DEFENSE TREATY INSPECTION READINESS PROGRAM • READINESS THROUGH AWARENESS

BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW

13 September 2012 – 26 September 2012

DTRA

GENERAL ARMS CONTROL

Aging U.S. Nuclear Arsenal Slated for Modernization

Washington Post, 15 September 2012, http://www.washingtonpost.com

The U.S. nuclear arsenal, the most powerful but indiscriminate class of weapons ever created, is set to undergo the costliest overhaul in its history, even as the military faces spending cuts to its conventional arms programs at a time of fiscal crisis. For two decades, U.S. administrations have confronted the decrepit, neglected state of the aging nuclear weapons complex. *(2,346 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (CWC)

Chinese to Appeal after Japan Court Rejects Compensation

Xinhua, 23 September 2012; accessed via Open Source Center

The victims of a fatal toxic gas leak from containers left behind by the Japanese army during World War II would appeal to Japan's Supreme Court after their compensation demand was rejected. *(273 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR TEST-BAN TREATY (CTBT)

CTBT Celebrates 16th Anniversary

CTBTO Preparatory Commission, 24 September 2012, http://www.ctbto.org

On September 24, 1996, the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) opened for signature at the United Nations General Assembly in New York, following three years of intense negotiations. The CTBT is the only treaty to ban all nuclear tests, everywhere and by everyone. The treaty also has a unique global alarm system to detect nuclear explosions. *(302 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

States to Press for Early Entry into Force of CTBT

UN News Center, 24 September 2012, http://www.un.org

Senior government officials will press for the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) when they meet later this week at United Nations Headquarters in New York, where the treaty first opened for signature 16 years ago today. *(209 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

back to top

News articles and publications found on the DTIRP website are compilations of open source current news articles and commentary concerning significant arms control treaty and related national security issues. The publications aim to give a balanced representation of how the public, other government organizations, and the media may view these arms control and threat reduction programs and issues. They are intended to serve the informational needs of Department of Defense (DoD) officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are not necessarily those supported by DoD, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, or the DTIRP.

COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR TEST-BAN TREATY (CTBT) (CONT.)

U.S. Conducts Fifth Nonexplosive Plutonium Test

Nuclear Threat Initiative, 21 September 2012, http://www.nti.org/gsn

Sources on Wednesday disclosed the completion between April and June of a fifth Z machine plutonium trial intended for studying the capacities of U.S. nuclear armaments, Kyodo News reported. *(138 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

U.S. Marks 20 Years without Underground Nuclear Explosive Testing

National Nuclear Security Administration, 21 September 2012, http://nnsa.energy.gov

Twenty years ago, on September 23, 1992, the United States conducted its last underground nuclear explosive test. Since then, the United States has developed the capability to ensure the safety, security, and reliability of its stockpile through the use of state-of-the-art technology and research while maintaining a moratorium on nuclear explosive testing. *(396 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

No Going Back: 20 Years since the Last U.S. Nuclear Test

Arms Control Association, 20 September 2012, http://www.armscontrol.org

On September 23, 1992, under the surface of the Nevada Test Site, the United States conducted its 1,030th – and last – nuclear weapon test explosion. At the time, there were serious questions about whether the United States could indefinitely extend the service lives of its nuclear warheads without regular nuclear testing. *(1,304 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

CTBT Information Processing Site Launched in Belarus

Nuclear Threat Initiative, 13 September 2012, http://www.nti.org/gsn

A new information processing facility in Belarus was set to begin operations on Tuesday in support of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty [CTBT], the Belarusian Telegraph Agency reported. *(100 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

back to top

News articles and publications found on the DTIRP website are compilations of open source current news articles and commentary concerning significant arms control treaty and related national security issues. The publications aim to give a balanced representation of how the public, other government organizations, and the media may view these arms control and threat reduction programs and issues. They are intended to serve the informational needs of Department of Defense (DoD) officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are not necessarily those supported by DoD, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, or the DTIRP.

FISSILE MATERIAL CUTOFF TREATY (FMCT)

UN Conference on Disarmament Meeting Ends in Deadlock

UN News Center, 13 September 2012, http://www.un.org

As the United Nations [UN] Conference on Disarmament ended its 2012 session in Geneva today – without breaking an impasse over its agenda, including the consideration of a fissile materials treaty – the top UN official on the issue urged Member States to continue to seek progress, keeping in mind that their national security was not solely dependent on military might. *(362 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

PLUTONIUM MANAGEMENT AND DISPOSITION AGREEMENT (PMDA)

Plutonium Fuel (MOX) Program at Savannah River Site Hit with Major Setback

The Aiken Leader, 17 September 2012, http://aikenleader.villagesoup.com

In a series of significant setbacks for the Department of Energy's (DOE) troubled plutonium fuel (MOX) program at the Savannah River Site (SRS), a key Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) official has backed away from considering MOX use in TVA's aging reactors at this time. *(864 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

NEW STRATEGIC ARMS REDUCTION TREATY (NEW START)

BCC Agreement Four: Tamper Detection Equipment for RDE

U.S. Department of State, 24 September 2012, http://www.state.gov

The fourth session of the Bilateral Consultative Commission (BCC) under the New START treaty was held in Geneva from September 11-21, 2012, where Agreement Number 4 was signed. The text of this agreement details the procedures for using tamper detection equipment to secure radiation detection equipment (RDE) stored in tamper-proof containers at the inspected Party's points of entry. *(678 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

BCC Agreement Three: Telemetric Information Playback Equipment

U.S. Department of State, 21 September 2012, http://www.state.gov

The fourth session of the Bilateral Consultative Commission (BCC) under the New START treaty was held in Geneva from September 11-21, 2012, where Agreement Number 3 was signed. The text of this agreement details the procedures for acquiring telemetric information playback equipment. *(282 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

back to top

News articles and publications found on the DTIRP website are compilations of open source current news articles and commentary concerning significant arms control treaty and related national security issues. The publications aim to give a balanced representation of how the public, other government organizations, and the media may view these arms control and threat reduction programs and issues. They are intended to serve the informational needs of Department of Defense (DoD) officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are not necessarily those supported by DoD, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, or the DTIRP.

VIENNA DOCUMENT (VDOC)

Italian Military Inspectors in Belarus on a Visit

Belarusian Telegraph Agency, 20 September 2012, http://news.belta.by

An Italian inspection group headed by Lieutenant Colonel Giuseppo Piombarolo is on an evaluation visit to the 116th guards attack unit of Air Force and Air Defense within the 2011 Vienna Document on Confidence and Security-Building Measures. Italian military inspectors will stay in Belarus until September 21, BelTA learnt from the Belarusian Defense Ministry.
(105 words) ***Click here for full text.***

FULL TEXT OF BI-WEEKLY ARTICLES FOLLOWS:

back to top

News articles and publications found on the DTIRP website are compilations of open source current news articles and commentary concerning significant arms control treaty and related national security issues. The publications aim to give a balanced representation of how the public, other government organizations, and the media may view these arms control and threat reduction programs and issues. They are intended to serve the informational needs of Department of Defense (DoD) officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are not necessarily those supported by DoD, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, or the DTIRP.

