



BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (BWC)

Uzbekistan Opens U.S.-Funded Biodefense Labs

Global Security Newswire, 28 March 2011; www.globalsecuritynewswire.org

Uzbekistan on Friday brought online two U.S.-funded biodefense facilities that are expected to boost the Central Asian region's ability track disease outbreaks. (104 words)

[Click here for full text.](#)

Committee Looks to Conduct Risk Assessment of Frederick Lab

BioPrepWatch, 01 April 2011; www.bioprepwatch.com

The Containment Lab Advisory Community Advisory Committee, a group formed to act as a liaison between the residents of Frederick County, Maryland, and the containment laboratories in the area, has taken on its first challenge. (299 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (CWC)

BGCA Completes Over-pack and Movement of Munitions

U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency (CMA), 23 March 2011, www.cma.army.mil

Blue Grass Chemical Activity completed the containerization of mustard projectiles which were earlier slated for an assessment designed to determine the characteristics of the mustard agent contained within them. (99 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

McConnell AFB Airmen to "Make CWC History"

U.S. Air Mobility Command, 25 March 2011, www.amc.af.mil

More than donning the "general issue" gas mask, McConnell AFB members are taking a historic step by hosting a Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) exercise March 28 to April 1, 2011. (293 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

Wildfire Burns 5,000 Acres at Pueblo Chemical Depot

The Pueblo Chieftain, 25 March 2011, www.chieftain.com

A fast-moving brush fire, sparked after powerful winds blew down a power pole, burned about 5,000 acres at the Pueblo Chemical Depot on Thursday afternoon. (304 words)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (CWC) (CONT.)

CMA Reaches 85 Percent Chemical Weapons Destruction Mark

U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency (CMA), 28 March 2011, www.cma.army.mil

The U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency (CMA) announced today that on Wednesday, March 23, it achieved destruction of 85 percent of the U.S. chemical agent stockpile since entry-into-force (EIF). (317 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

New Deputy Director-General of the OPCW

Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, 04 April 2011, www.opcw.org

The former Ambassador of Sri Lanka, Mrs. Grace Asirwatham, took up her duties as the new Deputy Director-General on April 1, 2011. (138 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR TEST-BAN TREATY (CTBT)

No Need for U.S. Nuclear Testing, NNSA Chief Says

Global Security Newswire, 25 March 2011; www.globalsecuritynewswire.org

The head of the U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration [NNSA] dismissed the need for additional nuclear testing in order to ensure the nation's nuclear arsenal remains in working order, *Arms Control Today* reported in its April edition. (466 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

Top Republican Remains Opposed to Nuclear Test-Ban

Global Security Newswire, 29 March 2011; www.globalsecuritynewswire.org

The 12 years since the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty was rejected on Capitol Hill have not offered reasons for reversing course in favor of the global ban on nuclear trial blasts, U.S. Senator Jon Kyl said on Tuesday. (954 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

CONVENTION ON CERTAIN CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS (CCW)

CCW Group of Governmental Experts to Continue to Negotiate on Cluster Munitions and Prepare for Fourth Review Conference

UN Office at Geneva, 25 March 2011, www.unog.ch

The Second 2011 Session of the Group of Governmental Experts of the States Parties to the CCW will commence on 28 March in Geneva. (415 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

back to top

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

FISSILE MATERIALS

Russia, U.S. in Talks on Uranium Enrichment Joint Venture

RIA Novosti, 24 March 2011, en.rian.ru/russia

Russia and the United States have started talks on setting up a joint venture to enrich uranium, the head of the Russian state nuclear corporation Rosatom said on Thursday. (184 words)

[Click here for full text.](#)

Conference on Disarmament Holds General Debate on the Cessation of the Nuclear Arms Race and Preventing Nuclear War

UN Office at Geneva, 24 March 2011, www.unog.ch

The Conference on Disarmament held a plenary meeting this morning in which it discussed agenda items 1 and 2, the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters. (596 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

U.S., China Expand Cooperation on Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Technology

National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), 30 March 2011, nnsa.energy.gov

The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) and the China National Energy Administration today announced that they have agreed to continue expanding cooperation between the United States and China on nuclear security issues. (509 words)

[Click here for full text.](#)

Y-12 Seismically at Risk – 9212 Complex Could Be Damaged, Disabled by Major Quake, Official Says

Knoxnews.com, 31 March 2011, www.knoxnews.com

Despite millions of dollars spent on upgrades, the 60-year-old production hub at the Y-12 nuclear weapons plant remains seismically vulnerable and could be severely damaged or disabled by a major earthquake. (964 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

UN Disarmament Machinery Can Help Achieve Goals, but Ultimate Responsibility 'Lies at Doorsteps' of Member States, Disarmament Commission Told as Session Opens

States News Service, 04 April 2011, accessed via Lexis Nexis

Despite an eleven-year stalemate in the Disarmament Commission over ways to achieve nuclear disarmament and wide skepticism that confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms would also remain elusive, hope remained for achieving consensus on each item of that body's painstakingly agreed agenda. (868 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

 [back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

NEW START TREATY (NST)

U.S. Reviewing Nuclear Arsenal with Eye to New Cuts

Associated Press (in Washington Times), 23 March 2011, www.washingtontimes.com

The Obama administration has begun examining whether it can make cuts to its nuclear weapons stockpiles that go beyond those outlined in a recent treaty with Russia. (186 words)

[Click here for full text.](#)

New START Implementation Panel to Convene

Global Security Newswire, 28 March 2011; www.globalsecuritynewswire.org

Russia and the United States are set on Monday to convene the first meeting of a panel intended to address matters related to the operation of a bilateral strategic nuclear arms control treaty that took effect last month, the State Department announced on Friday. (186 words)

[Click here for full text.](#)

Nukes in Europe: Coming Home Soon

Foreign Policy In Focus, 30 March 2011, www.fpif.org

The last U.S. nuclear weapons deployed in Europe may be on their way home, ending more than 50 years of their deployment abroad. (1,099 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

FULL TEXT OF BI-WEEKLY ARTICLES FOLLOWS:

 [back to top](#)

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Global Security Newswire, 28 March 2011; www.globalsecuritynewswire.org

Uzbekistan on Friday brought online two U.S.-funded biodefense facilities that are expected to boost the Central Asian region's ability track disease outbreaks, the Central Asia Newswire reported.

