

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

### Американо-Российская инициатива по предотвращению ядерного терроризма

November-December 2012 Newsletter

Информационный бюллетень за ноябрь-декабрь 2012 года



ИСКРАН

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#### NEWS:

##### **NNSA Administrator Thomas D'Agostino to Step Down**

Thomas D'Agostino, Administrator of the U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), [announced](#) on December 21<sup>st</sup> that he will step down from the post that he has held for five and a half years. "I am a strong believer that organizations are healthier when leadership changes on a periodic basis. The time is right for this change," he said.



Secretary of Energy Steven Chu [praised](#) the outgoing NNSA chief for "leading a vast acceleration of the Department's efforts to reduce nuclear dangers at home and abroad, overseeing our efforts to protect public health and safety by cleaning up the nation's Cold War nuclear legacy." Neile Miller, the NNSA's Principal Deputy Administrator, will serve as Acting Administrator when D'Agostino steps down on January 18<sup>th</sup>.

##### **Russian Government Approves Nuclear Security Deal with Belarus**

The Russian government has approved a draft inter-governmental agreement on nuclear security with Belarus, under which Moscow will build nuclear infrastructure in Belarus and train its personnel, Itar-Tass reported on December 20<sup>th</sup>. The accord also requires Belarus to refrain from building nuclear weapons and to ensure the physical protection of all nuclear materials of Russian origin.

##### **William Tobey on Defining and Implementing Best Practices in Nuclear Security**

William Tobey, Belfer Center senior fellow and director of the U.S.-Russia Initiative to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism (IPNT) has published a [paper](#) that analyzes the contribution that best practices can make to the field of nuclear security.

Tobey notes that the sharing of best practices has already revolutionized operations in the safety realm, but this success may not be easy to replicate in the security realm. Nevertheless, "governments and industry must foster efforts to share best practices in nuclear security." In particular, states and facilities with the greatest responsibilities (those possessing fissile material in quantities sufficient to make a nuclear weapon) should be most concerned about implementing best practices, according to Tobey's paper.



##### **DoD and NNSA Spent \$650 Million on Threat Reduction in Russia**

The U.S. Defense Department and the NNSA spent nearly \$650 million in 2012 on Russia-focused threat-reduction programs. Under the Obama administration's 2013 budget request, this figure is closer to \$500 million, *The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* [reported](#) on December 7<sup>th</sup>. In a separate development, the Obama administration has sharply reduced spending on a program to

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combat smuggling of nuclear and radiological materials through foreign seaports, GSN [reported](#) on December 12<sup>th</sup>.

### **Georgian Police Touts Success in Fighting Trafficking of Nuclear Materials**

Since the formation of a special nuclear police unit in Georgia in 2005 with U.S. assistance, 15 investigations have been launched in Georgia and dozens of people have been arrested. The Associated Press [reported](#) on December 10<sup>th</sup> that five previously undisclosed cases occurred in 2012, one of which led to an arrest in Turkey. Another case in 2011 involved enough cesium-137 to make a dirty bomb. Georgian officials also found links between two older cases involving highly enriched uranium.

### **Graham Allison Briefs on Threat of Nuclear Terrorism**



Graham Allison, director of the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs and IPNT member, has given a series of lectures and briefings on the threat of nuclear terrorism and ways to minimize it. Professor Allison spoke at Oxford University in the U.K. on October 11<sup>th</sup>, at the World Affairs Council in Washington, DC on October 8<sup>th</sup>, and at Harvard Kennedy School's program for Senior Executives in National and International Security in Cambridge, MA, on December 4<sup>th</sup>.

### **Nunn and Lugar Honored As Obama Urges Extension of CTR in Russia**

U.S. Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta awarded the Defense Department's highest civilian honor to the two co-founders of the Nunn-Lugar program at a December 3<sup>rd</sup> event in Washington, DC. Panetta [commended](#) Sen. Richard Lugar and former Sen. Sam Nunn for their "efforts at trying to ensure that we do everything we can to control the spread of weapons of mass destruction."

U.S. President Barack Obama also attended the event praising the two recipients of the Distinguished Public Service Award on the occasion of "the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of one of the country's smartest and most successful national security programs."

In [remarks](#) released by the White House, Obama told the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction Symposium that the Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program should continue in Russia even though Moscow has stated that it doesn't wish to extend the bilateral CTR agreement, which expires in June 2013.

President Obama said he is "optimistic" that the United States and Russia will "continue the work that's so important to the security of both our countries." He added, "Russia has said that our current agreement hasn't kept pace with the changing relationship between our countries. To which we say, let's update it. Let's work with Russia as an equal partner."

The changes Russian officials are looking to make to the CTR agreement are not unreasonable, according to Laura Holgate, senior director for threat reduction at the U.S. National Security Council. "They talk about the desire for a more balanced agreement and I'm optimistic that such exists in our common negotiating space," Holgate told [GSN](#).

Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov announced in October that Moscow doesn't want to extend the CTR umbrella agreement as it is. A source in the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has told *Kommersant* that Russia wants to negotiate a new treaty with the United States that

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Nunn

Lugar

would be “based on principles of equal rights and mutual respect” rather than extend the old agreement.

### **Pavel Zolotarev and Viktor Yesin on the Future of Nunn-Lugar in Russia**

Pavel Zolotarev, deputy director of Russia’s Institute for the U.S. and Canadian Studies (ISKРАН), does not share the U.S. leadership’s optimism that the U.S.-Russian CTR umbrella agreement will be renewed. In remarks reported by [Nezavisimaya Gazeta](#) on December 5<sup>th</sup> the retired general observed that Moscow makes nuclear security cooperation conditional on issues such as “missile defense system in Europe, rivalry in the post-Soviet area, and disagreements over the methods of resolving the problem of Syria.” Zolotarev praised the program’s achievements, but noted that it has its drawbacks, including the fact that the funding went to U.S. rather than Russian contractors.

When asked why Washington is so interested in extending the CTR agreement, Col. General (retired) Viktor Yesin explained, “The Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction exists in parallel with the Nunn-Lugar Program. It was launched at the G8 summit that was held in Kananaskis (Canada) in June 2002. It is the Nunn-Lugar Program that forms the juridical basis for cooperation in the Global Partnership.” Yesin is a senior fellow at ISKRAN, participant in the working group of the U.S.-Russia Initiative to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism.

During a visit to the Belfer Center in December, Yesin discussed ways to advance U.S.-Russian nuclear cooperation and shared his lessons from the Cuban Missile Crisis.



Zolotarev

Yesin

### **Anatoly Safonov Calls for Robust Security Across Nuclear Industry**

There will be “no adequate alternatives in the near future to nuclear energy,” but its development should be accompanied by robust security measures, Anatoly Safonov, Deputy Director General of Rosatom Overseas told the Eastern Europe Nuclear Energy Summit 2012 in Prague on November 15<sup>th</sup>. There should be robust and effective security measures to protect all nuclear sites and materials and to prevent nuclear terrorism, according to the retired colonel general who participates in the [Elbe Group](#).



### **NNSA and Interior Troops Open Training Facility in Urals**

The NNSA and Russia’s Interior Troops have announced the commissioning of the Ozersk Training Center in the Urals. The training center houses a mock nuclear facility where personnel of the Interior Troops will hone protective force tactics and procedures, according to the NNSA’s November 8<sup>th</sup> [press release](#).

*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.*

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#### **NNSA and Rosatom Cooperate to Remove HEU from Uzbekistan**

The NNSA [announced](#) on November 1<sup>st</sup> the removal of 72.8 kilograms of highly enriched uranium (HEU) spent fuel from the Institute of Nuclear Physics in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. The shipment of the spent fuel to Russia was the culmination of a multi-year effort between the NNSA, numerous Russian partners, including Rosatom, Uzbekistan, and the International Atomic Energy Agency. NNSA Administrator Thomas D'Agostino observed, "In the wrong hands this material could be used to make a nuclear weapon. This shipment and our ongoing partnership with Russia demonstrate the positive effect our efforts have on the global effort to secure, consolidate and minimize the use of highly enriched uranium across the globe." Russia is also developing a project for the removal of spent nuclear fuel from Vietnam by air, Itar-Tass reported on November 21<sup>st</sup>.

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

- **U.S. President Barack Obama:** "There's still much too much material – nuclear, chemical, biological – being stored without enough protection. There are still terrorists and criminal gangs doing everything they can to get their hands on it. And make no mistake, if they get it, they will use it; potentially killing hundreds of thousands of innocent people, perhaps triggering a global crisis. That's why I continue to believe that nuclear terrorism remains one of the greatest threats to global security." (Whitehouse.gov, December 3, 2012).
- **Assistant U.S. Secretary of State Thomas Countryman:** "From its initial focus twenty years ago on Russia and the newly independent states, the Nunn-Lugar program has withstood the test of time, expanding to other parts of the world and evolving toward a focus on biological threat reduction. In the years ahead, I am confident that both the United States and Russia will maintain the political will necessary to complete this important, unfinished business." (State Department, October 26, 2012).

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#### **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

- February 2013. U.S. and Russia complete plans for drawdowns in each country's nuclear arsenals, guided by mandates in New START.
- June 2013. The umbrella U.S.-Russian Cooperative Threat Reduction agreement expires.
- First half of 2013. U.S. President Obama to visit Russia.
- August 5, 2013. 50th anniversary of the signing of the Limited Test Ban Treaty.
- September 5-6, 2013. St. Petersburg will host the G20 summit.

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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

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

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