Aging U.S. Nuclear Arsenal Slated for Modernization

Washington Post, 15 September 2012, http://www.washingtonpost.com

The U.S. nuclear arsenal, the most powerful but indiscriminate class of weapons ever created, is set to undergo the costliest overhaul in its history, even as the military faces spending cuts to its conventional arms programs at a time of fiscal crisis. For two decades, U.S. administrations have confronted the decrepit, neglected state of the aging nuclear weapons complex. Yet officials have repeatedly put off sinking huge sums into projects that receive little public recognition, driving up the costs even further.

Now, as the nation struggles to emerge from the worst recession of the postwar era and Congress faces an end-of-year deadline to avoid $1.2 trillion in automatic cuts to the federal budget over 10 years, the Obama administration is overseeing the gargantuan task of modernizing the nuclear arsenal to keep it safe and reliable.

There is no official price tag for the effort to upgrade and maintain the 5,113 warheads in the inventory, to replace old delivery systems and to renovate the aging facilities where nuclear work is performed. A study this summer by the nonpartisan Stimson Center, a Washington think tank, estimated costs would be at least $352 billion over the coming decade to operate and modernize the current arsenal. Others say the figure could be far higher, particularly if the work is delayed even longer. *[…]*

Expense has loomed for years

At the heart of the overhaul are the weapons themselves. Renovating nuclear bombs and missiles to keep them safe and ready for use will cost tens of billions of dollars. Upgrading just one of the seven types of weapons in the stockpile, the B61 bomb, is likely to cost $10 billion over five years, according to the Pentagon. The next two types of bombs in line for modification are estimated to cost a total of at least $5 billion. By comparison, the operating budget for Fairfax County government next year will cost about $3.5 billion, including its vaunted school system.

Replacing the aircraft, submarines and ground-launch systems that carry nuclear payloads will be the most expensive budget item. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimated it would cost up to $110 billion to build 12 replacements for the aging Ohio-class submarines first launched in the 1980s. The Minuteman III ballistic missiles are undergoing a $7 billion upgrade even as a new generation of intercontinental ballistic missiles is under consideration. Meanwhile, a nuclear-capable fleet of F-35 strike aircraft is being built to replace existing aircraft at a cost of $162 million an airplane.

back to top

News articles and publications found on the DTIRP website are compilations of open source current news articles and commentary concerning significant arms control treaty and related national security issues. The publications aim to give a balanced representation of how the public, other government organizations, and the media may view these arms control and threat reduction programs and issues. They are intended to serve the informational needs of Department of Defense (DoD) officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are not necessarily those supported by DoD, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, or the DTIRP.

Finally, there are the buildings and laboratories where the refurbishment of weapons and development of new technologies take place. Modernizing those facilities is expected to cost at least $88 billion over 10 years, according to the NNSA, which is part of the Department of Energy. The need to spend heavily to modernize the nation's shrinking nuclear stockpile has been apparent for at least two decades. President George H.W. Bush reduced the stockpile by nearly 40 percent and imposed a ban on nuclear testing. President Bill Clinton extended the ban while reaffirming the importance of maintaining the arsenal's safety and performance.

President George W. Bush came into office in 2001 planning to shrink and modernize the vast and deteriorating nuclear complex. Although he cut the stockpile by almost 50 percent and made some progress on renovating the complex, the effort was largely derailed by the costs and complications of two wars. All the while, the backlog of urgent repairs accumulated, and the hidden costs increased steadily.

To catch up, the Obama administration's budget for refurbishing the nuclear stockpile went from $6.4 billion in 2010 to a $7.5 billion request for next year – a 17 percent increase at a time of budget constraints. To help pay the bills, this year the Defense Department agreed for the first time to contribute $8 billion over five years. "We came in thinking it had been taken care of and were shocked to hear how poorly it had been treated," said Jon Wolfsthal, who worked on nuclear weapons issues for the Obama White House until March.

While the administration was surprised by the state of the stockpile, the decision to spend heavily on modernization was also driven by a deal cut with Senate Republicans in late 2010. As part of negotiations to win ratification of the New START accord and reduce the nuclear weapons maintained by the United States and Russia, the administration agreed to increase money for modernizing the nuclear-weapons complex. Some Republicans say the administration isn't spending enough.

Los Alamos in disrepair

Situated on a remote mesa in the Jemez Mountains of northern New Mexico, Los Alamos National Laboratory was built secretly in early 1943 for the sole purpose of designing and building America's first atomic bomb. In the decades since, the lab has emerged as one of the nation's premier nuclear weapons design and research facilities, with 11,000 employees.

But parts of Los Alamos are in serious disrepair. Inside one critical building, pipes carrying dangerous wastewater are duct-taped together at the joints to plug leaks; plastic bags have been wrapped around the tape to trap seepage.

back to top

News articles and publications found on the DTIRP website are compilations of open source current news articles and commentary concerning significant arms control treaty and related national security issues. The publications aim to give a balanced representation of how the public, other government organizations, and the media may view these arms control and threat reduction programs and issues. They are intended to serve the informational needs of Department of Defense (DoD) officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are not necessarily those supported by DoD, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, or the DTIRP.

The building, called Wing 5, is part of the 50-year-old Chemistry and Metallurgy Research plant, which performs research on plutonium cores, the explosive "pits" for nuclear weapons. Sometimes liquid accidentally splashes under the ill-fitting doors and spills into the hallway, Bret Knapp, who heads the lab's weapons program, said during a rare visit by an outsider. When a spill occurs, the building must be evacuated until inspectors can make sure that the liquid is not radioactive. On other occasions, when the lights in the dilapidated structure flicker, electricians struggling to restore power pry open dozens of fuse boxes and expose brittle wiring far out of compliance with modern building codes.

The aging facility was slated for replacement 20 years ago. But in 1998, designers identified a fault line beneath the structure. The discovery pushed the price of reconstruction so high that no administration was willing to sign off. The Obama administration says safety requires its replacement – at a cost of $6 billion. Critics in Congress and among anti-nuclear groups, however, say the expensive new plant is unnecessary and would still present environmental dangers if built on the fault line.