Located in the cities of Andijan and Ferghana in the Ferghana Valley, the laboratories are to support diagnostic efforts in Uzbekistan and the wider region, UzDaily.com reported on Wednesday.

Work on the two facilities wrapped up in December. The price of building and providing technology for the facilities was \$1.3 million. Funding came through the U.S. Defense Threat Reduction Agency, which is also providing instruction to laboratory personnel in the use and upkeep of the advanced systems.

 [back to top](#)

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Committee Looks to Conduct Risk Assessment of Frederick Lab

BioPrepWatch, 01 April 2011; www.bioprepwatch.com

The Containment Lab Advisory Community Advisory Committee, a group formed to act as a liaison between the residents of Frederick County, Maryland, and the containment laboratories in the area, has taken on its first challenge.

At a meeting of the National Research Council on Monday, March 21, Beth Willis, the committee chair, said that the committee is attempting to conduct a risk assessment for a new laboratory space, according to the Frederick News Post.

A similar NRC panel last year evaluated the Army's environmental impact for its new infectious disease lab, which led to the formation of the current committee.

Willis mentioned several key issues that needed to be included in current and future risk assessments.

"A significantly more complex environment is evolving with the addition of each new facility," Willis' written comments said, according to the Frederick News Post. "Earlier (environmental impact statements) spoke to possible impacts of simultaneous breakdowns of systems in different (National Interagency Biodefense Campus) facilities, but not of cascading or non-simultaneous events. Both the gulf oil spill and the current nuclear crisis in Japan speak to the reality of events sometimes escalating well beyond a hazard assessment's worst-case scenario."

In addition, Willis and the committee said that past risk assessments have downplayed the possible risk of disgruntled employees and insider threat as well as the risk of an external terrorist threat. The committee also warned of the need for a more thorough discussion on lab-acquired infections and lab accidents, which she said were a source of anxiety for those in the community.

"While we understand that tularemia is not directly infectious human-to-human, in a scenario with a disease that is directly transmissible what would be the consequences in the city, the schools, medical offices etc?" the statement said, according to the Frederick News Post.

[back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

BGCA Completes Over-pack and Movement of Munitions

U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency (CMA), 23 March 2011, www.cma.army.mil

Blue Grass Chemical Activity completed the containerization of mustard projectiles which were earlier slated for an assessment designed to determine the characteristics of the mustard agent contained within them.

The containerization included over-pack and movement of 155mm mustard projectiles. A total of 12 crates containing the 96 containerized projectiles were safely transported to the designated storage igloo for future X-ray operations, which are scheduled to begin in May.

All munitions movements, over-pack operations and storage operations were performed under the direct oversight of qualified U.S. Army ammunition surveillance personnel and are in accordance with U.S. Army Standard Operating Procedures.

[back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



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DTRA

McConnell AFB Airmen to “Make CWC History”

U.S. Air Force, Air Mobility Command, 25 March 2011, www.amc.af.mil

More than donning the "general issue" gas mask, McConnell AFB members are taking a historic step by hosting a Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) exercise March 28 to April 1, 2011.

The exercise will be the Air Mobility Command's first base-wide, CWC 301 Mock On-Site inspection. The CWC is a multi-national arms control treaty that prohibits the development, production, stockpiling, transfer, use and preparation for use of chemical weapons.

"The goal of the CWC is to one day make a safer world by eliminating chemical weapons," said Dave Graves, AMC Treaty Compliance Officer. "McConnell is contributing to that goal by preparing and training Air Force base assistance teams [BATs]."

BATs consist of personnel knowledgeable of the CWC. The BAT members along with approximately 100 Team McConnell personnel will meet here, forming one team. The team and base will go through a rigorous four and a half day mock inspection. The inspectors will be searching for violations of the CWC such as McConnell's aircraft transporting chemical weapons or facilities housing chemical weapons.

"Our wing successes during the CWC mock on-site inspection [will be] largely due to Team McConnell's relentless drive and motivation, professionalism and strong leadership," said Mr. David Allee, the 22nd Air Refueling Wing International Treaty Compliance officer.

McConnell's Airmen can expect to attend mandatory formations, training, selective interviews, hazardous records reviews, on-site inspections and much more.

"The 'inspectors' will execute their mission [under the CWC] without interfering with McConnell's mission, however, commanders may suspend daily operations in order to support the inspectors," said Mr. Allee.

Although the CWC exercise is a small taste of an actual inspection, McConnell Airmen will be able to learn new skills, refine old ones and have the chance to be pioneers in AMC, said both treaty compliance officers.

 [back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

Wildfire Burns 5,000 Acres at Pueblo Chemical Depot

The Pueblo Chieftain, 25 March 2011, www.chieftain.com

A fast-moving brush fire, sparked after powerful winds blew down a power pole, burned about 5,000 acres at the Pueblo Chemical Depot on Thursday afternoon. Neither the area where the depot's mustard agent stockpile is stored nor the facility under construction to destroy the weapons was threatened, said Chuck Sprague, Army public affairs officer for the depot.

Sprague said that the fire started at about 4 p.m. as strong winds whipped across the prairie in the eastern part of the depot property. He said that a call had come into the depot headquarters alerting officials to a plume of smoke. In the early stages of the fire, the National Weather Service reported wind gusts between 41 and 53 mph.

"The wind changed direction several times so it's not one big smooth swap of grassland (that was burned)," said Sprague.

The Army maintains a crew of civilian firefighters and two brush-pumper trucks and the crew was quickly joined by firefighters from the Transportation Technology Center and the Pueblo County Rural Fire Department, the Pueblo County Sheriff's Office's Emergency Service Bureau and Boone firefighters.

Sprague said that at about 9 p.m. the fire had been 95 percent contained and that all but a few of the firefighters remained to extinguish hot spots.

Sprague said that an old unused shed was burned in the area, but no other structures were damaged or threatened. The shed was near Lynda Ann Reservoir, a defunct vehicle testing site and fishing pond.

"The only things out there that are going to miss (the shed) are the mice that nested in it," Sprague said.

He said that at about 5 p.m., an order was given to evacuate the chemical weapons destruction plant area and about 600 people exited the grounds, heading out of the depot's northern exit in a procedure that moved smoothly.

