the rest of the nuclear club is needed,” RIA-Novosti reported.

Olli Heinonen on Need for Urgent Action to Stem Proliferation

Olli Heinonen, Belfer Center senior fellow and IPNT member, has written a number of articles on the dynamics of nuclear proliferation threats and suggested ways of reducing them.

In a July 20, 2011 [entry](#), “Iran ramping up uranium enrichment,” on the Belfer Center’s Power and Policy Blog, Heinonen notes Iran’s recent announcement of installing additional centrifuges



with higher capacity is another sign that Iran is nearing production of weapons-grade material: “The current known Iranian enrichment program is practically now tuned to produce 20 % enriched uranium. With 20% enriched uranium, 90% of the effort required to produce weapons-grade uranium would have been achieved,” he wrote.

In an [article](#) published in the July 2011 issue of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, “A Multinational Fuel Consortium: Obstacles, Options, and Ways Forward,” Heinonen warns that several states could be a political decision away from acquiring nuclear weapons capability unless decisive actions are taken immediately.

In “North Korea’s Nuclear Enrichment: Capabilities and Consequences,” an [op-ed](#) published by North.org on June 22, 2011, Heinonen says that full disclosure of North Korea’s “historical and current nuclear activities will be necessary under any new agreement negotiated, alongside robust inspection rights for the IAEA.”

U.S. Nuclear Security Experts Oppose Cuts in Threat Reduction Budget

A group of prominent nuclear security experts have urged the U.S. Senate to reject a House of Representatives Appropriations Committee bill that would cut funding for the Global Threat

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Reduction Initiative by \$120 million for fiscal year 2012. The Fissile Materials Working Group (FMWG), said the initiative helps reduce the threat of global terrorism and that its budget should be left intact. Matthew Bunn, Associate Professor of Public Policy, IPNT member, and FMWG Steering Committee member, noted in an interview that funding for this program directly affects the pace at which highly enriched uranium (HEU) can be removed from vulnerable sites.



Joint Threat Assessment of Nuclear Terrorism Presented

Researchers from the [Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs](#) at Harvard Kennedy School and [The Institute for U.S. and Canadian Studies](#) (ISKRAN) of the Russian Academy of Sciences have presented what is the first joint assessment of the global threat of nuclear terrorism by experts from the world's two leading nuclear powers. Presentations of the [Joint Threat Assessment](#), which was undertaken under the aegis of IPNT and won the endorsement of the U.S.-Russian "Elbe Group" of senior retired military commanders and intelligence officials, took place in Moscow on June 26 and Vienna on July 20.

Pavel S. Zolotarev, a retired army major general who led the ISKRAN team of JTA authors, told the Moscow audience that "the killing of (Osama) Bin Ladin has not reduced concerns. It is obvious that the terrorists have set this goal. It should also be borne in mind that leaders of terrorist organizations are creating an ideological basis to justify mass casualties in the event of weapons of mass destruction being used," he was quoted by Interfax as saying.

Former Russian Interior Minister and senior member of the Elbe Group Army General Anatoliy Kulikov told the same audience that "Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups are trying to obtain access to military nuclear technology." "It is not a secret for anyone that al-Qaeda had close ties both with North Caucasus terrorist formations," he noted.

Zolotarev and William Tobey, IPNT director and Belfer Center senior fellow, also presented the bilingual report at IAEA's headquarters in Vienna on July 8. The presentation, which was attended by representatives of 18 missions, was followed by a discussion. Ambassador Glyn

Davies—who serves as the Permanent Representative of the United States to IAEA—moderated the discussion.



Zolotarev



Kulikov



Tobey

The International Science and Technology Center in Moscow to Operate Until 2015

The governing board of the International Science and Technology Center voted on June 28 to allow the Moscow-based facility to stay open until 2015, GSN reported. The center, which aims to provide Russian WMS scientists the opportunity to redirect their talents to peaceful activities, was opened in 1994. Russian President Dmitry Medvedev issued a decree last year that stated the Russian government's intention to withdraw from the U.S. led program, but stayed short of announcing the closure of the [center](#).