The metallurgy facility at Los Alamos isn't even the most pressing example of neglect and deterioration among the 40 buildings nationwide that the NNSA says need repair. That dubious honor goes to Building 9212, a uranium-processing facility at the Y-12 National Security Complex near Oak Ridge, Tennessee. Known in its heyday as the "Secret City," Y-12 produced highly enriched uranium for "Little Boy," the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima on Aug. 6, 1945. Today, Y-12 is the primary facility for processing and storing weapons-grade uranium and developing related technologies.

The 150-acre complex was in the news in late July when three peace activists, including an 82-year-old nun, cut the outer security fence, slipped past the perimeter and reached a building where highly enriched uranium is stored. They splashed blood on the outer walls and carried banners denouncing nuclear weapons. Though they never got inside the facility, the incident sparked a two-week shutdown at the plant and a security review across the nuclear complex. Several officials have been fired or reassigned.

Nearby is Building 9212. Protected by layers of razor wire two stories high and monitored by surveillance cameras and motion sensors, technicians inside process enriched uranium for civilian and naval nuclear reactors. Armed guards greet the few authorized visitors allowed into the structure. The operations inside Building 9212 are deemed so vital that an unplanned shutdown could cause critical problems across the nuclear supply chain. An extended stoppage would disrupt the weapons safety work and could force the closing of domestic and foreign civilian reactors that rely on low-enriched uranium from the facility, according to the NNSA.

back to top

News articles and publications found on the DTIRP website are compilations of open source current news articles and commentary concerning significant arms control treaty and related national security issues. The publications aim to give a balanced representation of how the public, other government organizations, and the media may view these arms control and threat reduction programs and issues. They are intended to serve the informational needs of Department of Defense (DoD) officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are not necessarily those supported by DoD, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, or the DTIRP.

No reporter had been allowed inside Building 9212 before The Washington Post's visit. Because of the radioactivity, visitors and workers must wear multiple pairs of yellow rubber gloves, socks and booties, an overcoat, goggles, a head covering and thermoluminescent dosimeters that measure possible radiation exposure.

Conditions inside belie the significance of the work and the danger of the radioactive material. The building is made of clay tile and cinder blocks and looks its age. Darrel Kohlhorst, the general manager at the time, pointed out large patches of rust and corrosion on interior walls. He said the walls and roof leak when it rains.

"If water hits the floor, we treat it like a contaminated spill," he said, adding that workers must mop the floors three times a day – and incinerate the mop heads afterward. The floors themselves are stainless-steel panels bolted together at thick seams. With age, they have become uneven and warped. Control panels resemble props on a 1950s sci-fi movie set, with oversize black-and-white dials and big red "start" and "stop" buttons.

Plant officials said the outdated equipment has not caused a major safety problem only because they halt operations even when minor things go wrong. For instance, when one of the giant, half-century-old exhaust fans goes on the blink, the repair time idles 30 people "for a $15 part," said Daniel Hoag, then deputy manager of Y-12. Two years ago, the vacuum system that keeps air flowing broke down, and the facility was closed for two weeks. Nuclear experts say the building should have been replaced years ago. But successive administrations decided to fund less costly renovations and purely scientific endeavors instead. In the meantime, the replacement cost has risen from $600 million in 2004 to $6.5 billion today.

Explaining the huge increase, NNSA spokesman Joshua McConaha said that initial cost estimates are always "speculative" and that final figures can't be determined until most of the design work is finished. Other factors push up costs. These nuclear facilities are one-of-a-kind plants, and the expertise and equipment needed to build them often doesn't exist anymore, so it has to be invented. "We're facing questions that have never been asked or answered, and we're doing it 20 years after the urgency of the Cold War," McConaha said. "We're building rare, incredibly complex nuclear facilities that nobody has had to build in decades."

Some 640 people are designing the new uranium processing plant at Y-12. It will use 10 experimental technologies still being invented. There will be elaborate air filtration systems, duplicative electrical and fire control systems, redundant security barriers, earthquake-proof concrete floors and impenetrable vaults – all required to maintain and work with highly radioactive material.

back to top

News articles and publications found on the DTIRP website are compilations of open source current news articles and commentary concerning significant arms control treaty and related national security issues. The publications aim to give a balanced representation of how the public, other government organizations, and the media may view these arms control and threat reduction programs and issues. They are intended to serve the informational needs of Department of Defense (DoD) officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are not necessarily those supported by DoD, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, or the DTIRP.

The construction requirements for new nuclear facilities can be seen not far from the 9212 site. The storage facility for highly enriched uranium where the July break-in occurred was completed in 2010 with 90,000 square feet of concrete. Its walls are 30 feet thick and two stories tall, with hidden gun ports. Inside the concrete box, every scrap of radioactive waste is carried to its eventual tomb by a series of mechanical arms and lifts requiring no human touch. Databases and computers track every trace of radioactive material continuously in this paperless, sterile world. *[…]*

Nuclear Posture Review

In an April 2009 speech, President Obama outlined his vision of a world free of nuclear weapons. Acknowledging that his goal might not be accomplished in his lifetime, Obama laid out an agenda for forging new partnerships to stop the spread of nuclear weapons, ending production of fissile material for weapons and ratifying new treaties to reduce their numbers.

Since then, though, the president has taken few steps to implement his objective. On the contrary, his 2010 Nuclear Posture Review, which lays out the role of nuclear weapons in U.S. security strategy, promised to maintain the triad of nuclear weapons favored by every president since Dwight Eisenhower.

In December 2010, the Senate approved ratification of the New START accord with Russia, which limits both sides to 1,550 warheads. But no progress has been made on the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty, which would curb development of new nuclear weapons and impose a permanent ban on nuclear tests by signatories.

Over the past year, the president has been calculating his next nuclear step. Civilian and military advisers have presented him with countless options as he sets more precise guidelines that military planners will translate into intricate targeting plans. The White House declined to comment on the president's strategic direction, but some government officials and outside experts said they believe he favors renewed talks with the Russians to drop the warhead total from 1,550 to 1,100. Few, however, expect any announcement until after the presidential election in November. *[…]*

Spending limits

The nuclear arsenal has not entirely escaped cuts. To comply with the new Budget Control Act spending limits, the NNSA decided this year that it could not afford to replace both the crumbling plutonium testing facility at Los Alamos for $6 billion and the deteriorating uranium processing facility in Building 9212 at Oak Ridge for $6.5 billion. The NNSA chose to rehab Building 9212

back to top

News articles and publications found on the DTIRP website are compilations of open source current news articles and commentary concerning significant arms control treaty and related national security issues. The publications aim to give a balanced representation of how the public, other government organizations, and the media may view these arms control and threat reduction programs and issues. They are intended to serve the informational needs of Department of Defense (DoD) officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are not necessarily those supported by DoD, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, or the DTIRP.

because there was no alternative site where the critical work carried out there could be performed.