 [back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



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DTRA

CMA Reaches 85 Percent Chemical Weapons Destruction Mark

U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency (CMA), 28 March 2011, www.cma.army.mil

The U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency (CMA) announced today that on Wednesday, March 23, it achieved destruction of 85 percent of the U.S. chemical agent stockpile since entry-into-force (EIF), when the United States ratified the Chemical Weapons Convention treaty in April 1997.

With this achievement, CMA is left with only 5 percent of its stockpile remaining before completing its mission of destroying 90 percent of the entire U.S. chemical agent stockpile since EIF. The final 10 percent will be disposed of by the U.S. Army Element Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives (ACWA) program. CMA is moving forward at a pace that should have mission completion by April 2012.

“Reaching 85 percent demonstrates how dedicated CMA’s work force is to the safety of the community, the workers and the environment,” said Conrad Whyne, CMA director. “It shows dedication to their country and the safe disposal of the stockpile. I am looking forward to celebrating the end of the mission and a safer tomorrow when we reach 90 percent.”

With this achievement, CMA has destroyed 26,019 tons of agent and more than 2.3 million munitions.

This is one of many achievements for CMA over the past year. Workers at the Pine Bluff Chemical Agent Disposal Facility completed destruction of the Pine Bluff chemical stockpile in November 2010, ending a legacy of safe storage operations by the men and women of the Pine Bluff Chemical Activity.

CMA achieved 75 percent destruction of its stockpile in July 2010 and 80 percent destruction in October 2010. In April 2010, CMA’s Non-Stockpile Chemical Materiel Project completed a mission at the Pine Bluff Explosive Destruction System site, destroying more than 1,200 recovered munitions.

CMA currently has three remaining sites in operation at Anniston, Alabama; Tooele, Utah; and Umatilla, Oregon, where chemical weapons continue to be destroyed. CMA is also safely storing chemical agent munitions at the ACWA sites near Richmond, Kentucky, and at Pueblo, Colorado.

 [back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

New Deputy Director-General of the OPCW

Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, 04 April 2011, www.opcw.org

The former Ambassador of Sri Lanka, Mrs. Grace Asirwatham, took up her duties as the new Deputy Director-General on April 1, 2011. She succeeds Mr. John Freeman from the United Kingdom, who had served in that capacity since April 2006.

Mrs. Asirwatham has had a long career in the Sri Lankan diplomatic service during which she has held several positions in Colombo, most recently as Director-General for South Asia and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. She has served overseas in Pakistan, Germany and as Ambassador to Nepal and The Netherlands.

In this last capacity, Ambassador Asirwatham was concurrently the Sri Lankan Permanent Representative to the OPCW where she served, inter alia, as Vice-Chairperson of the 14th Conference of States Parties in 2009.

Ambassador Asirwatham is married with two children, and enjoys painting in her spare time.

[back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



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No Need for U.S. Nuclear Testing, NNSA Chief Says

Global Security Newswire, 25 March 2011; www.globalsecuritynewswire.org

The head of the U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration [NNSA] dismissed the need for additional nuclear testing in order to ensure the nation's nuclear arsenal remains in working order, *Arms Control Today* reported in its April edition.

"In my opinion, we have a safe and secure and reliable stockpile. ... There's no need to conduct underground (nuclear) testing," said Thomas D'Agostino, whose agency oversees the upkeep of the nation's nuclear-weapon complex.

D'Agostino offered his comments amid indications that the Obama administration is preparing to push for U.S. ratification of the Comprehensive [Nuclear] Test-Ban Treaty [CTBT], which is intended to establish a global prohibition on atomic trial blasts.

The United States is one of 44 "Annex 2" nations that must ratify the pact before it can enter into force. It is among nine remaining holdouts; the others are China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, North Korea and Pakistan.

The U.S. Senate in 1999 rejected the executive branch's last effort to push the treaty through in Washington. Among the concerns then was the need for future testing to demonstrate that nuclear weapons would function as intended.

"The United States has a plan to extend the life of the existing stockpile" that does not involve test explosions, D'Agostino said. He added that the Obama administration's 2010 Nuclear Posture Review "very clearly directs our [national] laboratory directors to study the full range of options to make sure that we get the benefit of their technical knowledge and capability. ... (T)he laboratory directors have endorsed this as an acceptable approach to move forward with taking care of the stockpile out into the future."

The NNSA chief also played up the likelihood of meeting President Obama's 2009 pledge for locking down loose nuclear materials across the globe within four years. The "plan that we have right now completes this effort in December of 2013. ... We've identified a scope of work to get this four-year material secured," he told *Arms Control Today*.

D'Agostino addressed restrictions on his agency's nonproliferation operations due to appropriations levels for this budget year that are less than sought by the administration. Congress has yet to approve a final budget for the fiscal year that began on October 1, instead passing a series of short-term funding resolutions.

 [back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

"There likely will be some minor impacts associated with, well, we'll have to move this shipment back a few months," D'Agostino said. "Our plan was to front load that Global Threat Reduction Initiative work to get it under way robustly in 2011 so that as schedules change, we don't lose track and we can still hit our December 2013 target. Our plan is still to do that. We're down at the FY10 levels, but we can reallocate resources.... (W)e're managing just fine, but things get harder as the year goes on".

 [back to top](#)

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Top Republican Remains Opposed to Nuclear Test-Ban

Global Security Newswire, 29 March 2011; www.globalsecuritynewswire.org

The 12 years since the Comprehensive [Nuclear] Test-Ban Treaty was rejected on Capitol Hill have not offered reasons for reversing course in favor of the global ban on nuclear trial blasts, U.S. Senator Jon Kyl said on Tuesday.

"I've seen nothing in the ensuing time to suggest that if we forever give up our right to test" other countries would follow suit, the Senate Minority Whip said during a discussion at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Nuclear Policy Conference. "I'm not prepared to forever give up our right to do that with the circumstances that exist in the world today," he added.

The United Nations in 1996 adopted the prohibition on nuclear test explosions, which now has 182 member nations. Supporters say the agreement is essential to preventing additional nations from developing nuclear arms, as testing is a crucial component in the weaponization process.

The United States has observed a self-imposed moratorium on atomic bomb blasts since 1992. It has signed but not ratified the test-ban treaty.

When the Senate last took up the pact in 1999, opponents, led by Kyl, argued it would prohibit tests that might prove necessary to verify the reliability of the U.S. stockpile. Skeptics also wondered whether treaty states might be able to conduct clandestine nuclear tests without being detected.

