

## **A digest of useful news from U.S.-Russia Initiative to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism for the week of August 13-20, 2010**

### **I. U.S. and Russia priorities for the bilateral agenda.**

#### **Nuclear security agenda:**

- No significant developments.

#### **Iran nuclear issues:**

- The physical launch of the Bushehr nuclear reactor in Iran is set for August 21. Technicians will move tons of low-enriched uranium (LEU) fuel from a storage site into the reactor, the first of three steps in starting it up.
  - Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Bushehr “is a most important anchor which keeps Iran within the regime of nonproliferation.” He said, “It is fully protected from any proliferation risks whatsoever. This idea is shared by all the leaders of Western countries.” (Jerusalem Post, 8/20/10)
  - Lavrov added, “I would advise those who consider it the wrong signal to consult classics, such as George Bush, the former U.S. president, who called the Bushehr project a ‘paragon’ for cooperation with Iran, including cooperation in the nuclear industry.” (CNN, 8/19/10)
  - Rosatom head Sergei Kiriyenko called the pending physical launch of the Bushehr nuclear reactor “an event of crucial importance” that proves that “Russia always fulfills its obligations.” (CNN, 8/19/10)
  - Russian Ambassador to NATO Dmitry Rogozin warned other nations against attacking the nuclear power plant, saying “Russia did not build the station in Bushehr so that somebody could bomb it.” (Russia Today, 8/19/10)
  - White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs said Tehran’s use of Russian fuel “underscores that Iran does not need its own enrichment capability if its intentions, as it states, are for a peaceful nuclear program.” (Agence France Presse, 8/13/10)

#### **NATO-Russia cooperation, including transit to Afghanistan:**

- Russia is negotiating the sale of about 20 helicopters for Afghanistan, which NATO would fund. Foreign Minister Lavrov said Russia had also begun supplying firearms for the Afghan Interior Ministry and for police training. (Wall Street Journal, 8/19/10)

#### **Counter-terrorism cooperation:**

- Moscow has criticized some sections of the U.S. Department of State Country Reports on Terrorism about the Caucasus, calling the section on Georgia biased. (RIA Novosti, 8/13/10)

#### **Missile defense:**

- No significant developments.

**Ratification of the New START treaty:**

- No significant developments.

**Energy exports from CIS:**

- No significant developments.

**Access to major markets for exports and imports:**

- No significant developments.

**Other bilateral issues:**

- An appeals court in Thailand decided on Aug. 20 that reputed Russian arms dealer Victor Bout will be extradited to the U.S. Foreign Minister Lavrov called the decision “unlawful,” saying Moscow would continue to seek Bout’s return to Russia. (Washington Post, 8/20/10)

**II. Russia news.****Politics, Economy, and Energy:**

- President Medvedev met with First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov to discuss improving antimonopoly legislation. Medvedev told Shuvalov, “one area in which we are clearly doing badly...is competition.” (BBC, 8/14/10)
- Moscow denied a second term to Kaliningrad Governor Georgy Boos on the grounds that he lacked public support in a region where huge antigovernment protests broke out this year. (New York Times, 8/16/10)
- According to an official from the Russian Interior Ministry economic security department, in the first six months of 2010, Russian authorities detected 28,000 crimes involving corruption. (ITAR-TASS, 8/17/10)
- Colder temperatures and rain in Russia have helped firefighters put out the wildfires. (New York Times, 8/19/10)
- Russia’s grain export ban began. Analysts said they expected Russia to sharply increase imports of agricultural goods this season and possibly become a net importer of grain for the first time in 11 years. Russian Agriculture Ministry official Oleg Axyonov, however, said Russia would not import grain this year. (Moscow Times, 8/19/10; Wall Street Journal, 8/16/10; RIA Novosti, 8/20/2010)

**Defense policy:**

- Russia will hold an open tender for two warships of the class it had planned to buy from France, Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov said on Aug. 20. (AP, 8/20/10)
- Armenia has agreed to extend the lease on the Russian military base in the country until 2044. (Reuters, 8/18/10)

**Security policy:**

- Moscow police were on heightened alert after two bombings hit the Caucasus on Aug. 17, one killing a policeman at a checkpoint in North Ossetia and another

wounding a dozen people at a street café in Pyatigorsk. (Agence France Presse, 8/17; Reuters, 8/18/10)

- “All those involved must be found. ... If they put up resistance, they must be destroyed,” President Medvedev warned. (Moscow Times, 8/20/10)
- Russian officials announced the fire that once threatened the Federal Nuclear Center at Sarov has been largely extinguished and said Rosatom plans to increase fire safeguards at its sites. “Even if the fire had broken into the territory, that wouldn't have posed any nuclear, radiation or environmental danger,” said Rosatom’s Sergei Kiriyenko. . (Global Security Newswire, 8/19/10)

#### **Foreign policy:**

- Russia hosted a second quadrilateral summit on Aug. 18 with presidents of Russia, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan in Sochi. (New York Times, 8/18/10; WSJ, 8/19/10)
  - Foreign Minister Lavrov said Russia is “keen” to take part in an Afghan project to lay an electrical wire across Afghanistan that would distribute hydroelectric power in Tajikistan to Pakistan.
  - The four leaders issued a statement pledging to fight terrorism and drug trafficking.
- Russia has given a new nuclear-powered submarine, the Nerpa, to India for a 10-year lease. (Reuters, 8/20/10)

#### **Russia's neighbors:**

- President Medvedev arrived in Yerevan on Aug. 19 to meet with Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan. A Kremlin statement announced that an intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in the construction of a new generation nuclear power unit in Armenia was being prepared for signing during the visit. (RIA Novosti, 8/20/10)
- Georgian and Russian air carriers will start direct Moscow-Tbilisi flights this month with each conducting three flights per week. (Civil Georgia, Tbilisi, 8/19/10)