So, after 250 contractors moved into Los Alamos last year and tractors dug out 160,000 cubic feet of volcanic tuff rock from the side of a hill, NNSA and the administration decided that building a new plutonium-testing site would be delayed five years. The crews stopped work. The tractors were idled. A new reality sank in.

That new reality means some of the plutonium will be shipped to other facilities. Every couple of days, a UPS truck will deliver a dime-size slice of plutonium to Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, 45 miles east of San Francisco. Larger quantities of plutonium will be carried by secure vans to the Nevada National Security Site northwest of Las Vegas. Plutonium remaining at Los Alamos will be hand-delivered via an underground tunnel from one building to another.

The tunnel is being upgraded, and renovations are underway at Livermore and the Nevada site to handle the plutonium. Officials estimate the changes in the three locations will cost an additional $650 million over the next five years.

back to top

News articles and publications found on the DTIRP website are compilations of open source current news articles and commentary concerning significant arms control treaty and related national security issues. The publications aim to give a balanced representation of how the public, other government organizations, and the media may view these arms control and threat reduction programs and issues. They are intended to serve the informational needs of Department of Defense (DoD) officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are not necessarily those supported by DoD, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, or the DTIRP.

Chinese to Appeal after Japan Court Rejects Compensation

Xinhua, 23 September 2012; accessed via Open Source Center.

The victims of a fatal toxic gas leak from containers left behind by the Japanese army during World War II would appeal to Japan's Supreme Court after their compensation demand was rejected.

A liaison for the Japanese lawyers that serve as the victims' counsel told Xinhua on Sunday that they would start the appeal proceedings in recent days, adding that a representative of the victims is now in Tokyo lobbying Japanese lawmakers.

The Tokyo High Court upheld Friday a lower court decision that rejected the victims' compensation demand, denying the Japanese government's responsibility to collect the weapons due to no detailed information on their location.

The leak in Qiqihar City in 2003 left more than 40 people wounded with one death. The Japanese government agreed to pay 300 million yen for disposing of abandoned chemical weapons. The victims, however, are demanding compensation for their medical expenses. They told Xinhua that they have been afflicted since they were injured in the leak.

Niu Haiying has been weak as a result of the injury while her child is also not in a good shape, her husband Hao Yanzhi said. The woman is now in hospital receiving treatment. Yang Shumao, a victim in Sanhe Township of Qiqihar, said he always feels pain since the injury.

Qiqihar was where Japan's chemical weapon troops were located during World War II. Weapons abandoned by the troops have been frequently found in recent years, posing threat to local people.

Chi Susheng, a lawyer based in the city and a national lawmaker, said the Japanese courts' rulings were ridiculous, and he will continue to offer help and support to the victims.

back to top

News articles and publications found on the DTIRP website are compilations of open source current news articles and commentary concerning significant arms control treaty and related national security issues. The publications aim to give a balanced representation of how the public, other government organizations, and the media may view these arms control and threat reduction programs and issues. They are intended to serve the informational needs of Department of Defense (DoD) officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are not necessarily those supported by DoD, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, or the DTIRP.

CTBT Celebrates 16th Anniversary

CTBTO Preparatory Commission, 24 September 2012, http://www.ctbto.org

On September 24, 1996, the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) opened for signature at the United Nations [UN] General Assembly in New York, following three years of intense negotiations. The CTBT is the only treaty to ban all nuclear tests, everywhere and by everyone. The treaty also has a unique global alarm system to detect nuclear explosions.

The first proposal for a legal instrument to put an end to nuclear testing was made in 1954 by the then Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. This was followed by multiple rounds of negotiations in the 1950s and 1960s in which a complete ban on nuclear testing was discussed, but only a partial ban was achieved. The 1963 Partial Test-Ban Treaty (PTBT) banned nuclear tests in the atmosphere, in space, and underwater. It still, however, permitted underground testing, which actually increased in numbers after 1963.

The 1986 Reykjavik summit between U.S. President Ronald Reagan and Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev laid the foundations for the end of the Cold War. While the two leaders failed to agree on the complete abolition of all nuclear weapons, the summit led to a series of far-reaching arms control and disarmament measures. Nuclear testing and its verification were discussed at the summit and, for the first time, the Soviet side signaled openness to on-site inspections.

In the five decades before the CTBT, over 2,000 nuclear tests shook and irradiated the planet. The post-CTBT world saw only a handful of nuclear tests: those by India and Pakistan in 1998 and by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) in 2006 and 2009. These all met universal condemnation, including unanimously adopted UN Security Council sanctions. The zero-tolerance stance against nuclear tests is reflected by the number of States Signatories to the CTBT: 183, or over 90 percent of all countries.

back to top

News articles and publications found on the DTIRP website are compilations of open source current news articles and commentary concerning significant arms control treaty and related national security issues. The publications aim to give a balanced representation of how the public, other government organizations, and the media may view these arms control and threat reduction programs and issues. They are intended to serve the informational needs of Department of Defense (DoD) officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are not necessarily those supported by DoD, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, or the DTIRP.

States to Press for Early Entry into Force of CTBT

UN News Center, 24 September 2012, http://www.un.org

Senior government officials will press for the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) when they meet later this week at United Nations Headquarters in New York, where the treaty first opened for signature 16 years ago today.

The CTBT is the only treaty to ban all nuclear tests, everywhere and by everyone. The treaty also has a unique global alarm system to detect nuclear explosions.

With the combination of the treaty and its verification system, the international community has "virtually pushed the genie of nuclear explosions back in the bottle," the Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), Tibor Tóth, told a news conference at UN Headquarters ahead of Thursday's high-level event.

The CTBTO is tasked with building up the treaty's verification regime so that it is fully operational when the treaty enters into force, and with promoting signatures and ratifications.

Out of a total listed number of 195 States, 183 have so far signed the CTBT and 157 have ratified it. For the treaty to enter into force, ratification is required from the so-called Annex 2 States. Of these, China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, Pakistan and the United States, have yet to ratify it.

back to top

News articles and publications found on the DTIRP website are compilations of open source current news articles and commentary concerning significant arms control treaty and related national security issues. The publications aim to give a balanced representation of how the public, other government organizations, and the media may view these arms control and threat reduction programs and issues. They are intended to serve the informational needs of Department of Defense (DoD) officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are not necessarily those supported by DoD, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, or the DTIRP.

U.S. Conducts Fifth Nonexplosive Plutonium Test

Nuclear Threat Initiative, 21 September 2012, http://www.nti.org/gsn

Sources on Wednesday disclosed the completion between April and June of a fifth Z machine plutonium trial intended for studying the capacities of U.S. nuclear armaments, Kyodo News reported.