The United States is one of 44 "Annex 2" countries that must ratify the treaty before it can enter into force. It is also among nine holdouts; the others are China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, North Korea and Pakistan.

The Obama administration shortly after coming into office signaled it would attempt to ratify the agreement after the New START pact was finalized. However, the White House has not publicly committed to a time line for winning necessary Senate approval in the wake of vehement Republican opposition to the recently enacted U.S.-Russian nuclear arms control deal.

In pressing for ratification, treaty supporters today point to continuing efforts to stand up the worldwide verification network to detect nuclear explosions and steps by the United States to ensure the effectiveness of its atomic arsenal.

 [back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

The global lattice of CTBT detection sites is expected to be 90 percent complete before the start of 2013, the head of the agreement's implementing body said last year. Today, the network boasts 265 certified monitoring and laboratory installations.

Still, those strides are not enough to assuage the concerns of the Senate's No. 2 Republican. "It is the quality not the quantity of measurements or devices ... that really matters," according to Kyl, who has announced he will retire after the 2012 election. "I would note that even if you add the sophisticated United States capabilities beyond the international capabilities we were not able to verify the test that was announced in advance by the North Koreans in 2009," the lawmaker added.

Seismic stations operated by the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty Organization [CTBTO] and other entities detected what was quickly and widely assessed to be an underground nuclear blast. However, no organization ever identified airborne radionuclides that would have offered further proof of a North Korean nuclear test – a reversal from the discovery of such material that helped to pin down Pyongyang's 2006 test.

Kyl also questioned whether the test-ban treaty's regime for enforcing its terms "could be utilized effectively at all." "The answer is no. The treaty has not changed in this regard at all," he said, asserting that in the event of a suspected nuclear explosion a member state would have to marshal the support of 51 other nations before an investigation could be launched.

To persuade that many countries to take action in a timely fashion "beyond a doubt would not be achievable," Kyl told the audience. "So it's not just that [the treaty's] not verifiable; it's not enforceable," he said.

The U.S. Stockpile Stewardship Program, which works without conducting test detonations to ensure the country's nuclear weapons would perform as expected, has provided "both good news and bad news" about the state of the arsenal, according to Kyl. He did not elaborate.

The lawmaker said that before the Obama administration submits the treaty for Senate consideration, the White House must work with the international community to define what atomic activities are prohibited under the agreement. Moscow might have a different idea of how much nuclear yield would be allowed, according to Kyl.

He pointed to May 2009 finding of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States that there was a difference of opinion on the subject within the global community. "There's no debate. This is a canard," Arms Control Association head Daryl Kimball

 [back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

said after the event, adding that there is no discord among member states about what the agreement outlaws. "Zero means zero," he told Global Security Newswire.

Kimball said the United States needs to find a way to prevent other states from conducting nuclear explosions that could help advance established or nascent weapons programs in nations such as China, Iran and Pakistan.

He also took issue with Kyl's description of the Stockpile Stewardship Program, noting that the effort has informed the opinion of the nation's weapons laboratory chiefs that further explosive testing is not necessary. National Nuclear Security Administration chief Thomas D'Agostino, whose agency oversees the nation's nuclear-weapon complex, recently reaffirmed that position.

"Senator Kyl is clearly out of step with the vast majority of military and scientific opinion about advances made through the Stockpile Stewardship Program [and] the advances made in national and international monitoring," according to Kimball. It is a "failure of leadership for those who would criticize the test-ban treaty not to explain how rejecting the treaty advances our security."

 [back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

CCW Group of Governmental Experts to Continue to Negotiate on Cluster Munitions and Prepare for Fourth Review Conference

UN Office at Geneva, 25 March 2011, www.unog.ch

The Second 2011 Session of the Group of Governmental Experts of the States Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), mandated to continue negotiations to address urgently the humanitarian impact of cluster munitions, as well as to conduct preparatory work for the CCW Fourth Review Conference, will commence on Monday, 28 March at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.

Minister Jesus S. Domingo of the Philippines will preside over the week-long meeting, the second of three sessions ahead of the Fourth Review Conference to take place from November 14-25, 2011. The Group will continue its negotiations on cluster munitions based on a revised Chair's Paper which takes into consideration the deliberations during the Group's first session last February. The Group aims to produce a recommendation for consideration by the Fourth Review Conference to address urgently the humanitarian impact of cluster munitions, while striking a balance between military and humanitarian considerations. The Chairperson will be assisted by his Friends of the Chair: Mr. Philip Kimpton of Australia, Ms. Anesa Kundurovic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Lt. Col. Jim Burke of Ireland.

In accordance with the decisions taken by the 2010 Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW, the Group will also devote time for the consideration of the preparation for the Fourth Review Conference under the overall responsibility of the President designate, Ambassador Gancho Ganev of Bulgaria. At the first session the Group had decided to recommend for adoption by the Fourth Review Conference the provisional agenda and the draft rules of procedure of the review conference. The Group also discussed organizational issues as well as the issue on universalization. At the second session, the President designate will continue to guide the Group of Governmental Experts in preparing for the review conference building on what has been achieved thus far.

The humanitarian impact of cluster munitions has been discussed within the CCW since 2001, first – under a broader theme of explosive remnants of war, and since 2007 – as the main item of the agenda of the Group of Governmental Experts. Although the Group has invested much effort during the last four years in drafting a new protocol on prohibitions and restrictions on the use of cluster munitions, there still exist divergent views on the content. Amidst such controversy, the States Parties eventually reached consensus to renew for another year the mandate of the Group at the 2010 Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW in November 2010.

 [back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

Russia, U.S. in Talks on Uranium Enrichment Joint Venture

RIA Novosti, 24 March 2011, en.rian.ru/russia

Russia and the United States have started talks on setting up a joint venture to enrich uranium, the head of the Russian state nuclear corporation Rosatom said on Thursday. The uranium enrichment facility will be built on U.S. territory with Russian technology.

"Building such a facility... is a long way away, which cannot be covered in one day, but today we started moving in that direction," Rosatom chief Sergei Kiriyenko said. He said the deal was a "landmark" development in the context of the recent accident at Japan's Fukushima nuclear power plant, hit by blasts and fires after a 9.0-magnitude earthquake.

