



BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



23 August – 06 September 2011

DTRA

GENERAL ARMS CONTROL

U.S. Priorities for the NPT and Moving Forward

U.S. Department of State, 01 September 2011, www.state.gov

Remarks by Marcie B. Ries, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance, at the High Level Workshop against Nuclear Tests – From Here to 2015: Meeting the Targets of the NPT Action Plan, in New York City

Challenges and threats to the NPT must be effectively addressed so that progress in one area is not undermined or negated by actions in another area. (2,718 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

ANTI-PERSONNEL LANDMINE CONVENTION (APLC) (OTTAWA CONVENTION)

Ukraine Starts Disposal of Anti-Personnel Mines with Funding from Norway

Interfax-AVN Online, 29 August 2011, accessed via Open Source Center

The Pavlograd Chemical Plant in Ukraine's Dnipropetrovsk region has started up a new furnace for the disposal of PFM-1 anti-personnel mines in conformity with the UN Ottawa Convention.

(201 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (BWC)

America Protected from Bioweapons by Massive Technology System

BioPrepWatch, 29 August 2011, www.bioprepwatch.com

Scientists at federal research labs are defending the United States against the threat of biological weapons through the development of a nationwide system designed to check the air for germs such as anthrax and smallpox. (474 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

Issues for the Upcoming Biological Weapons Convention Review Conference

BioPrepWatch, 31 August 2011, www.bioprepwatch.com

Arvind Gupta, the Lal Bahadur Shastri chair at the Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses, recently described the issues to be discussed at the upcoming Biological Weapons Convention [BWC] review conference. (417 words) [Click here for full text.](#)



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CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (CWC)

Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility Liquid Incinerators Running at 100 Percent Feed Rate

U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency, 24 August 2011, www.cma.army.mil

The Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility has received approval from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality to increase the Liquid Incinerator processing rate from 75 percent to 100 percent of the feed rate demonstrated during the mustard agent trial burn and comprehensive performance test. (225 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

Chemical Weapons Diminish in Tooele

Deseret News, 31 August 2011, www.deseretnews.com

With an international treaty deadline approaching in April of next year, the remaining stockpile of 16 tons of chemical weapons stored at Deseret Chemical Depot should be completely destroyed ahead of schedule. (411 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

Myths Concerning Blue Grass Army Depot Persist

The Richmond Register, 05 September 2011, richmondregister.com

A military facility behind a fence with guards at the gate inevitably generates curiosity, followed by speculation that leads to false conclusions. A number of myths have evolved in the nearly 70-year history of the Blue Grass Army Depot. (893 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR TEST-BAN TREATY (CTBT)

International Day against Nuclear Tests: Translating Words into Action

Arms Control Association, 28 August 2011, armscontrolnow.org

August 29, 2011 is the second official International Day against Nuclear Tests. (1,731 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

U.S. Still Monitoring Residual Radioactivity on Bikini Atoll Isle

The Japan Times, 01 September 2011, www.japantimes.co.jp

The tiny and remote Pacific island of Bikini, part of Bikini Atoll, is home to an abandoned nuclear test observation post and a vegetable farm that is used to research residual radioactivity. (342 words) [Click here for full text.](#)



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

UN Conference to Push Work towards Entry into Force of Major Nuclear Treaty

Xinhua, 01 September 2011, english.news.cn

A UN ministerial conference, which is to be held here in the UN headquarters on September 23, will push for further signings and ratifications of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). (592 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

Legal Prohibition only Way to Realize World Free of Nuclear Testing, Weapons, Deputy Secretary-General Says during Observance of International Day

United Nations, 02 September 2011, www.un.org

Stressing that the voluntary moratoriums of nuclear-weapon States were no substitute for a legal prohibition, Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro today urged Governments that had not yet done so to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty [CTBT]. (781 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

FISSILE MATERIALS

NNSA Ships Additional Special Nuclear Material from LLNL

National Nuclear Security Administration, 31 August 2011, nnsa.energy.gov

The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) today announced that Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) has removed 90 percent inventory of nuclear material requiring the highest level of security protection. (260 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

Nuclear Warheads Converted to Fuel

The Voice of Russia, 04 September 2011, english.ruvr.ru

More than 420 tons of highly enriched uranium have been processed into fuel under the 500-ton Megatons to Megawatts Russian-American program, also known as the HEU-LEU program, the United States Enrichment Corporation (USEC) reported this week. (268 words)

[Click here for full text.](#)

IAEA to Host Forum on Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone for Middle East

International Atomic Energy Agency, 02 September 2011, www.iaea.org

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is to host a forum among its Member States to consider how the experience of Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zones (NWFZ) in several regions of the world could be relevant to the Middle East. (271 words) [Click here for full text.](#)



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FISSILE MATERIALS (CONT.)

Safety Questioned at Savannah River Site Nuclear Weapons Tritium Program

The Augusta Chronicle, 24 August 2011, chronicle.augusta.com

Weakened safety programs for Savannah River Site's tritium project could increase the potential for accidents, according to a federal oversight board that has given the U.S. Energy Department 90 days to address a series of new concerns. (636 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

OPEN SKIES TREATY

Russian Inspectors to Fly Open Skies Treaty Mission over U.S.