Scientists at the Sandia National Laboratories in New Mexico scrutinized plutonium activity under high pressure and heat levels like those of a detonating nuclear bomb, the National Nuclear Security Administration personnel said. The Z machine can generate X-rays of unparalleled intensity to mimic the fusion reactions of nuclear warheads, the sources indicated.

Experiments involving the Z machine supplement a separate series of subcritical nuclear trials, the semiautonomous Energy Department office has said.

The United States conducted its most recent nuclear test detonation 20 years ago. It began the subcritical experiments in 1997 and the additional plutonium trials in 2010 to help ensure the upkeep of its aging nuclear weapons.

back to top

News articles and publications found on the DTIRP website are compilations of open source current news articles and commentary concerning significant arms control treaty and related national security issues. The publications aim to give a balanced representation of how the public, other government organizations, and the media may view these arms control and threat reduction programs and issues. They are intended to serve the informational needs of Department of Defense (DoD) officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are not necessarily those supported by DoD, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, or the DTIRP.

U.S. Marks 20 Years without Underground Nuclear Explosive Testing

National Nuclear Security Administration, 21 September 2012, http://nnsa.energy.gov

Twenty years ago, on September 23, 1992, the United States conducted its last underground nuclear explosive test. Since then, the United States has developed the capability to ensure the safety, security, and reliability of its stockpile through the use of state-of-the-art technology and research while maintaining a moratorium on nuclear explosive testing.

"Over the past twenty years, the United States has been able to innovate and develop the tools we need to keep our stockpile safe, secure, and effective without underground testing," said [National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA)] Administrator Thomas D'Agostino. "In April 2009, President Obama shared his vision of a world without nuclear weapons. As we work toward that goal, we have the world's leading scientific facilities, the world's fastest computers, and the world's brightest minds working to ensure that we never again have to perform nuclear explosive testing on U.S. nuclear weapons."

Created in the 1990s, NNSA's Stockpile Stewardship Program has allowed successive Presidents to remain confident in the safety, security, and effectiveness of the stockpile. Scientists and weapons experts at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL), Sandia National Laboratories (SNL), and the Nevada National Security Site (NNSS) have significantly advanced the nation's ability to understand the stockpile without nuclear explosive testing through legacy data, new data from non-nuclear experiments, supercomputer simulations and modeling, laboratory testing, and data analysis.

Ongoing investments in one-of-a-kind facilities at each of the labs have added to tools and techniques available to researchers. For example, the National Ignition Facility at LLNL, Z Machine at SNL, and the Dual-Axis Radiographic Hydrodynamic Test Facility at LANL allow for the re-creation and study of specific phenomena that would be found in a nuclear detonation. The Nevada National Security Site – formerly the Nevada Test Site – now plays a significant role as part of the Stockpile Stewardship Program with facilities such as JASPER and U1a. Combined with increases in supercomputing capacity (NNSA's Sequoia supercomputer is the world's fastest), scientists have been able to employ computer simulations and other non-nuclear experiments to achieve high confidence in the stockpile, without the need for nuclear explosive testing.

In addition, because of the continual improvement of science and technology, the United States has been able to extend the life of its weapons systems. Life Extension Programs conducted by NNSA allow for existing designs to be maintained without the need for additional explosive testing or weapons development.

back to top

News articles and publications found on the DTIRP website are compilations of open source current news articles and commentary concerning significant arms control treaty and related national security issues. The publications aim to give a balanced representation of how the public, other government organizations, and the media may view these arms control and threat reduction programs and issues. They are intended to serve the informational needs of Department of Defense (DoD) officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are not necessarily those supported by DoD, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, or the DTIRP.

No Going Back: 20 Years since the Last U.S. Nuclear Test

Arms Control Association, 20 September 2012, http://www.armscontrol.org

On September 23, 1992, under the surface of the Nevada Test Site, the United States conducted its 1,030th – and last – nuclear weapon test explosion. At the time, there were serious questions about whether the United States could indefinitely extend the service lives of its nuclear warheads without regular nuclear testing.

But today, with the help of two decades of hard data and problem-solving through the nuclear weapons Stockpile Stewardship Program, those questions have been answered. As Bruce T. Goodwin, Principal Associate Director for Weapons at Livermore National Laboratory told The Washington Post in November 2011: "We have a more fundamental understanding of how these weapons work today than we ever imagined when we were blowing them up."

It is now widely recognized that the United States no longer has any need for, nor any interest in, conducting nuclear explosive tests. Four presidential administrations have determined that it remains in the U.S. national security interests to refrain from resuming nuclear explosive testing: George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama. The more time passes the more it becomes clear: the days of U.S. nuclear testing are over.

The 1992 U.S. testing halt was triggered by Congressional approval of the Exon-Hatfield-Mitchell 9-month test moratorium legislation – a bipartisan initiative that was prompted by the end of the Cold War, the closure of the Soviet test site in Kazakhstan in 1989, and Russia's unilateral test moratorium announced on October 5, 1991. The Senate approved the measure on August 3, 1992 by a 68-32 vote. The House adopted it on September 24 by a 224-151 margin. The legislation limited the number and purpose of any additional testing and set a September 30, 1996 end date for U.S. testing.

On July 3, 1993, after an extensive interagency review, President Bill Clinton announced he would extend the U.S. moratorium and pursue multilateral negotiations for a Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Negotiations began in 1994 and concluded in mid-1996. The treaty, which was opened for signature in September 1996, prohibits "any nuclear weapon test explosion," provides for an extensive global monitoring system, and the option for short-notice, on-site inspections to detect and deter surreptitious nuclear weapons testing.

Before signing the CTBT on September 24, 1996, President Clinton created the Stockpile Stewardship Program to maintain the U.S. nuclear arsenal in the absence of nuclear test explosions. Before the program would be able to show concrete results, the Senate rejected the CTBT in 1999 after a hasty and abbreviated debate, in part because some senators were concerned that the new approach might not work.

back to top

News articles and publications found on the DTIRP website are compilations of open source current news articles and commentary concerning significant arms control treaty and related national security issues. The publications aim to give a balanced representation of how the public, other government organizations, and the media may view these arms control and threat reduction programs and issues. They are intended to serve the informational needs of Department of Defense (DoD) officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are not necessarily those supported by DoD, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, or the DTIRP.

Now, the stewardship program has proven so successful over the years that many informed observers who were initially skeptical believe that the United States does not need nuclear tests. As Linton Brooks, former director of the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) under President George W. Bush, said in November 2011, "as a practical matter, it is almost certain that the United States will not test again... I have been in and out of government for a long time. And in recent years I never met anybody who advocated that we seek authorization to return to testing."