"When two states, leaders of the global nuclear market, sign a long-term deal in such a situation, this gives a certain answer about the future development of the global nuclear energy sector," he said.

During Kiriyenko's visit, Russian state-controlled nuclear equipment exporter Technabexport (Tenex), fully owned by Rosatom, signed a \$2.8 billion ten-year deal with USEC to supply low-enriched uranium.

Under the deal, Russia will supply USEC with 21 million separate work units (SWU) over a period of ten years starting from 2013.

[back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

Conference on Disarmament Holds General Debate on the Cessation of the Nuclear Arms Race and Preventing Nuclear War

UN Office at Geneva, 24 March 2011, www.unog.ch

The Conference on Disarmament held a plenary meeting this morning in which it discussed agenda items 1 and 2, the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters. The Conference also discussed the way forward on a program of work.

Delegations spent a great deal of time discussing the two indicative timetables that had been proposed by the President of the Conference last week. Ambassador Wang Qun of China had proposed two possible timetables for his presidency, both based on timetables used by previous presidents of the Conference on Disarmament. Many delegations had asked for additional time to review the documents and consult with their capitals before making a decision on the way forward for the next several weeks. Many issues were raised during the discussion on how to structure their work, including whether it was better to hold discussions in formal or informal meetings, the content of such discussions and the discussion of the four core agenda items.

The key issue for one delegation was the quality of discourse that would allow them to achieve a meaningful outcome. Side events, such as the one hosted by Japan and Australia on fissile material, deepened their discussion in a constructive and structured way, and this was why they supported such events. If the Conference on Disarmament did something similar perhaps they could make progress. The speaker felt they were falling short of what the General Assembly expected of them, and they wanted meaningful, structured discussion, not an exchange of views, leading to a meaningful outcome to which the General Assembly attached importance.

Many delegations said they supported any timetable that would allow them to move forward with substantive discussions and substantive work. One delegation pointed out that the resources of the Conference had been exhausted by this absurd procedural debate. They were sitting there with permanent and non-permanent representatives of the Security Council and of the G8 and the G20 and there were revolutions going on in the world and here they were bogged down in a procedural debate. Members were invited to think about the importance of seeking alternatives to nuclear disarmament and arms control to contribute to peace and security in the world.

During the discussion on agenda items 1 and 2, speakers said that in the final analysis they needed to stop production of the materials used to make nuclear weapons; this was one of the reasons the Conference on Disarmament had been established in the first place. The nuclear disaster in Japan was an important reminder of the serious consequences awaiting them in case of a nuclear war or the accidental use of such weapons. It was high time for the

 [back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

international community to shoulder its responsibilities in this respect and to speed up the progress related to nuclear disarmament; any shirking of these obligations or steps backward was fraught with danger. Speakers reiterated the importance of adopting a program of work without delay to establish a sub-committee on an ad hoc basis to deal with nuclear disarmament.

It was noted that mutually assured destruction had been replaced by a less stable multi-polar world. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty was not meant to ensure a permanent divide between nuclear weapon States and non-nuclear weapon States, yet what they saw today was the nuclear weapon States thinking that the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty was a license for their indefinite possession of nuclear weapons. Negotiations for nuclear disarmament were the litmus test for the Conference on Disarmament's success, not negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty.

 [back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

U.S., China Expand Cooperation on Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Technology

National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), 30 March 2011, nnsa.energy.gov

The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) and the China National Energy Administration today announced that they have agreed to continue expanding cooperation between the United States and China on nuclear security issues.

During a meeting of the Joint Coordinating Committee (JCC) of the U.S.-China Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Technology (PUNT) Agreement, NNSA Deputy Administrator for Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation Anne Harrington and Vice Administrator Qian Zhimin of the China National Energy Administration agreed that Chinese and U.S. experts would pursue additional areas for cooperation and continue research and development into new technology to guarantee a safe and secure nuclear future. They also agreed to establish a new joint working group on radioactive source security and stressed the importance of developing nuclear safety, safeguards and security in parallel.

This week's meeting is the latest example of the expanding nuclear security cooperation between the United States and China. Earlier this year, during a state visit to Washington, D.C., by Chinese President Hu Jintao, the United States and China announced a memorandum of understanding for work at a Center of Excellence of nuclear security near Beijing.

"This meeting demonstrates the broad range of active and vital cooperation between the United States and China and reaffirms our mutual commitment to implementing the nuclear security agendas of our presidents," said NNSA Deputy Administrator Harrington. "This framework also facilitates a broad group of important bilateral initiatives between our two countries, including the U.S. – China Bilateral Civil Nuclear Energy Cooperative Action Plan."

Co-chaired by Ms. Harrington and Mr. Qian, this was the 6th meeting of the JCC. In addition to NNSA and the China National Energy Administration, the JCC also included representatives from the China Atomic Energy Authority, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Environmental Protection, the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Nuclear Energy and the U.S. Department of State.

The two-day meeting consisted of plenary sessions and working group breakout sessions to discuss joint projects and exchange information on a comprehensive range of mutual interests, including emergency management, nuclear energy, nuclear security, nuclear safeguards, export controls, radioactive waste, and environmental management. Signed in 1998, the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Technology Agreement is a legally binding mechanism between the United States and China that allows for bilateral technical cooperation in civil nuclear energy and

 [back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

nonproliferation. Over the years, this cooperation has covered a wide variety of areas, including nuclear technology and export controls, nuclear emergency management and safety, and high level waste management.

For example, since 2004 under the PUNT Agreement, NNSA's Material Protection, Control & Accounting (MPC&A) Program has worked with China on the development of domestic nuclear security best practices, and the Next Generation Safeguards Initiative (NGSI) has worked to improve safeguards for advanced fuel cycle facilities. The Office of International Emergency Management and Cooperation has worked with China to develop and conduct emergency management training courses and shared data on emergency preparedness and response programs. Similarly, since 2007 the PUNT Agreement has facilitated efforts by NNSA's Global Threat Reduction Initiative to work with its partners in China to improve radioactive source security.

 [back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

Y-12 Seismically at Risk – 9212 Complex Could Be Damaged, Disabled by Major Quake, Official Says

Knoxnews.com, 31 March 2011, www.knoxnews.com

Despite millions of dollars spent on upgrades, the 60-year-old production hub at the Y-12 nuclear weapons plant remains seismically vulnerable and could be severely damaged or disabled by a major earthquake.

