

U.S.-Russia Initiative to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism

Американо-Российская инициатива по предотвращению ядерного терроризма

August-September 2011 Newsletter

Информационный бюллетень за август-сентябрь 2011 года



ИСКРАН

NEWS:

William Tobey, Pavel Zolotarev to Addresses AtomEco on Joint Threat Assessment

William Tobey, Belfer Center senior fellow and director 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 will address an international conference in Moscow on the first joint assessment of the global threat of nuclear terrorism by experts from the world's two leading nuclear powers. Presentation of the [Joint Threat Assessment](#) of Nuclear Terrorism, which was written by teams from the Belfer and ISKRAN authors under the aegis of IPNT and won the endorsement of the U.S.-Russian "Elbe Group" of senior retired military commanders and intelligence officials, will take place during the AtomEco-2011 conference that is to take place on October 31st-November 1st.



Tobey



Zolotarev

Graham Allison Argues For Eternal Vigor to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism

Belfer Center director and IPNT member Graham Allison was among commentators selected by the *Los Angeles Times* to look back at what they [wrote](#) in the aftermath of 9/11 on the tenth anniversary of these terrorist attacks. Allison wrote: "To prevent a nuclear 9/11, all nuclear weapons and weapons-usable material everywhere must be secured to a 'gold standard'—beyond the reach of terrorists or thieves." He also argues that the price of success in preventing a nuclear 9/11 remains eternal vigor and vigilance.



Aleksei Arbatov Weighs In On Terrorism and Proliferation

Aleksei Arbatov, head of the Center for International Security of Russia's Institute of World Economy and International Relations, granted an [interview](#) to RIA Novosti. In the interview, he warns that the rise of tensions between countries impacts their efforts to fight terrorism, prevent expansion of the nuclear club, and counter proliferation of nuclear technologies and materials. In the September 9th interview, Arbatov also warns that diasporas formed by illegal migrants may "create a fertile ground for terrorism" and illicit transit. Arbatov's Center is a member of the IPNT Working Group.



Goal of the Initiative: Contribute to improved joint U.S.-Russian assessment of the threat of nuclear terrorism and concepts, strategy, and actions to prevent a successful nuclear attack by terrorists.

Moldova Is Hunting For Mastermind of Nuclear Smuggling Ring

Authorities in Moldova believe that members of the smuggling ring, which was busted in this former Soviet republic this past summer, were trying to sell weapons-grade uranium to a buyer in North Africa. Moldovan investigators believe the leader of the crime ring is in Russia. U.S. authorities have reportedly been aiding Moldovan authorities in the manhunt.

The Russian government had no immediate comment on the investigation. However, in September *AP* quoted White House national security spokesman Tommy Vietor saying that Russian authorities “are taking appropriate action.”

In June, Moldova police arrested six suspects and seized a sample of Uranium-235 in a sting that thwarted a potential customer, described by a top Moldovan official as “a citizen of a Muslim country in Africa.” But a September 2011 report by staff for U.S. Senator Richard Lugar said the group also claimed to possess plutonium.

According to U.S. and U.N. officials, the sample of uranium oxide seized from the crime syndicate was traced to specific Russian enrichment facilities. Olli Heinonen, IPNT member and former chief investigator at the International Atomic Energy Agency, told *AP* that the seized uranium could have come from Russian civilian nuclear stocks used in research reactors.

Heinonen and Bunn Warn of “Security Fukushima”

Olli Heinonen, Belfer Center senior fellow and IPNT member, and Matthew Bunn, Associate Professor of Public Policy and IPNT member, published an [article](#) in *Science* magazine. In the article, they call for more stringent standards for protecting nuclear facilities against terrorist sabotage. The September 2011 article, “Preventing the Next Fukushima,” notes that both al Qaeda and Chechnya-based terrorist groups have considered such sabotage.



Heinonen



Bunn

“Nuclear safety and security measures are in many ways mutually reinforcing. A nuclear facility cannot be considered safe, in the sense of posing little risk to humans and the environment, unless it is also secure,” they write. The authors call on International Atomic Energy Agency to issue recommendations to prevent a “security Fukushima.”

Ukraine Agrees to Remove All of its Weapons-Grade Uranium to Russia

The United States and Ukraine finalized a [deal](#) to transfer all of Ukraine’s weapons-grade uranium to Russia. The agreement was signed by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Ukrainian Foreign Minister Kostyantyn Gryshchenko on September 26th. According to *AP*, it requires Ukraine to send all of its bomb-grade uranium to Russia by April 2012.

NNSA and Russian Customs Complete Deployment of Radiation Detectors

The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) and the Federal Customs Service of Russia completed their joint work on equipping all Russian border crossing points with equipment designed to detect nuclear and radiological smuggling. In a September 22nd [statement](#), NNSA said that its Second Line of Defense (SLD) program and the customs service have equipped all 383 border crossings with radiation detection monitors. The U.S and Russian

Goal of the Initiative: Contribute to improved joint U.S.-Russian assessment of the threat of nuclear terrorism and concepts, strategy, and actions to prevent a successful nuclear attack by terrorists.