And George Shultz, President Ronald Reagan's Secretary of State, said in April 2009, "[Republicans] might have been right voting against [the CTBT] some years ago, but they would be right voting for it now, based on these new facts.... [There are] new pieces of information that are very important and that should be made available to the Senate."

Times have changed since 1992 and many of the old assumptions and beliefs about nuclear weapons and nuclear testing no longer apply. We now have almost two decades of experience with the Stockpile Stewardship Program, which has exceeded all expectations. The recent National Academy of Sciences (NAS) report, "The Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty – Technical Issues for the United States," lays out a compelling technical case, based on the latest information, that the United States does not need nuclear tests to maintain its arsenal.

The NAS report finds that "The technical capabilities for maintaining the U.S. stockpile absent nuclear-explosion testing are better now than anticipated" when the NAS issued its previous report in 2002, and that "the United States has the technical capabilities to maintain a safe, secure, and reliable stockpile of nuclear weapons into the foreseeable future without nuclear-explosion testing."

The technical strategy for maintaining the U.S. nuclear stockpile without explosive testing has been in place for almost two decades. Since 1994, each warhead type in the U.S. nuclear arsenal has been determined to be safe and reliable through a rigorous annual certification process. The Stockpile Stewardship Program includes nuclear weapons surveillance and maintenance, non-nuclear and subcritical nuclear experiments, and increasingly sophisticated supercomputer modeling. Life extension programs have successfully refurbished existing types of nuclear warheads and can continue to do so indefinitely.

A 2009 study by JASON, the independent technical review panel, concluded that the "lifetimes of today's nuclear warheads could be extended for decades, with no anticipated loss in confidence."

back to top

News articles and publications found on the DTIRP website are compilations of open source current news articles and commentary concerning significant arms control treaty and related national security issues. The publications aim to give a balanced representation of how the public, other government organizations, and the media may view these arms control and threat reduction programs and issues. They are intended to serve the informational needs of Department of Defense (DoD) officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are not necessarily those supported by DoD, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, or the DTIRP.

Arguments for resuming U.S. nuclear testing have become weaker and weaker with time, as the stockpile is certified year-after-year and more warhead types have their service lives extended. Moreover, NNSA has more resources than ever before to perform core stockpile stewardship work. Since 2009, funding for the nuclear weapons complex has increased by 13 percent.

The Obama administration's $7.6 billion budget request for fiscal year 2013 would boost NNSA weapons programs funding even more, by 5 percent over last year's appropriation of $7.2 billion. As Senator Dianne Feinstein noted at a March 21, 2012 appropriations committee hearing, "Regarding nuclear weapons activities, I believe the fiscal year 2013 budget request provides more than sufficient funding to modernize the nuclear weapons stockpile."

Nevertheless, some die-hard CTBT critics say that the United States might someday need to test to develop a new type of nuclear weapon. First, there is no military requirement for new types of nuclear weapons. Second, in the exceedingly unlikely event that nuclear testing is needed in the distant future, the United States has the option to exercise the CTBT's "supreme national interest clause" and withdraw from the treaty.

Given that the United States already has the most advanced nuclear arsenal in the world, setting off another round of global nuclear tests would only serve to undermine U.S. security by helping other nuclear-armed states improve their nuclear capabilities. The CTBT has now been signed by 183 nations and ratified by 157. The treaty has already improved U.S. and global security. Both Russia and China halted nuclear testing as a result of the CTBT and only one nation (North Korea) has conducted nuclear tests since 1998.

In order for the CTBT to formally enter into force, however, it must still be ratified by the remaining eight "holdout" states listed in Annex 2 of the treaty. Ratification by the United States and China is crucial. By signing the treaty and ending nuclear testing, Washington and Beijing have already taken on most CTBT-related responsibilities, yet their failure to ratify has denied them – and others – the full security benefits of the treaty.

U.S. ratification would reinforce the taboo against testing and prompt other key states – such as China, India, and Pakistan – to ratify the treaty. Without positive action on the CTBT, however, the risk that one or more states could resume nuclear testing will only grow.

Nuclear testing is a dangerous and unnecessary vestige of the Cold War that the United States rightly abandoned in 1992. After 1,030 tests, the United States does not need further nuclear explosive testing, but those who would seek to improve their arsenals do. It is past time to take another look at the CTBT. The Senate has a responsibility to reconsider the treaty and to do so on the basis of an honest and up-to-date analysis of the facts and the issues at stake.

back to top

News articles and publications found on the DTIRP website are compilations of open source current news articles and commentary concerning significant arms control treaty and related national security issues. The publications aim to give a balanced representation of how the public, other government organizations, and the media may view these arms control and threat reduction programs and issues. They are intended to serve the informational needs of Department of Defense (DoD) officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are not necessarily those supported by DoD, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, or the DTIRP.

CTBT Information Processing Site Launched in Belarus

Nuclear Threat Initiative, 13 September 2012, http://www.nti.org/gsn

A new information processing facility in Belarus was set to begin operations on Tuesday in support of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty [CTBT], the Belarusian Telegraph Agency reported.

The Minsk site – overseen by the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty Organization – would receive information from the pact's International Monitoring Network, carry out related calculations, and send findings to the CTBT International Data Center in Vienna, Austria.

Forty-four "Annex 2" nations must ratify the treaty before it can enter into force. The eight holdouts from that group are China, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan, and the United States.

back to top

News articles and publications found on the DTIRP website are compilations of open source current news articles and commentary concerning significant arms control treaty and related national security issues. The publications aim to give a balanced representation of how the public, other government organizations, and the media may view these arms control and threat reduction programs and issues. They are intended to serve the informational needs of Department of Defense (DoD) officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are not necessarily those supported by DoD, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, or the DTIRP.

UN Conference on Disarmament Meeting Ends in Deadlock

UN News Center, 13 September 2012, http://www.un.org

As the United Nations [UN] Conference on Disarmament ended its 2012 session in Geneva today – without breaking an impasse over its agenda, including the consideration of a fissile materials treaty – the top UN official on the issue urged Member States to continue to seek progress, keeping in mind that their national security was not solely dependent on military might.

"National security is also linked to the security of one's neighbors, and to regional and global security," the UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Angela Kane, said as the Conference, the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community, adopted its 2012 report to the General Assembly.

"Recognizing this indivisibility of security is the first and most crucial step toward advancing the security interests of all, at the expense of none," Ms. Kane added.

Established in 1979 and with a current membership of 65 countries, the Conference on Disarmament primarily focuses on cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament, prevention of nuclear war, and prevention of an arms race in outer space, among other issues.

Over its history, the Conference has produced landmark disarmament instruments such as the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

However, the Conference has been plagued in recent years by an inability to overcome differences among its members and start its substantive work towards advancing those goals.