Sections of the 9212 complex, where bomb-grade uranium is processed, were built during World War II, and a federal spokesman at Y-12 said it's not possible to bring the old facility up to today's seismic standards. He said that's one of the reasons why the government wants to build a new Uranium Processing Facility, which is projected to cost as much as \$6.5 billion and won't be available for at least another decade.

The National Nuclear Security Administration initially declined to answer questions about 9212's structural integrity and whether it could withstand a major earthquake, but spokesman Steven Wyatt later issued this statement by email:

"Safety analyses show that a major earthquake could result in significant structural damage and process failure." Process failure means the uranium operations would no longer function, Wyatt said.

The spokesman confirmed that an earthquake could potentially compromise the safety measures in place to prevent a nuclear criticality – an event involving an uncontrolled nuclear chain reaction and release of radiation. "We have analyzed this very carefully and have not identified any scenarios that would have an impact beyond a few meters from the facility," he said.

No information on potential impacts to workers at 9212 was released.

Wyatt said Y-12's seismic analyses are based on the "anticipated maximum horizontal ground surface accelerations" for this area, with a range of 0.006 to 0.30 on the Modified Mercalli Intensity Scale. That correlates roughly to an earthquake between 5.0 and 6.0 on the Richter scale, he said.

The latest evaluation was done in 2005, and that report is not releasable to the public, Wyatt said. A 1987 report, which was obtained by the News Sentinel years ago through a Freedom of Information Act request, identified more than 500 plausible scenarios for significant earthquake damage at 9212 – each of which would lead to at least one of the "consequences of interest."

 [back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

Those consequences were serious injury or death of personnel; loss of plant capability; and criticality. At that time, the E-wing of 9212 was considered the most vulnerable because it would collapse with the lowest ground acceleration (0.14), with 20 of the top 50 scenarios involving serious injuries or deaths. Thirteen of the 18 criticality scenarios also were at E-wing, where manufacturing work with highly enriched uranium is conducted. It's not immediately clear if E-wing today is in better shape or worse shape than it was 20 years ago.

The 9212 complex is a sprawling network of inter-connected process buildings, many of which were added during Y-12's burgeoning work on nuclear weapons during the Cold War 1950s. Concerns about its safety and the structural soundness are not new. In 1989, a structural engineer at Lockwood Greene Engineers, a Department of Energy contractor, said he was fired after his study concluded that 9212 would collapse during a major earthquake. The engineer, Paul Nestel, said his study was later revised by other engineers to show that the building could withstand an earthquake.

A DOE investigation concluded that Nestel's firing was inappropriate, although not directly tied to his seismic study of the Y-12 facility. He was later offered his job back, but declined, and reportedly received a \$33,000 financial settlement. The report, meanwhile, brought new scrutiny to 9212 complex, which contains numerous chemical processes for recycling highly enriched uranium used in nuclear weapons. At least one of the building's wings is used to cast, fabricate and machine uranium metal in various shapes.

In early 1990, a DOE nuclear safety panel headed by John Ahearne, a former chairman of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, reviewed the seismic issues while holding a session in Oak Ridge and called for additional studies.

There have been other evaluations since then, including regular reports by the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board. The DNFSB has called for more aggressive upgrades at 9212 as the schedule for UPF keeps getting delayed. In a 2005 letter to NNSA, the board's then-chairman A. J. Eggenberger wrote that the Y-12 contractor recommended that some modifications to address structural deficiencies not be made "because of the facility's limited life, given the planned construction and start-up of a replacement facility by 2013."

In a September 2010 letter to Congress, the safety board wrote, "The Department of Energy continues to rely on aging facilities to carry out hazardous production missions." The board cited the 9212 complex at Y-12 as an "acute" example, along with a plutonium operation at Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico.

 [back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

"These two facilities are structurally unsound and are unsuitable for protracted use," said the report signed by the safety board's five members. "The board is especially concerned as schedules for replacement facilities continue to slip . . . "

The Oak Ridge situation is complicated by the Y-12 facility's reportedly essential role in the nuclear weapons program. The current plan is to operate the 9212 complex until the Uranium Processing Facility comes online. However, construction of UPF isn't scheduled to start until 2012 and won't be completed until 2020, at the earliest, and the new facility won't be fully operable until 2024.

Wyatt said the government has invested millions of dollars and made "numerous modifications" to 9212 over the past 20 years, "taking seismic design into consideration." Those modifications included "efforts to fortify walls and roofing to strengthen the structural integrity of the facility by adding building cross bracing, modifications to equipment and piping," and the addition of seismic shut-off valves for some processes, he said.

There also is a continuing effort to minimize the quantity of nuclear material at risk, thus reducing the consequences in the event on an earthquake or other problem.

 [back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

UN Disarmament Machinery Can Help Achieve Goals, but Ultimate Responsibility 'Lies at Doorsteps' of Member States, Disarmament Commission Told as Session Opens

States News Service, 04 April 2011, accessed via Lexis Nexis

Despite an eleven-year stalemate in the Disarmament Commission over ways to achieve nuclear disarmament and wide skepticism that confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms would also remain elusive, hope remained for achieving consensus on each item of that body's painstakingly agreed agenda, said Sergio Duarte, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs as he opened the Commission's 2011 substantive session.

With the end of its three-year cycle fast approaching, the Commission's current session was especially important, said Mr. Duarte, pressing States to break the current standoff. Each item – recommendations for achieving nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation; elements of a draft declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade; and practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms – was part of a larger ambition to achieve the United Nations ultimate objective: general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

But while the United Nations disarmament machinery was intended to help achieve common goals, "the ultimate responsibility for the fate of disarmament initiatives lies at the doorsteps of our Member States, whose policies, priorities and sheer persistence will shape the contours of our world to come – for better or worse," he said. Those, in turn, would be influenced by the actions and expectations of civil society. "Together, we have a solemn legacy to maintain and a new future to create for generations yet to come," he declared.

Consensus should be possible, said Commission Chair Hamid Al-Bayati of Iraq, citing widespread agreement on the importance of the issues at hand. Obstacles should not be allowed to undermine collective efforts, as a lack of consensus would only add to the Commission's unsatisfactory record. There was potential to move forward, especially as related to agreed guidelines or norms. What was needed was political will to restore the credibility of the United Nations disarmament machinery.