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U.S., Russia Reaffirm Plan to Dispose 17,000 Bombs-Worth of Plutonium

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov exchanged diplomatic notes in Washington D.C. on July 13 to bring the amended Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement between the two countries into force. The amended agreement directs each side to dispose of no less than 34 metric tons of surplus weapon-grade plutonium, in total enough material to create 17,000 nuclear weapons. The U.S. will provide Russia with \$400 million for the program and Russia will fund the balance of the project, which is estimated to cost some \$3 billion, according to a press release issued by the National Nuclear Security



Lavrov

Administration (NNSA) on July 13. Lavrov and Clinton also signed what a Russian diplomat described as a document that “deals with minimizing the risks of radioactive contamination of the environment.” Lavrov met with Clinton and President Obama during his July 12-13 visit to Washington.



Clinton

Allison and Kokoshin Warn of Nuclear Terrorism Threat

The Belfer Center has published a June 2011 [paper](#) by IPNT member and former Deputy Defense Minister of Russia Andrei Kokoshin, “Ensuring Strategic Stability in the Past and Present: Theoretical and Applied Questions.” Kokoshin warns there is a “high probability that extremist political organizations which use political methods in their struggle will acquire nuclear weapons, as evidenced by the transition that these organizations have made to the ‘mega-terrorism’ instantiated by the 9/11 attacks on the United States.” Belfer Center director and



Kokoshin

IPNT member Graham Allison concurs with Kokoshin’s assessment. In the Foreword to Kokoshin’s paper, Allison writes: “The global nuclear order is reaching a tipping point. Several trends are advancing along crooked paths, each undermining this order. These trends (include)... terrorist groups’ enduring aspirations to acquire nuclear weapons.”



Allison

Kevin Ryan Discusses Game-Changing Threat

Belfer Center Executive Director and IPNT member Kevin Ryan has published a [paper](#), “Preventing the Unthinkable,” in the June 2011 issue of Journal of International Security Affairs. The paper discusses “the one game-changing threat that exists in the world” – a nuclear attack. The two best opportunities for the U.S. and Russia to cooperate against the threat of nuclear attack are in creating missile defense and preventing nuclear terrorism, he wrote.



U.S. National Strategy for Counterterrorism Highlights Nuclear Terrorism Threat

The U.S. National Strategy for Counterterrorism, released by the White House in June 2011, notes efforts of terrorist organizations to acquire weapons of mass destruction and calls for international cooperation to “deter WMD theft, smuggling, and terrorist use.” “The danger of

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nuclear terrorism is the greatest threat to global security. Terrorist organizations, including al-Qaeda, have engaged in efforts to develop and acquire weapons of mass destruction—and if successful, they are likely to use them,” the [document](#) warns.

20 Million Euros Worth of U-235 Intercepted in Moldova

Moldovan police arrested six members of an international organized crime ring that specializes in the smuggling of radioactive materials after finding a container with uranium-235 in their possession on June 27. The Moldovan Interior Ministry’s chief investigator Vitaly Brichak would not identify the weight or specify level of enrichment, but estimated the uranium, which was seized as a result of a [sting operation](#), is worth 20 million euros on the black market. Members of the ring include citizens of Moldova, a resident of Moldova’s breakaway republic of Transnistria, and a Russian citizen, he said.

Obama Extends Program to Secure Russian Fissile Materials

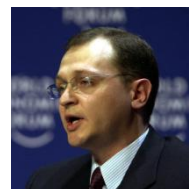
President Obama has ordered a one-year extension of the U.S. national emergency first declared in 2000 over Russian atomic material suitable for use in nuclear weapons, GSN reported on June 20. “It remains a major national security goal of the United States to ensure that fissile material removed from Russian nuclear weapons pursuant to various arms control and disarmament agreements is dedicated to peaceful uses. The accumulation of a large volume of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States,” Obama said.

