

## U.S.-Russia Initiative to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism

### Американо-Российская инициатива по предотвращению ядерного терроризма

June-July 2012 Newsletter

Информационный бюллетень за июнь-июль 2012 года



ИСКРАН

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#### NEWS:

##### **NNSA: U.S.-Russia HEU Purchase Agreement 90% Complete**

The NNSA [announced](#) on July 9<sup>th</sup> that the U.S.-Russia Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU) Purchase Agreement of 1993 is now 90 percent complete. The agency said it has already monitored the elimination of more than 450 metric tons (MT) of Russian HEU. By the end of 2013 a total of 500 MT of Russian HEU will have been eliminated through conversion into low enriched uranium (LEU). This is roughly equivalent to 20,000 nuclear weapons.

##### **Center for International Security on Failure to Deter Nuclear Terrorism**

The Center for International Security at Russia's Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO) has released the full text of a report, entitled "[Russia and the Dilemmas of Nuclear Disarmament](#)", edited by Alexei Arbatov, Vladimir Dvorkin and Sergey Oznobishchev. The Center participates in the working group of the U.S.-Russia Initiative to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism (IPNT). The report principally analyzes opportunities for deep nuclear disarmament. It also contains a number of important observations about nuclear security. The authors warn, for example, that the existing model of nuclear deterrence would fail to deter acts of nuclear terrorism. "Stability will be eventually disrupted by further nuclear weapons proliferation and by international terrorism inevitably gaining access to such weapons. Maintaining the system of nuclear deterrence... will inevitably lead to the erosion of strategic stability and increase the possibility of nuclear warfare or terrorist use of nuclear weapons which will have catastrophic consequences for the modern civilization."



Arbatov



Dvorkin



Oznobishchev

##### **House of Representatives Passes Legislation to Combat Nuclear Terrorism**

The U.S. House of Representatives has passed the Nuclear Terrorism Conventions Implementation and Safety of Maritime Navigation Act of 2012. According to the Nukes of Hazard [blog](#), this bipartisan legislation, approved on June 28<sup>th</sup>, would strengthen American efforts to combat nuclear terrorism by implementing: (1) the requirements of the 2005 International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism; and (2) the key 2005 amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. The bill has to be passed by the Senate before the president can deposit the articles of ratification for the two treaties.

##### **Kiriyenko and Poneman Meet To Announce Completion of Reactor Conversion Study**

Rosatom director general Sergei Kiriyenko and U. S. deputy energy secretary Daniel Poneman met in Moscow on June 26<sup>th</sup> to co-chair a session of the US-Russian working group on nuclear

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energy and security. At the meeting they announced the completion of joint U.S.-Russian efforts to study the feasibility of converting four Russian research reactors from HEU to LEU. The costs of converting Kurchatov Institute's Argus, OR, IR-8 and MEPhI's IRT will exceed \$12 million, according to Rosatom's estimates. According to reports in the Russian press, Rosatom intends to convert one or two of these four reactors from HEU to LEU in 2014.

At the June 26<sup>th</sup> meeting, it was also announced that HEU will be removed from Uzbekistan and Vietnam to Russia by mid-2012. All in all, Russia plans to remove a total of 2,357 kg of HEU fuel from third world research reactors by 2016.

U.S. and Russian officials also discussed the text of a bilateral agreement on research and development in nuclear energy. The agreement, which should be ready to sign in September, is intended to set the framework for shared efforts in designing prospective nuclear reactors and fuel, AP and Itar-Tass reported.



Kiriyenko

Poneman

### **U.S. Seeking to Extend CTR Umbrella Agreement with Russia**

The United States is looking to extend the Cooperative Threat Reduction umbrella agreement with Russia, Assistant Defense Secretary Madelyn Creedon told a Senate panel in June.

"So far our very preliminary discussions have been positive," she said. Creedon believes that the agreement, which expires in June 2013, would ultimately be extended.

### **Obama and Putin Agree to Continue Joint Efforts to Strengthen Nuclear Security**

Presidents Barack Obama and Vladimir Putin met on the sidelines of the G-20 summit in Mexico on June 18<sup>th</sup> to discuss joint efforts to strengthen nuclear security and combat terrorism among other issues.

In a [joint statement](#) at their first presidential-level meeting, Obama and Putin agreed "to redouble bilateral efforts to improve nuclear security, counter nuclear smuggling, and combat nuclear terrorism." They pledged to continue joint efforts to counter proliferation and



terrorism, including "the common threat from al Qaeda and other terrorist groups operating in and around Afghanistan."

Furthermore, the United States and Russia "will continue to work together to counter financial support for terrorism, disrupt the possible connections between terrorist networks and criminal



groups, prevent the spread of violent extremism, and improve transportation security, including by concluding bilateral agreements in this field."

Obama and Putin also agreed to continue research on the feasibility of converting research reactors in the United States and Russia to LEU fuel.