To that point, Pakistan's representative wondered whether the goals of non-proliferation could be achieved while an "elite club" continued to hold on to nuclear weapons. Some had argued the Commission had not lived up to its potential. "This is not a failure of the disarmament machinery," he said, but rather of political will to promote disarmament. Until nuclear disarmament was achieved, non-nuclear-armed States would continue to be entitled to assurances that such weapons would not be used against them.

 [back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

Moreover, the present focus on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) followed a pattern of negotiating only those agreements that did not undermine the security interests of the major Powers, he said. To advance disarmament and non-proliferation goals, such a treaty must provide for the multilateral reduction of existing fissile stocks and take a broader approach to the definition, scope and verification of that material.

Throughout the day, delegates underlined the need to strengthen the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, reduce nuclear warheads and allow non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to exercise their legitimate right to participate in the research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, without discrimination. In that regard, Indonesia's representative, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, expressed concern at the persistence of "undue restrictions" on exports of such materials, equipment and technology to developing countries.

"Security is global or it is nothing at all," declared Senegal's representative, noting that glimmers of hope had been seen in the conclusion of a new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) between the United States and Russian Federation, and the August 2010 entry into force of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. Those events had created momentum for new progress.

Taking that a step further, Brazil's delegate said the time was ripe to start negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention, which would prohibit those arms and lead to their irreversible, transparent and verifiable destruction, according to an agreed legal framework and specified timelines. Another positive step would be the negotiation, in the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament, of a verifiable treaty banning fissile material for nuclear weapons that took into account existing stocks and prohibited future production.

For its part, the United States would be as flexible as possible on procedural matters and substantive outcomes, said that country's representative. Given that there were only three weeks left in the issue cycle, he recommended distilling from previous efforts only the most broadly agreed, realistic and focused approaches that had the best chance of commanding consensus on agreed principles, guidelines and recommendations. "We simply must keep trying," he said.

In other business today, the Commission elected as Vice Chairs Byrganym Aitimova (Kazakhstan) from the Group of Eastern European States; Jean-Cedric Janssens de Bisthoven (Belgium) and Francisco-Javier Sanabria (Spain) from the Group of Western European and Other States; and Saliou Niang Dieng (Senegal) from the Group of African States.

 [back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

In addition, Benin's representative was elected as Rapporteur, and Nigeria's representative was elected as Chair of Working Group 2.

Also speaking today were the representatives of Hungary (on behalf of the European Union), Chile (on behalf of the Rio Group), Nigeria (on behalf of the African Group), Australia, Japan, Kenya, Bangladesh, United Republic of Tanzania, Kazakhstan, Algeria, Sweden, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Montenegro, China and the Republic of Korea.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Republic of Korea also spoke in exercise of the right of reply.

 [back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

U.S. Reviewing Nuclear Arsenal with Eye to New Cuts

Associated Press (in Washington Times), 23 March 2011, www.washingtontimes.com

The Obama administration has begun examining whether it can make cuts to its nuclear weapons stockpiles that go beyond those outlined in a recent treaty with Russia.

The classified review is not expected to be completed until late this year, but some Republicans already are worried that it will go too far. On Tuesday, 41 Republican senators warned Obama in a letter not to make major changes in nuclear policy without consulting Congress.

Arms control advocates say the United States is mired in Cold War-era thinking about nuclear deterrence and are pressing the administration to use the review to rethink U.S. nuclear requirements. They say the decisions will be a test of President Barack Obama's commitment nearly two years ago to put the world on a path toward eliminating nuclear weapons.

Obama ordered the nuclear review early last year with an aim of shrinking the nuclear arsenal, but the work, led by the Defense Department, began recently, according to a department spokeswoman, Lt. Col. April Cunningham.

The review will look at issues such as what targets the U.S. would have to hit with nuclear weapons in a worst-case scenario and what kind of weapons it would need to hit them. Rethinking the requirements could open the way to cuts.

In the letter to Obama, Republicans warned against any big reductions from those outlined in the New START treaty, ratified by the Senate and the Russian Duma in recent months. The treaty limits each side to 1,550 deployed warheads – a level military officials have said meets the need of the current directives.

Sharp reductions in nuclear forces “would have important and as yet unknown consequences for nuclear stability,” the letter said.

The letter was circulated by Sen. Jon Kyl, R-Ariz., a leading opponent of the New START treaty when it was considered in the Senate. It makes clear that significant changes in nuclear policy without consulting Congress could affect consideration of a new treaty with Russia. The 41 lawmakers who signed it include a number who supported New START and represent sufficient numbers to block any treaty.

There is no indication that the Obama administration is considering drastic cuts as a result of the review. But the study could shape talks it has proposed with Russia on weapons not

 [back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

covered by the New START treaty. The administration wants to focus on stored nuclear weapons and those intended for short-range delivery, known as tactical nuclear weapons. But negotiations with Russia also could lead to further reductions in deployed long-range nuclear weapons.

Administration officials say the review has just begun and no decisions have been made. In a broader look at nuclear weapons policy last year, called the nuclear posture review, the administration stressed the need for maintaining a strong U.S. deterrent.

“The United States will continue to ensure that, in the calculations of any potential opponent, the perceived gains of attacking the United States or its allies and partners would be far outweighed by the unacceptable costs of the response,” the document said.

Disarmament advocates who follow administration thinking on nuclear issues say the document is unlikely to lead quickly to sharp cuts. “For better or worse, it’s not in the cards,” says Daryl Kimball, head of the Arms Control Association, which advocates nuclear disarmament. But advocates hope the review could open the way to reconsidering what would be needed to deter potential adversaries.

“We shouldn’t have to dump 60 hydrogen bombs on Odessa to ensure U.S. nuclear security,” says Joseph Cirincione, president of the Ploughshares Fund, which advocates the elimination of nuclear weapons. “This review will determine whether the president is serious about moving toward deep reductions and the elimination of nuclear weapons or if he is giving up on that vision.”

[back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

New START Implementation Panel to Convene

Global Security Newswire, 28 March 2011; www.globalsecuritynewswire.org

Russia and the United States are set on Monday to convene the first meeting of a panel intended to address matters related to the operation of a bilateral strategic nuclear arms control treaty that took effect last month, the State Department announced on Friday.

This session of the Bilateral Consultative Commission [BCC] is set to continue until April 8 in Geneva, Switzerland.