Interfax-AVN Online, 26 August 2011, accessed via *Open Source Center*

A Tupolev Tu-154-M Lk-1 airplane carrying a group of Russian inspectors will fly observation missions over U.S. territory under the international Treaty on Open Skies from August 28 to September 5. (140 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

U.S. Inspectors to Make Open Skies Monitoring Flight in Russia

Interfax-AVN Online, 29 August 2011, accessed via *Open Source Center*

U.S. inspectors will take a flight aboard an OC-135B Open Skies United States Air Force observation aircraft in Russia from August 29 through September 3. (110 words)

[Click here for full text.](#)

FULL TEXT OF BI-WEEKLY ARTICLES FOLLOWS:



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Remarks by Marcie B. Ries, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance, at the High Level Workshop against Nuclear Tests – From Here to 2015: Meeting the Targets of the NPT Action Plan, in New York City

Good Afternoon. I would like to begin by thanking the East-West Institute for their invitation and for their continued dedicated efforts to help forge collective action from the international community towards a safer and better world. I'd also like to thank the Permanent Mission of Kazakhstan for inviting me to speak at this High Level Workshop. It is an honor to be here and we have much to discuss regarding our priorities in moving forward, including our efforts to advance the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference Action Plan.

I know Ambassador Susan Burk, U.S. Special Representative for Nuclear Nonproliferation, spoke very aptly at this event last year about the 2010 NPT Final Document and U.S. priorities for the NPT. I will update you on these priorities and U.S. actions taken to advance them, but before I do, let me take say a few words about the 2010 NPT Review Conference [RevCon].

2010 NPT Review Conference

As Ambassador Burk noted last year, the 2010 NPT Review Conference succeeded because the vast majority of the treaty Parties understood that the Review Conference was an opportunity to strengthen the NPT and the global nonproliferation regime at a time of great challenge to both. Most Parties worked diligently and in good faith throughout the Conference to find common ground. There was widespread agreement that a balanced, forward-looking agenda covering all three of the NPT's supporting pillars – nonproliferation, disarmament, and peaceful uses of nuclear energy – would reinvigorate both the treaty and the nuclear nonproliferation regime of which it is the cornerstone.

The Action Plan adopted at the Conference reflects the understanding that efforts to strengthen the treaty must be balanced among its pillars, as well as the need for “mutual responsibility” in its implementation, which is critical to the continued viability of the NPT regime. The real test of the RevCon's success will be how seriously all the Parties take the agreement they reached and how well they implement the commitments they made at the RevCon.

I would like to go into some detail on actions in which we have been engaged involving all three of the NPT pillars, although I will dwell in more detail on disarmament, the area for which I have responsibility. Much has been accomplished since the RevCon.

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New START Treaty Implementation

As you all know, the New START Treaty entered into force on February 5th of this year. Implementation of the treaty is going well. It continues to be a bright spot in the U.S.-Russian relationship. So far, the process of treaty implementation has been very pragmatic, professional, and positive – a continuation of the positive working relationship we established during the negotiations in Geneva. We are constantly in communication with our Russian colleagues and the implementation process has been precise and efficient.

This treaty responsibly limits the number of strategic nuclear weapons and launchers that the United States and Russia may deploy. When the treaty is fully implemented, it will result in the lowest number of strategic nuclear warheads deployed by the United States and the Russian Federation since the 1950s, the first full decade of the nuclear age.

The United States and Russia have exchanged data, held exhibitions, and notified each other on the status of our strategic forces. In fact, we have exchanged more than 1,000 notifications since February. We also have begun conducting on-site inspections. To date, the United States has conducted eight on-site inspections in Russia and Russia has conducted seven in the United States since the period for New START Treaty inspections began on April 6.

The access and information derived from this treaty provide important predictability and stability in the U.S.-Russian nuclear relationship. Without this access and information, the risks of miscalculations, misunderstandings, and mistrust would be greater.

Next Steps in U.S.-Russian Reductions

The United States is committed to continuing a step-by-step process, as outlined by President Obama in Prague in 2009, to reduce the overall number of nuclear weapons, including the pursuit of a future agreement with Russia for broad reductions in all categories of nuclear weapons – strategic, non-strategic, deployed and non-deployed.

We would also like to increase transparency on a reciprocal basis with Russia. We are in the process of thinking through how this and other such transparency measures might be implemented. We will consult with our NATO allies and invite Russia to join with us to develop an initiative, including examination of potential reciprocal actions that could be taken in parallel by the United States and Russia.

We have a lot of very complicated issues to consider, so the more creative and innovative ideas we have to work with, the better off we will be. For that reason, we are grateful to the community

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of experts, both government and nongovernment, American, Russian, and international, who are contributing to our work.

While the United States and Russia have more steps to pursue bilaterally, it is also time to continue, with greater intensity, a multilateral dialogue among the P5 [permanent five nuclear weapon states: China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, and United States]. In late June at a conference in Paris, the P5 discussed transparency, verification, and confidence-building measures. The conference, a follow-on to the first such meeting held in London in 2009, was another constructive step in the process of nuclear-weapon states' engagement on disarmament and related issues, and demonstrated the P5's commitment to the implementation of the Action Plan that was adopted by consensus at the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

All the P5 states recognized the fundamental importance of transparency in building mutual understanding and confidence. We exchanged information on nuclear doctrine and capabilities and discussed possible voluntary transparency and confidence-building measures. To this end, we approved the creation of a working group on Nuclear Definitions and Terminology. We will also hold technical consultations on verification issues later this year in London. In order to ensure that these conferences evolve into a regular process of P5 dialogue, we agreed to hold a third conference in the context of the 2012 NPT Preparatory Committee to continue our discussions.

The United States is proud to be at the leading edge of transparency efforts – publically declaring our nuclear stockpile numbers; participating in voluntary and treaty-based inspection measures; and working with other nations on military to military, scientific and lab exchanges, and site visits.

We hope that all countries will join in the common effort to increase transparency and build mutual confidence. Confidence-building, at its very core, is a shared effort.

Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty

The United States is committed to pursuing U.S. ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and to its entry into force at the earliest possible date. Entry into force of the CTBT is an essential step toward the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons. While the United States abides by the core prohibition of the CTBT through our nuclear testing moratorium promulgated in 1992, the principal benefit of the treaty – that of constraining all states from testing – still eludes us.

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We have begun a deliberate and methodical process of engaging the U.S. Senate and the American public on the importance of the CTBT. Entry into force of the CTBT is an essential step toward the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons, a vision articulated by the President when he spoke in Prague in 2009. Our recent experience working with the U.S. Senate to gain ratification of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty – New START – with the Russian Federation has prepared us for what is expected to be an equally thorough and robust debate over the CTBT. We do not expect it will be easy or happen quickly, but we will work hard to make it happen.

The Administration commissioned a number of reports, including an updated National Intelligence Estimate and an independent National Academy of Sciences report to assess the ability of the United States to monitor compliance with the treaty and the ability of the United States to maintain, in the absence of nuclear explosive testing, a safe, secure and effective nuclear arsenal so long as these weapons exist. A public version of the Academy's report is expected to be released soon. These authoritative reports, together with others, will give the U.S. Senate a wealth of information to assist them in making a determination on the merits of ratification of the CTBT.

Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty

A Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty [FMCT] continues to be a top priority for the United States and a large majority of other countries. Negotiating an FMCT would be a major international achievement for nonproliferation and for disarmament. So it is disappointing that the Conference on Disarmament has been unable to achieve consensus to commence negotiations. Because of this continuing stalemate the P5 agreed to renew their efforts to promote such negotiations prior to the upcoming UNGA [United Nations General Assembly]. Acting on that commitment, the P5 met this week in Geneva, to take stock of developments regarding the Conference on Disarmament (CD). They discussed how to achieve at the earliest possible date in the CD their shared goal of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons purposes. They expressed their determination to this end. In that context, they look forward to meeting again with other relevant parties during the United Nations General Assembly First Committee. We are hopeful that the P5, working with other relevant partners, will be able to chart a productive path forward.

Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement

On a similar front, just last month, Secretary of State Clinton and Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov brought the U.S.-Russian Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement [PMDA]

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and its 2006 and 2010 Protocols into force. The amended agreement commits each country to dispose of – under strict nonproliferation conditions – no less than 34 metric tons of excess weapon-grade plutonium, which represents enough material for about 17,000 nuclear weapons in total. Disposition of the plutonium is scheduled to begin in 2018 following construction of the necessary facilities. The two countries and the IAEA are making progress on appropriate IAEA verification measures for each country's disposition program.

Nuclear Weapon-Free Zones

Nuclear weapon-free zones are a high priority for the United States. At the 2010 NPT Review Conference, Secretary Clinton announced that the Administration would submit the protocols to the Africa and the South Pacific nuclear weapon-free zones to the U.S. Senate for advice and consent to ratification. This was done on May 2 of this year. As Secretary Clinton also committed last May, the United States is consulting with the parties to nuclear weapon-free zone treaties in Central and Southeast Asia in an effort to reach agreement that would allow us to sign the protocols to those treaties.

Middle East WMD Free Zone

A related issue is the proposal for a zone free of weapons-of-mass-destruction in the Middle East. For months we have been meeting regularly with the other co-sponsors of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East and the UN to determine the best way to fulfill our responsibilities as laid out in the plan on the Middle East endorsed by the NPT RevCon in a way that will best ensure a successful conference. We are fully committed to this effort. However, the success of the conference and similar efforts cannot be imposed from outside. It will depend on the willingness of the regional states to help build an atmosphere conducive to constructive dialogue on all relevant issues.

Nonproliferation [IAEA Safeguards]

President Obama stated in Prague that, "We need real and immediate consequences for countries caught breaking the rules or trying to leave the treaty without cause." The 2010 NPT RevCon Action Plan underscores the importance of resolving all cases of non-compliance with safeguards obligations. Our collective efforts in the UN Security Council regarding the nuclear challenges posed by Iran, Syria, and North Korea are designed with these goals in mind, and we look forward to continued cooperation with the international community in seeking to resolve these situations.



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The United States, other Member States, and the [International Atomic Energy Agency] IAEA Secretariat are actively considering ways to strengthen the IAEA safeguards system, and the United States remains committed to ensuring the Agency has the resources and political support it needs to make effective use of its existing authorities. A comprehensive U.S. review of potential options for strengthening safeguards produced several recommendations, including improving the IAEA's abilities to investigate potential and actual undeclared nuclear activities, ensuring that the IAEA has reliable funding to meet its evolving safeguards mandates, and expanding adherence by all relevant states to NPT safeguards agreements and the Additional Protocol.

Since the NPT RevCon, nine countries have put Additional Protocols into force. As of August 22, 2011, 110 states have Additional Protocols in force and another 25 states have signed them, but have not yet completed their ratification process. We are committed to universalizing these important safeguards instruments. To this end, we are working with our partners to engage countries without them to address concerns they have with bringing them into force and to provide assistance in implementation where necessary.

While the 2010 Final Document did not include consensus on the issue of abuse of the NPT's withdrawal provision (Article X), it did note that many NPT Parties "underscore that under international law a withdrawing party is still responsible for violations of the NPT." We will continue to pursue measures to dissuade such abuse with other NPT Parties.

Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy

The third pillar of the NPT is the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The United States continues its active effort to fulfill its commitments under the treaty's Article IV to international peaceful nuclear cooperation with states that abide by their nonproliferation obligations. At the RevCon, Secretary Clinton announced a Peaceful Uses Initiative to raise \$100 million over five years in new funding for IAEA activities in peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including projects related to human health (especially cancer), water management, food security, and nuclear power infrastructure development. In support of this new campaign, the United States has pledged \$50 million and is seeking funding from other countries to match that amount before the next Review Conference in 2015; Japan, South Korea, and New Zealand have already stepped forward to join us in this effort with contributions of their own. Our own contributions have funded more than \$10 million in specific projects in these areas since the RevCon, benefitting more than 80 IAEA Member States.