"The world is facing new risks and challenges to our common security. If we manage to address the challenges of disarmament, we will be able to better create a platform for common actions to address these new challenges as well," Ms Kane said in her remarks to the session's closing.

"Members have to employ all available means to reach a common political will and to enable this body to fulfill its mandate," she added. "This is less of a challenge of administrative reform than of reconciling differences among Member States through diplomacy. "

Such diplomacy, Ms. Kane said, may include high-level consultations in different formats, new approaches to addressing key issues, with the forthcoming 67th session of the General Assembly providing the broadest platform to consider new initiatives.

back to top

News articles and publications found on the DTIRP website are compilations of open source current news articles and commentary concerning significant arms control treaty and related national security issues. The publications aim to give a balanced representation of how the public, other government organizations, and the media may view these arms control and threat reduction programs and issues. They are intended to serve the informational needs of Department of Defense (DoD) officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are not necessarily those supported by DoD, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, or the DTIRP.

Plutonium Fuel (MOX) Program at Savannah River Site Hit with Major Setback

The Aiken Leader, 17 September 2012, http://aikenleader.villagesoup.com

In a series of significant setbacks for the Department of Energy's (DOE) troubled plutonium fuel [mixed oxide] (MOX) program at the Savannah River Site (SRS), a key Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) official has backed away from considering MOX use in TVA's aging reactors at this time.

The Decatur Daily, a newspaper located in Decatur, Alabama and just a few miles from TVA's Browns Ferry reactors, quotes Preston Swofford, Chief Nuclear Officer at TVA, as saying that he's not at this point interested in MOX use and the agency is instead focused on a host of problems facing operation and management of TVA's nuclear plants. The official was quoted as a DOE hearing on plutonium disposition, including necessity of testing of MOX in the problem-plagued Browns Ferry reactors, was conducted near Decatur on September 13.

The paper quotes Swofford's negative comments about consideration of MOX: "It's just so low on my radar screen that I refuse to jump in the fray. I don't think I do service to the ratepayers of the Valley bringing on one more issue. Now three or four years from now, when the fleet's back to steady, we'll take a look at the product."

"Given TVA's reluctance in pursuing MOX and the fact that the DOE has no customers to use experimental MOX fuel, [there] is reason to put the brakes on the entire MOX program and halt construction of the $6 billion MOX plant to nowhere," said Tom Clements, Nonproliferation Policy Director with the Alliance for Nuclear Accountability [ANA]. "It appears that the MOX program continues to degrade into a big-government program with a singular mission: transfer of tax payer money into the pockets of the plutonium industry."

At the DOE hearing on the draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement on plutonium testing and use in Browns Ferry, pro-MOX advocates were shocked that sixteen members of the public spoke against use of the experimental plutonium fuel in Browns Ferry while not a single person spoke in favor. Three people spoke in favor of pursuit of thorium reactors, not considered by DOE as an option for plutonium disposition.

Given the troubles with the Browns Ferry reactors, including having the worst rating by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) of any reactors in the United States, public sensitivity about the operation of the reactors is high. Comments from many members of the public who live nearby focused on increased risks to reactor operation if MOX is used in the GE Mark I reactors (Fukushima design).

back to top

News articles and publications found on the DTIRP website are compilations of open source current news articles and commentary concerning significant arms control treaty and related national security issues. The publications aim to give a balanced representation of how the public, other government organizations, and the media may view these arms control and threat reduction programs and issues. They are intended to serve the informational needs of Department of Defense (DoD) officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are not necessarily those supported by DoD, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, or the DTIRP.

According to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission in a September 18 blog on "Mid-Term Grades Go out for Nuclear Power Plants," the Browns Ferry reactors are in a unique, dangerous class when it comes to poor operation. The NRC states that "Browns Ferry 1 in Alabama is in the fourth performance category and requires increased oversight due to a safety finding of high significance, which will include additional inspections to confirm the plant's performance issues are being addressed."

TVA is struggling to deal with the host of issues at the Browns Ferry Fukushima-design reactors and does not need to add to problems by taking on the dodgy MOX mission, according to the ANA. "If the DOE tries to force TVA to commit now to MOX use in the Browns Ferry degraded reactors, which may never be able to perform at a higher safety level, I predict this arm-twisting approach will be seen for what it is and backfire into DOE's face," according to Clements. "If they were acting in a responsible manner, both DOE and AREVA, Inc. would announce that the aging Browns Ferry reactors are off the table for testing and use of experimental weapons-grade MOX."

Also, at the hearing in Alabama, it was pointed out to NNSA by ANA, via a written comment, that a video being shown about MOX included an erroneous statement that there was a "treaty" with Russia for plutonium disposition. There is only an "agreement" with Russia, which has much less status than a treaty which must be passed by the Senate. To its credit, NNSA has agreed to edit the video and fix the error. [See *Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement (PMDA)* synopsis at **http://dtirp.dtra.mil/TIC/synopses/pmda.aspx**] *[…]*

Experimental MOX made from weapons-grade plutonium has never been tested or used in a boiling water reactor (BWR) like Browns Ferry. Testing of MOX will take at least six years in one of the Browns Ferry reactors, according to an August 8 presentation to the NRC by Global Nuclear Fuel, meaning that MOX could not be used before 2025 at the earliest, resulting in a host of scheduling problems at the MOX factory, along with soaring costs which will raise the ire of Congress.

The DOE budget request for Fiscal Year 2013 estimated that yearly operational costs of the MOX would plant would be $499 million, so costs will mount rapidly as BWR fuel could not even be considered for licensing by the NRC until the test of "lead use assemblies" (LUAs) had been completed, the spent MOX allowed to cool down and the fuel subjected to post-irradiation examination. Test MOX will have to be fabricated in the MOX plant at SRS, if licensed to operate by the NRC, as no other facility in the world would have the capability to fabricate MOX from weapons-grade plutonium. *[…]*

back to top

News articles and publications found on the DTIRP website are compilations of open source current news articles and commentary concerning significant arms control treaty and related national security issues. The publications aim to give a balanced representation of how the public, other government organizations, and the media may view these arms control and threat reduction programs and issues. They are intended to serve the informational needs of Department of Defense (DoD) officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are not necessarily those supported by DoD, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, or the DTIRP.

BCC Agreement Four: Tamper Detection Equipment for RDE

U.S. Department of State, 24 September 2012, http://www.state.gov

[Editor's Note: The fourth session of the Bilateral Consultative Commission (BCC) under the New START treaty was held in Geneva from September 11-21, 2012, where Agreement Number 4 was signed. The text of this agreement follows, detailing the procedures for using tamper detection equipment to secure radiation detection equipment (RDE) stored in tamper-proof containers at the inspected Party's points of entry.]

