

## **International Cooperation to Secure Military Nuclear Materials**

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One category of nuclear material that has not yet been adequately addressed throughout recent Nuclear Security Summits is military stockpiles.<sup>2</sup> Instead, the Summit process has focused primarily on reducing the risk of civilian nuclear material theft.

One opportunity for discussing security for military materials is within the P5 Process. Established in 2009, the so-called P5 dialogue provides a forum for nuclear weapon states to regularly discuss their obligations under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).<sup>3</sup> One might think it is a departure from the group's mandate, but, in fact, it is necessary for the P5 to discuss nuclear security. Effective nuclear security is part of the critical infrastructure that supports the NPT. Disarmament will not happen without it.<sup>4</sup>

Moreover, the P5 process has already broadened its scope to include issues that are not explicitly described in the NPT. For example, the P5 process now discusses disarmament verification and assurances. While progress has been slow, both of these issues were addressed extensively during U.S.-Russian Cooperative Threat Reduction.<sup>5</sup> It would be a logical elaboration to use the topic of nuclear security as a common denominator for future P5 discussions. Discussing nuclear security might make it easier to approach both verification and assurances.

Finally, the P5 process consists of the majority of states with nuclear weapons. By working to strengthen nuclear material in military programs, the P5 helps to legitimize efforts to strengthen nuclear security cooperation overall, build trust between states with nuclear weapons and material, and open avenues for future discussions about reducing the risk of nuclear weapons.

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<sup>1</sup> This draws upon forthcoming article by Nickolas Roth and Jeffrey Lewis.

<sup>2</sup> Military materials have been mentioned in joint communiqués.

<sup>3</sup> Much of the background on P5 comes from Andrea Berger and Malcolm Chalmers, "Great Expectations: The P5 Process and the Nonproliferation Treaty, (Whitehall Report 3-13, 2013), [https://www.rusi.org/downloads/assets/WHR\\_3-13\\_Web.pdf](https://www.rusi.org/downloads/assets/WHR_3-13_Web.pdf) (accessed March 9, 2015).

<sup>4</sup> See Matthew Bunn, "Nuclear Security is the Foundation for the Three Pillars of the Nonproliferation Treaty," *Nuclear Security Matters*, March 17, 2014, <http://nuclearsecuritymatters.belfercenter.org/blog/nuclear-security-foundation-three-pillars-nonproliferation-treaty> (accessed March 15, 2015).

<sup>5</sup> Andrew J. Bieniawski, Sean M. Tyson, Vladislav G. Balamutov, "Overview of Transparency Under the U.S.-Russian Highly Enriched Uranium Purchase Agreement," Presented at 1998 Institute of Nuclear Materials Management Annual Meeting. For an excellent summary of U.S.-Russian nuclear security transparency measures and lessons learned, see David Hafemeister, "U.S. nuclear security cooperation with Russia and transparency," in *Transparency in Nuclear Warheads and Materials: The Political and Technical Dimensions*, ed. Nicholas Zarimpas (Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 80-111, <http://books.sipri.org/files/books/SIPRI03Zarimpas/SIPRI03Zarimpas.pdf>. Also, see Ashot A. Sarkisov and Rose Gottemoeller, Ed., *Future of the Nuclear Security Environment in 2015: Proceedings of a Russian-U.S. Workshop* (Washington, DC: Joint Committees on the Future of the Nuclear Security Environment in 2015; in cooperation with the Russian Academy of Sciences; National Research Council, 2009).

Discussions about nuclear security within the P5 Process have already begun. The P5 has attempted to address accident response—although some countries objected to taking on the issue—and China has indicated it could be interested in a discussion about accident prevention. Additionally, in April, 2015, the P5 released its “Glossary of Key Nuclear Terms” that included a section with terminology on safety and security (although none of the terms were directly related to nuclear security).<sup>6</sup> Possible future steps include:

1. Unlike Nuclear Security Summits that have avoided connecting the two issues, the P5 should focus on how effective nuclear security supports the disarmament process. States should agree to include as part of the permanent agenda of the P5 dialogue discussions on how to verifiably consolidate and eliminate nuclear materials in a way that does not increase the risk of theft or sabotage.
2. The P5 should develop a standard reporting form providing detailed information on security rules and practices for military materials that could be submitted under UNSCR 1540, which legally obligates all states to provide “appropriate effective” security and accounting for all nuclear weapons or related materials.
3. Establish a nuclear security working group where states can share information about security rules and practices for military stocks and develop a consensus about what measures could be considered “appropriate and effective.”<sup>7</sup>
4. Drawing upon work already done by the International Atomic Energy Agency and by China and the United States, the P5 should include terminology related to security for nuclear materials into its glossary of terms.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> See P5 Working Group on the Glossary of Key Nuclear Terms, *P5 Glossary of Key Nuclear Terms*, Beijing: China Atomic Energy Press, April 2015, <http://www.pircenter.org/media/content/files/13/14313989580.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> For a description of what constitutes appropriate and effective and what might be necessary to implement such measures, see Matthew Bunn, “‘Appropriate Effective’ Nuclear Security and Accounting – What is It?” (Nashville, Tennessee: Presentation, Material Accounting and Physical Protection -- Joint Global Initiative/UNSCR 1540 Workshop, July 18, 2008), [http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/publication/18452/appropriate\\_effective\\_nuclear\\_security\\_and\\_accounting.html](http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/publication/18452/appropriate_effective_nuclear_security_and_accounting.html) (accessed March 10, 2015).

<sup>8</sup> See *Nuclear Security Recommendations on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Nuclear Facilities* (Vienna, Austria: International Atomic Energy Agency, 2011), [http://www-pub.iaea.org/MTCD/publications/PDF/Pub1481\\_web.pdf](http://www-pub.iaea.org/MTCD/publications/PDF/Pub1481_web.pdf) and Committee on the U.S. – Chinese Glossary of Nuclear Security Terms, “English – Chinese, Chinese – English, Nuclear Security Glossary” (Washington, DC and Beijing: National Academies Press and Atomic Energy Press, 2008).