It is important that we ensure that the worldwide expansion of nuclear power not be accompanied by an increased threat of nuclear proliferation. That could result if more countries

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seek to acquire their own sensitive fuel-cycle facilities, in particular enrichment or reprocessing plants. Since the 2010 RevCon, the IAEA Board of Governors has approved, without a single negative vote, two new measures to assure IAEA members of an adequate supply of fuel for peaceful nuclear power plants – a low enriched uranium reserve to be established under IAEA auspices at a location to be determined and the United Kingdom’s proposal for nuclear fuel assurances.

Conclusion

Challenges and threats to the NPT must be effectively addressed so that progress in one area is not undermined or negated by actions in another area. Countries with nuclear weapons will be reluctant to disarm when they perceive risks that additional states might acquire such weapons, one of the reasons nonproliferation compliance is so important. Conversely, the indefinite possession of nuclear weapons by some states can erode the willingness of non-nuclear weapon states to maintain or strengthen their commitments to forgo them. In sum, we cannot succeed in disarmament without continued progress in nonproliferation, and vice versa. We must all commit to work together to carry out and strengthen the goals and objectives of the NPT.

We have come a long way in the last two years and our hard fought achievements should inspire us all to accomplish even more. Although the challenges ahead are great, and we have a much longer road yet to travel, we’re confident that by working together we can make further progress as we seek to achieve a world without nuclear weapons. The stakes and the benefits to all states are enormous, and all states must do their part to make the NPT’s objectives a reality. Let us take this opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to work together to achieve these objectives and to ensure the future success of the NPT.

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Ukraine Starts Disposal of Anti-Personnel Mines with Funding from Norway

Interfax-AVN Online, 29 August 2011, accessed via Open Source Center

The Pavlograd Chemical Plant in Ukraine's Dnipropetrovsk region has started up a new furnace for the disposal of PFM-1 anti-personnel mines in conformity with the UN Ottawa Convention.

"The first mines were disposed on Friday in the attendance of heads of the Ukrainian Space Agency, the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry, the Norwegian embassy, the Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining and the NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency (NAMSA)," a source at the Ukrainian Space Agency told Interfax. The furnace will dispose of 1.1 million mines per year. The program will last until 2014, he said.

As of now, Ukraine has about 6 million PMF-1 mines liable for disposal. The Norwegian government decided in early 2011 to assign \$1 million to Ukraine for the disposal of anti-personnel mines under the UN Ottawa Convention. The Pavlograd Chemical Plant disposed of about 155,000 munitions in 2008-2009. The plant suspended the disposal in 2010 due to the lack of funds.

Ukraine signed the convention that bans use, stockpiling, production and distribution of anti-personnel mines and stipulates the disposal of such weapons in 1999. The member countries pledged to dispose of their stock of anti-personnel mines no later than four years after the convention's entry into force.

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America Protected from Bioweapons by Massive Technology System

BioPrepWatch, 29 August 2011, www.bioprepwatch.com

Scientists at federal research labs are defending the United States against the threat of biological weapons through the development of a nationwide system designed to check the air for germs such as anthrax and smallpox. After the September 11, 2001 attacks, Tom Slezak and other government researchers began work on a pathogen early warning system known as Biowatch, the Associated Press reports.

The Biowatch system is currently deployed in approximately 30 cities across the country, located in secret near high-profile targets such as subways and stadiums. Biowatch sucks in city air through filters that are collected every day by technicians and then tested for the DNA of dangerous bioagents. The program is designed to alert authorities in the event of the release of deadly germs before patients show up sick at hospitals.

Many of the system's details are kept secret in order to keep potential terrorists guessing, including the exact number of monitors located in each city as well as the pathogens they test for, the AP reports. Officials admit, however, that Washington and New York are heavily monitored. According to Slezak, Biowatch covers 80 percent of the U.S. population.

The system has raised several alerts about the presence of potentially harmful microbes since it was installed. Biowatch detected tularemia the day after a 2005 anti-war protest on the Washington Mall. Further tests revealed the germs to be naturally occurring. "We have to be able to make millions of measurements and never have a single false positive measurement," David Rakestraw, the head of the weapons of mass destruction countermeasures program at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories, said, the AP reports.

Not everyone is convinced Biowatch is a silver bullet. The system is extremely labor intensive and expensive to maintain. According to budget analysts at the Center for Biosecurity at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, the government has spent more than \$500 million dollars on the program. "What we basically deployed were glorified vacuum cleaners," Penrose "Parney" Albright said, according to the AP. Albright oversaw the system's deployment as the Department of Homeland Security's director of anti-weapons of mass destruction research and development under President George W. Bush.

Albright said that the system can be streamlined by greater use of technological developments. By relying on chips in the detectors themselves, the system should be capable of testing for more than 3,000 types of germs, as opposed to the small handful now sought. Scientists would then be alerted to test samples that came back positive. Many believe Biowatch should only be

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seen as one part of a broader campaign to protect the country from bioterror. "It's not all that we need," Frances Downes, the director of public health laboratories for Michigan said, the AP reports. "We can't assume it's a safety blanket and it's covering us and we're always going to know about a (bioterror) attack."