"The Russian Federation and the United States will coordinate and discuss technical matters related to the implementation of the treaty," RIA Novosti quoted the Russian Foreign Ministry as saying in a statement.

The [New START] treaty obligates Washington and Moscow to each limit their deployed strategic nuclear arsenals to 1,550 warheads, down from the 2,200 maximum required by 2012 under an earlier treaty. It also sets a ceiling of 700 deployed warhead delivery systems, with another 100 allowed in reserve.

The two former Cold War rivals have already started to exchange information on their respective nuclear deterrents, as called for in the treaty.

The pact mandates that the commission assemble two or more times every 12 months, barring consensus by Washington and Moscow on an alternate schedule.

 [back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

Nukes in Europe: Coming Home Soon

Foreign Policy In Focus, 30 March 2011, www.fpif.org

The last U.S. nuclear weapons deployed in Europe may be on their way home, ending more than 50 years of their deployment abroad. A new report on the future of these weapons shows that 24 NATO members seek to end deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe or will not block a NATO consensus decision to remove them. Only three countries are holding out, and only one is actively trying to break the emerging consensus. The coming months will be decisive for the future of the 200 or so U.S. nukes in Europe.

IKV Pax Christi, a Dutch peace and security NGO, interviewed all 28 NATO member delegations to find out exactly what they think about the withdrawal of U.S. tactical nuclear weapons (TNW). The resulting Withdrawal Issues report confirms minimal support for future TNW deployment in Europe. Many delegations deem redundant the B61 gravity bombs designed to be dropped from fighter aircraft.

With growing momentum toward a world without nuclear weapons, many regard the TNW as the low hanging fruit, “the first ones to go.”

Contrary to oft-repeated myths, the so-called new NATO countries are not more reluctant to have the bombs removed. Countries closer to Russia are not more likely to want to keep these nuclear weapons. Nor did any delegation mention the persistent assumption that Turkey would build its own nuclear bomb in the event of TNW withdrawal.

Throughout 2010, the United States remained remarkably flexible, saying that it would leave any decision on the future of these TNW to European allies. Officially, the United States had no preference. Behind the scenes though, U.S. diplomats in Brussels are quite openly denouncing the relevance of the TNW for current and future NATO defense and deterrence policy and posture. It is a public secret that U.S. ambassador to NATO Ivo Daalder favors phasing out the TNW.

Clearing the Obstacles

The countries that want the TNW gone usually do not expect them to be out today or tomorrow. NATO countries list a number of obstacles that need to be cleared prior to a consensus decision to return the TNW to the United States. Three obstacles top the list.

First, TNW withdrawal should not undermine alliance cohesion. The visibility of the transatlantic bond needs to be guaranteed. In addition, current nuclear burden sharing needs to be replaced

 [back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

by new forms of burden sharing. This should not be a difficult obstacle to overcome. Countries have already suggested a range of plans for “more practical” or “more useful” forms of burden-sharing.

Second, 10 NATO delegations mention France as a key obstacle. In the run up to the November 2010 NATO Strategic Concept, France went out of its way to make sure that both the nuclear posture (force deployment, numbers, and locations) and policy (continued nuclear sharing) of the alliance remained unchanged. For a long time, France blocked NATO plans for missile defense. France also objected to a NATO civilian capacity. It was France, apparently, that most vocally opposed the adoption of a “negative security assurance” or similar nuclear weapons declaratory policy. According to some sources, France took these conservative positions to be able to trade them off one by one, only to get an unchanged nuclear posture in return.

Finally, according to half the delegations, TNW withdrawal cannot be achieved without first seeking some form of reciprocity with Russia. Russia maintains a large stock of TNW, some deployed close to NATO territory. Six NATO countries say they will only agree to TNW withdrawal if Russia relocates at least part of its TNW arsenal. Others are less attached to the idea, saying that some form of reciprocity “would be preferred” or “would help to speed along the debate within NATO.” Only one country admitted to being disgruntled about the link made with Russia, reasoning that this way Russia and NATO are offering each other excuses to keep their TNW arsenals.

For now, the conservative French strategy has prevailed. The Strategic Concept reflects the failure to come to a conclusion on NATO’s nuclear policies and posture. Unable to take a clear position on TNW, the text remains vague and essentially pushed the issue onto the “Defense and Deterrence Posture Review” that should conclude by 2012.

Changing Nuclear Policy

Russian reciprocity remains the biggest concern. NATO says it will only relocate the TNW back to the United States if Russia gives up something too. Russia says it will not even start talking about its TNW until the United States brings its nukes home. The United States basically says it would be willing to do so, but only if backed by NATO consensus. How to move beyond the Russia- NATO-U.S. loop of reciprocity is central to any forward progress on removing U.S. nuclear weapons from Europe.

 [back to top](#)

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 March – 04 April 2011

DTRA

Although the United States took a back-row position in the TNW discussions in 2010, in 2011 it seems determined to regain a leadership role. In his message to the U.S. Senate, on the occasion of the New START ratification, President Obama wrote that he will seek to initiate negotiations with Russia on TNW “following consultation with NATO allies but not later than one year after entry into force of the New START treaty.” The deadline is clear: European allies have one year to deal with their internal division on TNW. If the allies fail to come to a conclusion, the United States will decide.

The evidence cited in the IKV Pax Christi report suggests that the allied decision can't be anything but withdrawal. There is simply not enough support for continued deployment. The U.S. deadline and the process of the Defense and Deterrence Posture Review give NATO the time to discuss new ways of burden-sharing and to reassure France that ending the TNW deployment in Europe will not affect the autonomous French nuclear status. The year also offers NATO a chance to lay the groundwork for the United States and Russia to discuss the last remaining tactical nuclear differences of the Cold War.

The Obama administration has the historical opportunity to end TNW deployment outside U.S. territory. It would be a major contribution to the ultimate aim of a world without nuclear weapons, and it would bring the number of countries with nuclear weapons on their territory down from 14 to nine. It is time to put the Cold War nuclear posture of the alliance to bed, and to bring the U.S. weapons home.

Wilbert van der Zeijden is the researcher for IKV Pax Christi's Nuclear Disarmament program. Susi Snyder is the program leader for IKV Pax Christi's Nuclear Disarmament program. Both are contributors to Foreign Policy In Focus.

[back to top](#)

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