Chu, Kiriyenko Sign an Agreement, Lab Directors Meet 1st Time Since 2004

U.S. Secretary of Energy Steven Chu signed an agreement with Rosatom General Director Sergey Kiriyenko during his visit to Moscow on June 9 which builds on past nuclear cooperation. The new agreement includes support for national and international efforts on nonproliferation of nuclear weapons, advancing research efforts, and the development of a legal framework to expand joint activities between the two countries on nuclear research, Energy.gov reported. Shortly before Chu’s visit to Moscow, the NNSA and Rosatom announced the successful completion of the first meeting of the U.S. and Russian laboratory directors since 2004.



Chu



Kiriyenko

NOTABLE STATEMENTS ON NUCLEAR TERRORISM:

- Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov: “We believe that the global conventions dedicated to the prevention of acts of nuclear terrorism, and the UN Security Council resolutions enjoining countries to prevent nuclear materials from getting into the hands of non-state actors create a solid foundation for our cooperation. Of course, all this must be coupled with adherence to the NPT and with the need for ratification of the CTBT by all states and the

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commencement of negotiations on banning the production of fissile materials.” (States News Service, July 23, 2011).

- U.S. Congressman Bill Pascrell: “Today... we know that terror groups like al-Qaeda are still out there, probing and plotting attacks against Americans and they continue to be committed to obtaining nuclear and biological weapons.” (GSN, June 24, 2011).
- Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Mike Mullen: “Those things that I fear in the future are the proliferation of [nuclear] technology, and it’s the opportunity and the potential that it could fall into the hands of terrorists.” (*Washington Post*, June 16, 2011).
- U.S. Congressman Peter Visclosky: [Cuts to NNSA budget] “reduces our ability to counter the most serious threats confronting our national security and that’s the threats of nuclear terrorism.” (GSN, June 14, 2011).
- U.S. Senator Carl Levin: “The risk of a terrorist organization getting their hands on and detonating an improvised nuclear device or other weapon of mass destruction remains one of the gravest possible threats to the United States.” (GSN, June 9, 2011).

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- August 2011. U.S.-Russian nuclear security drill “Crimson Ranger.”
- August 6, 2011. Anniversary of Hiroshima.
- August 9, 2011. Anniversary of Nagasaki.
- August 29, 2011. International Day Against Nuclear Tests and 20th anniversary of the closure of Semipalatinsk, main Soviet nuclear test site.
- September 11, 2011. 10th anniversary of attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon.
- September 12-16, 2011. IAEA board of governors meeting.
- September 19-23, 2011. IAEA general conference.
- October 11-12, 2011. 25th Anniversary of Reykjavik Summit between President Reagan and Gorbachev on nuclear arms reductions.
- November 3-4, 2011. Presidents Medvedev and Obama attend G-8 and G-20 in Cannes, France.
- November 12-13, 2011. Presidents Medvedev and Obama attend the APEC summit in Honolulu.
- November 17-18, 2011. IAEA board of governors meeting.
- December 12, 2011. 20th anniversary of Nunn-Lugar program.
- February 5, 2012. 1st anniversary of New START entering into force.
- April 8, 2012. 2nd anniversary of signing New START.
- May 24, 2012. 10th anniversary of the signing of SORT.
- May 2012. NATO summit in Chicago.
- May 2012. G-8 and G-20 summit in Chicago.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The U.S.-Russia Initiative to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism (IPNT) solicits papers, articles and commentary from readers for inclusion in the newsletter and publication on the Initiative's web site. Contact Belfer Center fellow Simon Saradzhyan at (phone) +1-617-496-8228, (fax) +1-617-495-8963, or simon_saradzhyan@hks.harvard.edu.

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:

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- *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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