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Issues for the Upcoming Biological Weapons Convention Review Conference

BioPrepWatch, 31 August 2011, www.bioprepwatch.com

Arvind Gupta, the Lal Bahadur Shastri chair at the Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses, recently described the issues to be discussed at the upcoming Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) review conference. Gupta said that this seventh review conference ... will include general debate and discussion of multiple issues such as compliance, verification and monitoring. The event is scheduled to be held from December 5 – 22, 2011 in Geneva, Switzerland.

According to Article XII of the convention, the review conference will "review the operation of the convention, taking into account, inter alia, new scientific and technological developments relevant to the convention; the progress made by states parties on the implementation of the obligations under the convention; progress of the implementation of the decisions and recommendations agreed upon at the sixth review conference."

Gupta said the BWC does not have a formal verification process but does provide for an approach to the UN Security Council to carry out investigations. [...] This provision has not yet been invoked. According to Gupta, the lack of a legally binding [verification] protocol to the convention is partially the result of the United States rejecting a draft in 2001. [...] Another issue [concerns] the confidence building measures (CBMs) which provide an annual report to promote transparency and information sharing. "The format for reporting has not been updated since 1991," Gupta said. "Moreover, only half the members have done any regular reporting.

A useful innovation of the last few years has been setting up the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) and the mechanism for inter-sessional meetings of experts as well as states parties. These meetings have been found to be useful for promoting an exchange of views and for strengthening confidence building. Whether the ISU and these meetings should be extended, and if so, in what form, will be an issue for discussion at the seventh BWC review conference."

Gupta also noted that the BWC has been ratified by 164 countries, making it less popular than the Chemical Weapons Convention or the [Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty] NPT. He also said that a lack of BWC progress has led to ad hoc measures outside the convention, such as the [United Nations Security Council Resolution] UNSCR 1540, which calls for the strengthening of measures against bioterrorism nationally.

"Without effective verification, the BWC will remain weak," Gupta said. "However, the prospects for developing such a mechanism are not bright. A large dose of political will, particularly on the part of the United States, ... will be required to address these concerns."

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Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility Liquid Incinerators Running at 100 Percent Feed Rate

U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency, 24 August 2011, www.cma.army.mil

The Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility has received approval from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality to increase the Liquid Incinerator processing rate from 75 percent to 100 percent of the feed rate demonstrated during the mustard agent trial burn and comprehensive performance test.

This approval follows a prior regulatory acceptance of the agent trial burn report of July 5, 2011, confirming the testing and results were in compliance with the applicable standards and permit conditions. UMCDF is now authorized to commence hazardous waste feed based on the rates demonstrated during the agent trial burn for agent and spent decontamination solution.

“The era of chemical munitions at Umatilla Chemical Depot is rapidly closing,” said Gary Anderson, Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility System Project Manager. “The government and contractor workforce are working around the clock to safely destroy the mustard agent and we are ahead of schedule to meet international treaty deadline.”

There are less than 400 ton containers in the stockpile at Umatilla Chemical Depot. The last mustard agent at UMCDF is expected to be destroyed in November of this year. “We are proceeding safely and deliberately to process the last of the mustard ton containers,” said Steven Warren, Project General Manager for URS, the company that build and operates UMCDF. “This authorization to increase our feed rate will make us a little more efficient.”

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Chemical Weapons Diminish in Tooele

Deseret News, 31 August 2011, www.deseretnews.com

With an international treaty deadline approaching in April of next year, the remaining stockpile of 16 tons of chemical weapons stored at Deseret Chemical Depot should be completely destroyed ahead of schedule. And plans to close down the incinerator built to destroy the arms are under revision to meet that goal.

The Tooele Chemical Agent Disposal Facility, tasked with the destruction of the nation's largest stockpile of chemical weapons, has technologically outgrown its original closure plan issued in 1996, said Tom Ball, a staff engineer with the Utah Division of Solid and Hazardous Waste.

"The existing closure plan was overcome by time," Ball said. "In our opinion, this permit modification was necessary because the old plan was completely inadequate." That inadequacy is not unusual given the amount of time that passes from when an original permit is issued and closure becomes imminent, he added. "This plan will bring things up to date with the design of the facility and more modern closure standards."

Three of the country's eight continental stockpiles already have been completely eliminated, as well as the one at the U.S.-owned Johnson Atoll in the North Pacific Ocean west of Hawaii. The United States, in fact, is marching steadily toward its destruction of what originally started out as 31,501 tons of declared chemical agent in 1985.

Overall, 90 percent of the U.S. stockpile should be eliminated by the April 29, 2012 deadline imposed by the Chemical Weapons Convention Treaty, which was ratified by the United States in 1997 and controls stockpile elimination in countries representing 98 percent of the world's population. As of late August, the United States had destroyed 26,410 tons of chemical – or 88.3 percent of what it had at the time of treaty ratification, according to Greg Mayhall, spokesman for the U.S. Army's Chemical Materials Agency.

Two facilities – Blue Grass, Kentucky and Pueblo, Colorado – have had their chemical weapons elimination schedule held up by political and public opposition to the incineration process. Other alternatives are being pursued. Because of those delays, the United States will miss the deadline as will Russia – which had an estimated 40,000 tons of declared agent.

The deadline for destruction will have to be extended by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons [OPCW], which monitors treaty adherence through the inspection of nearly 5,000 facilities worldwide. The [OPCW] reported that 62 percent of the world's chemical stockpiles have been destroyed, with advances in technology beginning to accelerate that process. [...]

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Myths Concerning Blue Grass Army Depot Persist

The Richmond Register, 05 September 2011, richmondregister.com

A military facility behind a fence with guards at the gate inevitably generates curiosity, followed by speculation that leads to false conclusions. A number of myths have evolved in the nearly 70-year history of the Blue Grass Army Depot. Since becoming depot commander in July 2010, Col. Brian Rogers has made many efforts to be involved, both formally and informally, with the Madison County community. Making himself available and approachable, is one way for him to show that the depot and its leadership are and want to be good neighbors and corporate citizens.