The Delegation of the United States of America to the Bilateral Consultative Commission and the Delegation of the Russian Federation to the Bilateral Consultative Commission,

Acting in accordance with the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms of April 8, 2010, hereinafter referred to as the Treaty,

Pursuant to subparagraph (b) of Section I of Part Six of the Protocol to the Treaty,

Have agreed as follows:

1. The inspecting Party shall have the right to use tamper detection equipment that is brought to points of entry on the territory of the inspected Party. The tamper detection equipment shall be used only to apply tamper detection seals to tamper-proof containers referred to in subparagraph 9(c) and in paragraph 11 of Section VI of Part Five of the Annex on Inspection Activities to the Protocol to the Treaty, in which radiation detection equipment is stored, and to determine the condition of a previously applied tamper detection seal. Such tamper detection seals shall not be applied to and such tamper detection equipment shall not be used on the tamper-proof containers in which the calibration source is stored.

2. The Parties shall use makes and types of tamper detection equipment that are commercially available and available for acquisition by both Parties at the time the inspected Party provides consent to bring the equipment into its territory pursuant to paragraph 3 of this Agreement.

3. Prior to the first time the tamper detection equipment is brought into the territory of the inspected Party, the inspecting Party shall provide to the inspected Party a Format Number 43 notification containing a list of such tamper detection equipment, indicating the manufacturer's name and the model. The inspected Party shall, within 30 days from the date of receipt of the inspecting Party's notification, provide a Format Number 43 notification containing its consent to bring in such equipment or refusing such consent, with an explanation of the reasons for the refusal.

back to top

News articles and publications found on the DTIRP website are compilations of open source current news articles and commentary concerning significant arms control treaty and related national security issues. The publications aim to give a balanced representation of how the public, other government organizations, and the media may view these arms control and threat reduction programs and issues. They are intended to serve the informational needs of Department of Defense (DoD) officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are not necessarily those supported by DoD, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, or the DTIRP.

4. The inspecting Party may substitute tamper detection equipment of a different manufacturer or different model, subject to compliance with paragraphs 2 and 3 of this Agreement.

5. Tamper detection equipment shall be subject to examination by the inspected Party in accordance with paragraphs 2 and 4 of Section I of Part Five of the Annex on Inspection Activities to the Protocol to the Treaty.

6. Tamper detection equipment shall be used only at the point of entry and shall not be brought to the inspection site. A member of the in-country escort shall be present when tamper detection equipment is used. Tamper detection equipment shall be removed from the territory of the inspected Party by the inspection team that brought such equipment.

7. If it is detected that the tamper-proof containers have been tampered with, the inspection team leader shall, prior to the departure of the inspection team from the territory of the inspected Party, provide to a member of the in-country escort the data generated by the tamper detection equipment confirming the fact that the seal has been tampered with. A copy of such data shall be attached to the inspection activity report.

8. Without prejudice to the procedures described in paragraph 11 of Section VI of Part Five of the Annex on Inspection Activities to the Protocol to the Treaty, issues related to the detection of tampering with the tamper-proof containers shall be resolved by the Parties within the framework of the Bilateral Consultative Commission or by other agreed means.

9. This Agreement shall enter into force as of the date of signature and shall remain in force so long as the Treaty remains in force.

back to top

News articles and publications found on the DTIRP website are compilations of open source current news articles and commentary concerning significant arms control treaty and related national security issues. The publications aim to give a balanced representation of how the public, other government organizations, and the media may view these arms control and threat reduction programs and issues. They are intended to serve the informational needs of Department of Defense (DoD) officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are not necessarily those supported by DoD, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, or the DTIRP.

BCC Agreement Three: Telemetric Information Playback Equipment

U.S. Department of State, 21 September 2012, http://www.state.gov

[Editor's Note: The fourth session of the Bilateral Consultative Commission (BCC) under the New START treaty was held in Geneva from September 11-21, 2012, where Agreement Number 3 was signed. The text of this agreement follows, detailing the procedures for the Parties to acquire telemetric information playback equipment.]

The Delegation of the United States of America to the Bilateral Consultative Commission and the Delegation of the Russian Federation to the Bilateral Consultative Commission,

Acting in accordance with the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms of April 8, 2010, hereinafter referred to as the Treaty,

Pursuant to subparagraph (b) of Section I of Part Six of the Protocol to the Treaty,

Have agreed as follows:

1. In accordance with subparagraph 8(c) of Part Two of the Annex on Telemetric Information to the Protocol to the Treaty and paragraphs 1 and 3 of Part Five of the Annex on Telemetric Information to the Protocol to the Treaty, the Parties shall, upon request, provide each other with the opportunity to acquire telemetric information playback equipment for which a demonstration was conducted in accordance with subparagraph 8(a) of Part Two of the Annex on Telemetric Information to the Protocol to the Treaty, together with the appropriate software and technical documentation, as well as spare parts for previously purchased telemetric information playback equipment.

2. The lists of such telemetric information playback equipment, software, and technical documentation are contained in the Annexes to this Agreement.

3. This Agreement shall enter into force as of the date of signature and shall remain in force so long as the Treaty remains in force.

back to top

News articles and publications found on the DTIRP website are compilations of open source current news articles and commentary concerning significant arms control treaty and related national security issues. The publications aim to give a balanced representation of how the public, other government organizations, and the media may view these arms control and threat reduction programs and issues. They are intended to serve the informational needs of Department of Defense (DoD) officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are not necessarily those supported by DoD, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, or the DTIRP.

Italian Military Inspectors in Belarus on a Visit

Belarusian Telegraph Agency, 20 September 2012, http://news.belta.by

An Italian inspection group headed by Lieutenant Colonel Giuseppo Piombarolo is on an evaluation visit to the 116th guards attack unit of Air Force and Air Defense within the 2011 Vienna Document on Confidence and Security-Building Measures.

Italian military inspectors will stay in Belarus until September 21, BelTA learnt from the Belarusian Defense Ministry. The foreign inspectors will evaluate the reliability of the information presented by Belarus to the OSCE member states according to the 2011 Vienna Document on the personnel and material of the unit in question, the ministry said.

Along with two military inspectors from Italy, the group will include one inspector from the United States.

back to top

News articles and publications found on the DTIRP website are compilations of open source current news articles and commentary concerning significant arms control treaty and related national security issues. The publications aim to give a balanced representation of how the public, other government organizations, and the media may view these arms control and threat reduction programs and issues. They are intended to serve the informational needs of Department of Defense (DoD) officials in the continuing assessment of defense policies, programs and actions. Further reproduction or redistribution for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are not necessarily those supported by DoD, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, or the DTIRP.