### **Belfer Center Fellows Brief Canadian Senators on Nuclear Terrorism**

William Tobey, Belfer Center senior fellow and IPNT director; Matthew Bunn, associate professor at the Harvard Kennedy School and IPNT member; and Simon Saradzhyan, Belfer Center fellow and IPNT member [testified](#) on the threat of nuclear terrorism at the June 11<sup>th</sup> hearings of the Canadian Senate's Special Committee on Anti-Terrorism.

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The trio briefed the Canadian senators on findings of the [U.S.-Russia Joint Threat Assessment of Nuclear Terrorism](#) by the Belfer Center and Russia's U.S. and Canadian Studies Institute and offered their opinions on the dynamics of the nuclear terrorism threat.



Tobey

Bunn

Saradzhyan

Tobey testified in person, while Bunn and Saradzhyan briefed the Canadian legislators via a video-link between the Senate and the Harvard Kennedy School. During his June visit to Canada Tobey also held separate briefings on the threat for senior Canadian government officials.

### **Laverov: CTR Program to Dispose of Decommissioned Submarines Almost Completed**

The U.S.-Russian Cooperative Threat Reduction Program aimed at disposing of Soviet-built nuclear submarines is close to conclusion, Russian Academy of Sciences' Vice President Nikolai Laverov told Interfax-AVN on June 7<sup>th</sup>. He said the disposal will be completed "when all the submarines, of which we have four, with faulty fuel have been removed, but it will take a year or two."

### **Al-Qaeda's Number 2 Killed by U.S. Drone in Pakistan**

Senior al-Qaeda leader Abu Yahya al-Libi was killed in a drone strike in Pakistan's North Waziristan tribal area on June 4<sup>th</sup>, U.S. officials said. This Islamic scholar from Libya was believed to have become Number 2 in al-Qaeda's command, following the death of Osama Bin Laden last year. White House spokesman Jay Carney confirmed Al-Libi's death on June 5<sup>th</sup>, describing it as "another serious blow to core al-Qaeda."

### **Rosatom Consolidates HEU Fuel Production at Elektrostal**

Rosatom will consolidate production of all HEU fuels at the Elektrostal Machine-Building Plant in the Moscow region. The plant will produce fuel for naval, transport, and research reactors. The second fuel fabrication facility, the Novosibirsk Chemical Concentrates Plant, will continue production of LEU fuel for power reactors, IPFM Blog reported on June 4<sup>th</sup>.

### **Book: Obama Told Taliban Might Have a Nuclear Bomb**

A new book by Belfer Center senior fellow and *New York Times* chief Washington correspondent David Sanger, entitled *Confront and Conceal*, says U.S. President Barack Obama was briefed in 2009 on the possibility that the Taliban had acquired a nuclear bomb. Obama was briefed on "ambiguous" evidence supporting such a fear and dispatched a nuclear detect and disablement team to the region, *AFP* reported, citing Sanger. The threat eventually dissipated after Pakistan had taken stock of its nuclear arsenal to determine that none of the warheads were missing.

#### **NOTABLE STATEMENTS ON NUCLEAR TERRORISM:**

- **Laura Holgate, U.S. National Security Council Senior Director**, on removal of HEU from Ukraine: “You could hang a sign out on the Ukrainian border, “No nuclear terrorists need come here, nothing here for them.” (*GSN*, June 29, 2012).
- **Sergei Kiriyyenko, director of Rosatom**, on removal of HEU from former Soviet republics to Russia: “We are talking about hundreds of potential ‘dirty bombs’ that could have fallen into the hands of terrorists. Russia and the U.S. have taken responsibility for security in all the countries which we have supplied with highly enriched uranium.” (*AP*, June 26, 2012).
- **Daniel Poneman, U.S. Deputy Secretary of Energy**: “The conversion of Russian research reactors from highly-enriched uranium to lightly-enriched uranium directly supports the president’s goal to reduce the dangers of nuclear material terrorism and weapons proliferation.” (*NNSA*, June 26, 2012)
- **U.S. President Barack Obama and Russian President Vladimir Putin**: “We agree to redouble bilateral efforts to improve nuclear security, counter nuclear smuggling, and combat nuclear terrorism, as well as to facilitate the beginning of negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament on a fissile material cutoff treaty that will halt production of fissile materials for use in nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices, within the framework of a balanced program of work at the Conference.” (White House, June 18, 2012).

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#### **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

- September 2012. Russia and the United States to sign an intergovernmental agreement for scientific and technical cooperation in the field of peaceful atomic energy.
- October 15-28, 2012. 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Cuban Missile Crisis.
- October 2012. 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United States and Belarus signing the umbrella Cooperative Threat Reduction agreement.
- December 8, 2012, 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces treaty.
- December 12, 2012. 21<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction program.
- January 31, 2013. Russia formally accedes to the Nuclear Energy Agency of OECD.
- June 2013. The umbrella U.S.-Russian Cooperative Threat Reduction agreement expires.

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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](mailto:simon_saradzhyan@hks.harvard.edu).

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