Although he has been surprised and bemused by some of the questions he has been asked, Rogers said during a media tour of the depot earlier this summer that he welcomes questions and is happy to answer. After introducing himself as depot commander and engaging in conversation at a coffee shop, a man asked him if nuclear weapons are stored at the depot, Rogers said. The question was followed by a wink and the comment, "Of course, I know you can't tell me." Rogers said he assured the man no nuclear weapons are kept at the depot, and to his knowledge, none ever have. However, the commander said he was unsure if his new friend really believed him.

Of the 902 storage "igloos" at the depot, only 44 house chemical weapons, less than 5 percent. Still, many people believe the depot is primarily a chemical weapons storage facility. Chemical weapons storage, a separate "activity" on the depot with its own command, is an important part of the facility's responsibilities, Rogers said, but it represents a small portion of what takes place there. The United States is bound by an international treaty to never use toxic chemical agents as weapons and to destroying its stockpile. The depot's 523 tons of chemical agent are destined for destruction at a massive plant rising next to the restricted area where they are housed.

The land that became the depot during World War II was once farmed by Madison County families, and some land unused by the depot is leased to farmers for grazing livestock. The animals are there only for grazing, Rogers said, not as indicators of chemical weapons or radiation leaks, another myth that persists. Cattle grazing on the depot "are not like canaries in a coal mine," he said, comparing them to the birds once kept in underground mines to detect dangerous levels of poisonous gases. Rogers said a schoolmate of his son's told him the cattle were there because they would start glowing if radiation leaked from nuclear weapons at the depot.

Radiation cannot leak from weapons that are not there, he said. However, trying to prove a negative, especially to skeptics, remains a challenge. The livestock-grazing leases benefit both

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the depot and local farmers, the commander said. The depot earns income and the farmers gain forage for their animals. Hay is harvested from some vacant depot land that is not grazed. Although what some suspect or think they know about the depot may be untrue, but there is much the public does not know, Rogers said. Most is not secret, however.

The depot is a direct supplier of ammunition to American war fighters in Afghanistan and Iraq, Rogers said. Depot public affairs officer Samuel Hudson said he saw many ammo boxes stamped “Blue Grass Army Depot” when he was on active duty in Afghanistan before becoming a civilian employee of the depot. Armor plating to protect military vehicles from bombs buried in roadways, a favorite weapon of insurgents, also are prepared, stored and shipped from the depot. In addition to storing, shipping and decommissioning ammunition, the depot refits older munitions, such as artillery shells, for use by the U.S. military. It also fabricates fins for mortar shells, the commander said.

Reporters and photographers were taken through the depot’s industrial-style operations on the media tour. The depot receives no congressional appropriation to operate, Rogers [said]. As part of the Army’s Working Capital Fund, it earns money by competing with other depots to supply to military units. The arrangement is designed to foster efficiency, and the depot has thrived and continues to grow in the non-traditional environment, he said.

The depot, as did all U.S. military facilities, came under heightened security 10 years ago after the September 11 terror attacks. Although the security remains a top depot priority, Rogers said, especially for the chemical limited area, the depot has made more areas accessible to the public in recent years. That includes a golf course, swimming pool, walking trail, club house and a portion of the Richmond Battlefield on which Union and Confederate soldiers fought nearly 150 years ago.

The depot plans to have some portions of the battle’s 2012 re-enactment, its 150th anniversary, take place on the depot, Hudson said. A Boy Scout camping event also is scheduled for the near future, the first time that has happened in nearly 25 years. This past December, the depot opened Lake Buck Lodge, a club house that overlooks a 15-acre lake. It is available for private parties, including company gatherings and family reunions. Playground equipment helps make it family friendly. Walking trails run alongside the lake. Inviting the public to the depot to share such facilities is another way of integrating the installation into the community, Rogers said, and perhaps dispelling a few lingering myths.

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International Day against Nuclear Tests: Translating Words into Action

Arms Control Association, 28 August 2011, armscontrolnow.org

August 29, 2011 is the second official International Day against Nuclear Tests. It coincides with the 20th anniversary of the historic events that led to the closure of the former Soviet nuclear test site of Semipalatinsk, where more than 456 explosions contaminated the land and its inhabitants. The courageous efforts of the Kazakh people and their allies lead Moscow's communist regime to halt nuclear weapons testing and catalyzed actions elsewhere around the globe that eventually led to a U.S. nuclear testing halt and the negotiation of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty [CTBT].

The damage caused by nuclear testing and the job of bring a permanent and verifiable ban on all nuclear testing is, however incomplete. As UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said on August 25: "We urgently need new progress in achieving a world free of both nuclear tests and nuclear weapons," Ban said. "Current voluntary moratoriums on nuclear weapon tests are valuable, yet they are no substitute for a global ban," he stated. The August 29 commemoration should spur nongovernmental organizations and policymakers to redouble stalled efforts to secure entry into force of the CTBT and improve programs to better understand and responsibly address the health and environmental damage caused by past nuclear testing. [...]

[On October 5, 1991] then-Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev...declared a moratorium [on nuclear tests], prompting U.S. legislators, including Senator Mark Hatfield (R-Oregon), Senator George Mitchell (D-Maine), Representative Mike Kopetski (D-Oregon) and Representative Dick Gephardt (D-Missouri) to introduce nuclear test moratorium legislation in Congress. With strong grassroots support in the United States, the legislation gathered momentum and support and was later modified to mandate a 9-month U.S. testing halt and negotiations on a CTBT. The legislation was approved by the House and Senate in September 1992. The last U.S. nuclear test explosion was conducted on September 23, 1992.