U.S.-Russia Initiative to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism

Американо-Российская инициатива по предотвращению ядерного терроризма

August-September 2011 Newsletter

Информационный бюллетень за август-сентябрь 2011 года

agencies are now working to install a communications integration system for Russian customs by 2015, according to the statement.

GAO report on U.S. ability to account for its nuclear material overseas

The U.S. Government Accountability Office released a [report](#) titled "U.S. Agencies Have Limited Ability to Account for, Monitor, and Evaluate the Security of U.S. Nuclear Material Overseas," which warns that, "DOE, NRC, and State are not able to fully account for U.S. nuclear material overseas that is subject to nuclear cooperation agreement terms because the agreements do not stipulate systematic reporting of such information, and there is no U.S. policy to pursue or obtain such information." The report also describes as inadequate the efforts to ensure physical protection of the U.S. material in partner countries.

U.S. State Department Warns of Nuclear Terrorism Threat

The U.S. State Department has issued its annual [Country Reports on Terrorism](#) on August 18th. They warn that the diffusion of scientific and technical information regarding the assembly of nuclear weapons – some of which is now available on the Internet – has increased the risk that a terrorist organization in possession of sufficient fissile material could develop its own crude nuclear weapon. The report also warns that widespread use of radioactive materials in nearly every country makes these materials much more accessible for deployment in a radiological dispersal device, often referred to as a "dirty bomb."

NOTABLE STATEMENTS ON NUCLEAR TERRORISM:

- Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev: "Fortunately, the world has not faced the problem of nuclear terrorism yet. But we are practically not secured from such threat. High risks of uncontrolled spread of the nuclear threat are possibly related to participants of the black market of nuclear technologies." (*Times of Central Asia*, September 26, 2011).
- Former U.S. national security advisor Samuel R. Berger and ex-director for defense policy and arms control in the U.S. National Security Council Steve Andreasen: "Even with the Cold War now 20 years behind us, the United States and Russia still deploy thousands of strategic nuclear weapons on high alert and tactical nuclear weapons throughout Europe, unnecessarily heightening the risk of accidental, unauthorized, or mistaken nuclear use, and of terrorist groups acquiring a weapon or dangerous nuclear material." (*Foreign Policy*, September 8, 2011).
- FBI assistant director for weapons of mass destruction Valid Majidi: "In reality, building a nuclear device is not a simple task. It's so expensive, and it takes so much access and expertise. Ultimately, I'm not as worried about a nuclear detonation because the probability is relatively low." (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, September 5, 2011).
- FBI weapons-of-mass-destruction supervisor Barbara Walls: "The threat is still real, still credible." (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, September 5, 2011).
- NNSA Administrator Thomas D'Agostino: "The fact that we haven't had a radiological device go off in the world is great, but I don't take that as problem solved -- there's a lot of

Goal of the Initiative: Contribute to improved joint U.S.-Russian assessment of the threat of nuclear terrorism and concepts, strategy, and actions to prevent a successful nuclear attack by terrorists.

U.S.-Russia Initiative to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism

Американо-Российская инициатива по предотвращению ядерного терроризма

August-September 2011 Newsletter

Информационный бюллетень за август-сентябрь 2011 года

risk out there. ... That's why there's a sense of urgency." (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, September 5, 2011).

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- November 3-4, 2011. U.S. President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev attend G8 and G20 summits 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 summits in Chicago.

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.

Goal of the Initiative: Contribute to improved joint U.S.-Russian assessment of the threat of nuclear terrorism and concepts, strategy, and actions to prevent a successful nuclear attack by terrorists.

U.S.-Russia Initiative to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism

Американо-Российская инициатива по предотвращению ядерного терроризма

August-September 2011 Newsletter

Информационный бюллетень за август-сентябрь 2011 года

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 [William 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]

- *Center for International Security, Institute for World Economy and International Relations, Russian Academy of Sciences [imemoran@imemo.ru, 7-499-120-52-36]*

- **Центр международной безопасности**, Институт мировой экономики и международных отношений РАН [imemoran@imemo.ru, 7-499-120-52-36]

- *Center for International Security and Cooperation, Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, Stanford University [Dr. S. Hecker, shecker@stanford.edu, 1-650-725-6468]*

- **Центр международной безопасности и сотрудничества** Института международных дел имени Фримана Спогли Стэнфордского университета. [Доктор наук З. Хэккер, shecker@stanford.edu, 1-650-725-6468]

- *USA and Canada Studies Institute, Russian Academy of Sciences [Dr. S. Rogov, pa.to.rogov@rambler.ru, 7-495-691-11-66]*

- **Институт изучения Соединенных Штатов Америки и Канады РАН** [Доктор наук С. Рогов, pa.to.rogov@rambler.ru, 7-495-691-11-66]

Goal of the Initiative: Contribute to improved joint U.S.-Russian assessment of the threat of nuclear terrorism and concepts, strategy, and actions to prevent a successful nuclear attack by terrorists.