The following year, U.S. nongovernmental organizations and legislators successfully pressed President Clinton to indefinitely extend the U.S. test moratorium in July 1993 and launch multilateral negotiations on the Comprehensive [Nuclear] Test-Ban Treaty. [...]

Accelerating CTBT Entry into Force

Although the CTBT was opened for signature fifteen years ago this month, our work is far from complete. By banning all nuclear weapon test explosions, the CTBT prevents the established nuclear weapon states from proof-testing new, more sophisticated warhead designs. Without the option of nuclear explosive testing, newer members of the club cannot perfect smaller, more easily deliverable warheads.

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With the CTBT in force, global and national capabilities to detect and deter possible clandestine nuclear testing by other states will be significantly greater. Entry-into-force is essential to making short-notice, on-site inspections possible and maintaining long-term political and financial support from other nations for the operation of the International Monitoring System [IMS] and International Data Center [IDC].

One-hundred eighty-two states have signed the CTBT, but the treaty must still be ratified by nine remaining...states – the United States, China, India, Pakistan, Israel, Iran, Indonesia, Egypt, and North Korea – before it can formally enter into force.

In three weeks, CTBT states parties will gather at the United Nations for the Article XIV Conference on Facilitating CTBT Entry into Force. Such efforts are important, but actions speak louder than words. Governments must work harder to make that conference more effective by following it up with a serious diplomatic action plan for getting the remaining hold out states on board.

The United States and China

Ratification by the United States and China is particularly important. Given their existing nuclear test moratoria and 1996 signature of the CTBT, Washington and Beijing already bear most CTBT-related responsibilities, yet their failure to ratify has denied them – and others – the full security benefits of CTBT entry into force. In April 2009, U.S. President Barack Obama's pledged to "immediately and aggressively pursue U.S. ratification of the Comprehensive [Nuclear] Test-Ban Treaty." He said, "After more than five decades of talks, it is time for the testing of nuclear weapons to finally be banned." We agree. But now, President Obama must translate those lofty words into action and mount a serious public campaign to win the support of two-thirds of the U.S. Senate for ratification of the treaty without conditions.

[...] The Obama administration can and must explain how and why the treaty enhances international security, is effectively verifiable, and is essential to curb the spread of nuclear weapons in the future. To indicate the seriousness of his intention to do so, President Obama should promptly name a senior, high-level White House coordinator for the CTBT effort. The technical and political case for the CTBT is even stronger than it was in 1999 when the Senate failed to provide its advice and consent for ratification. What is necessary is the political will to pursue ratification and willingness by all Senators to review the new evidence in support of the treaty rather than arrive at judgments based on old information or misinformation.

It is also time for China's leaders to finally act on the CTBT. [...] The January 19, 2011 Joint Statement by President Hu Jintao and President Barack Obama stated that "... both sides

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support early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty.” Washington’s renewed pursuit of CTBT ratification opens up opportunities for China and other Annex 2 states – such as Indonesia – to lead the way toward entry into force by ratifying before the United States does. Action by Beijing would demonstrate its credibility as a nonproliferation leader and improve the chances that other states in Asia, as well as the United States, would follow suit.

India and Pakistan

India and Pakistan could advance the cause of nuclear disarmament and substantially ease regional tensions by converting their unilateral test moratoria into a legally binding commitment to end nuclear testing through the CTBT. [...] Since their [reciprocal] nuclear tests in 1998... condemned by the UN Security Council in Resolution 1172, neither India nor Pakistan have transformed their de facto nuclear test moratorium into a legally binding commitment not to conduct nuclear test explosions. It is also...time for India’s current leaders to pursue the recommendations of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi’s eloquent and visionary 1988 action plan for disarmament, which calls for “a moratorium on the testing of nuclear weapons ... to set the stage for negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty.” India’s security and that of Asia would be enhanced if New Delhi were to seek adoption of the CTBT along with its nuclear-armed Asian neighbors. [...]

Addressing the Damage Caused by Nuclear Testing

The damage caused by the 2,051 nuclear test explosions conducted worldwide lingers on at dozens of test sites from Lop Nor in China, to the atolls of the Pacific, to Nevada, to Algeria where France conducted its first test, to western Australia where the U.K. exploded nuclear weapons, to Semipalatinsk, across Russia, in Kazakhstan, and beyond. Most of the test sites are in the lands of indigenous peoples and far from the capitals of the testing governments. The 528 atmospheric tests delivered radioactive materials that produced approximately 430,000 additional cancer fatalities by the year 2000, according to a 1990 report published by the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War. The U.S. National Cancer Institute estimated in a 1997 report that the 90 dirtiest U.S. tests could cause 7,500-75,000 additional cases of thyroid cancer.

While underground nuclear blasts pose a smaller radioactive hazard than atmospheric tests, there has been widespread venting from underground explosions, especially at the Semipalatinsk test site in Kazakhstan. The United States has acknowledged that 433 of its 824 underground tests released radioactive material into the atmosphere. In addition, underground nuclear blasts leave a legacy of radioactive contamination, which eventually might leak into the surrounding environment.

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Our knowledge of the extent of the harm caused by five decades of nuclear test explosions underground, in the atmosphere, and underwater is still incomplete. The governments responsible for the damage have not adequately provided the assistance to survivors and resources necessary to mitigate the environmental contamination. In fact, the major testing states have been reluctant to recognize the harm inflicted by testing and the rights of those people who have been most affected. For example, for more than thirty years, France conducted 46 atmospheric and 147 underground nuclear tests in the South Pacific at Moruroa and Fangataufa atolls in French Polynesia. It is estimated that nearly half of France's underground nuclear tests released radioactive material into the atmosphere. Today, there are lingering concerns over hazards to the environment and the health of local populations.

Beyond the presence of plutonium and cesium on land and in the lagoon, as reported by the IAEA in 1998, ongoing monitoring of the geology of Moruroa Atoll has revealed major hazards on the north-east flank of the atoll. There were 28 underground tests in this northeast sector, with six tests releasing radioactivity into the ocean environment through cracks in the basalt base of the atoll. A January 2011 report by the French Atomic Energy Commission (CEA) outlines scenarios where a landslide of the side of the atoll – amounting to 670 million cubic meters of rock – could create a 15 to 20 meter high wave and swamp the east of the atoll. The collapse would also send out waves forming a 10 to 13 meter tsunami, which could threaten the neighboring inhabited island of Tureia. [...]

Improving the International Response

Last year, on the first International Day against Nuclear Tests the government of Kazakhstan made an important proposal: the establishment of an international fund – to be managed by the United Nations – to support the survivors of nuclear testing. To translate the idea into action, the UN Secretary-General would organize a conference under the auspices of the United Nations to help mobilize resources for the remediation of contamination and for health monitoring and rehabilitation of downwinders near nuclear test sites around the world.

States responsible for the testing at major test sites – particularly the United States and Russia – should report to the conference and on an annual basis every year thereafter on their current and future efforts and resource allocations to address the health and environmental impacts of nuclear testing and to rehabilitate populations that have been particularly impacted.

Independent nongovernmental experts, and especially members of affected communities should be invited to participate help develop a multi-year program of action. Many nuclear testing survivors are minorities on the own land whose views have too often been overlooked. That must no longer be the case.

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U.S. Still Monitoring Residual Radioactivity on Bikini Atoll Isle

The Japan Times, 01 September 2011, www.japantimes.co.jp

The tiny and remote Pacific island of Bikini, part of Bikini Atoll, is home to an abandoned nuclear test observation post and a vegetable farm that is used to research residual radioactivity. The 2.4-sq.-km island is officially uninhabited, but small groups of researchers and municipal officials are rotated for temporary visits to carry out research.

A rare media tour of the island was held last week, explaining the research the United States is continuing to carry out on the effects of nearly 70 nuclear bomb tests in the 1940s and '50s in the vicinity. Participants on the tour saw tomatoes, radishes and watermelons, among other vegetables and fruit, struggling to grow on the vegetable farm.

A Bikini Atoll municipal official, who guided the tour, said people are not allowed to eat anything harvested on the island. Some of the crops had been sent to the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California "a few months ago," the official said. The West Coast facility is a nuclear research institute. The official said coconuts are also regularly shipped about 600 km to Majuro, the capital of the Marshall Islands, so that the U.S. Department of Energy can analyze the radioactivity remaining in the soil.

Bikini locals, who were ordered in 1946 to leave the island because of the nuclear tests, returned home in 1968, after the U.S. government declared the site safe. But they were forced to evacuate again after many complained of health problems – including thyroid cancer. U.S. government studies have suggested some diseases may have been caused by internal exposure to radiation after the islanders ate local coconuts and crops, according to the municipal official.

Readings of radioactive materials in the air only ranged between 0.1 and 0.4 microsievert during the 2½-hour stay on the island Saturday, and one reporter with a Geiger counter detected no radioactive substances.

Six temporary visitors are currently staying on the island, the official said. Workers for the department and the Bikini Atoll municipality take turns staying there for several months to carry out research and equipment maintenance. [...]

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UN Conference to Push Work towards Entry into Force of Major Nuclear Treaty

Xinhua, 01 September 2011, english.news.cn

A UN ministerial conference, which is to be held at the UN headquarters in New York on September 23, will push for further signings and ratifications of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), according to Annika Thunborg, spokesperson and chief of public information for the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO).

Thunborg briefed the press on Thursday on the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty, which will bring foreign ministers from approximately 100 countries as well as UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to UN headquarters to take part in discussions.

Nine additional countries – the United States, China, Indonesia, India, Pakistan, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Israel, Iran, and Egypt – must ratify the CTBT, which bans all nuclear explosions, before it can enter into force. Among these, India, DPRK and Pakistan have not signed the treaty; the remaining six countries have signed but not ratified the CTBT. "What we expect is that there will be a lot of calls on these nine countries to sign or ratify the treaty," said Thunborg. "There will be a final declaration and an action plan adopted on what should happen."

A total of 182 countries have signed the CTBT, including many of the nine in question. However, only 154 have ratified the treaty. According to treaty provisions on its entry into force, 44 particular states, including the nine, are required to sign and ratify.

Thunborg identified ways in which the CTBT has been successful thus far. She said the treaty has enabled extensive and accurate monitoring of nuclear tests around the world in addition to monitoring the spread of radiation and helping with disaster mitigation. "So we have succeeded with all of this, but what we have not done, what the key challenge is, is that the treaty has not entered into force because nine countries still need to ratify the treaty...and many of these nine countries are also nuclear armed states, which makes it even more important."

Mexican foreign minister Patricia Espinosa Catellano and her Swedish counterpart, Carl Bildt will serve as chairs of the conference.

Thunborg pointed out that September 2011 is a month of many anniversaries in the history of nuclear weaponry. The CTBT opened for signatures 25 years ago on September 23, she said. "So that's 15 years ago, and we have accomplished a lot," she explained. "Testing basically

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screached to a halt. We had over 2,000 nuclear explosions before that and in the last 15 years we have had a handful – a handful too many, but still."

Another important anniversary was on Thursday, which marked the 50th anniversary of the breaking of a moratorium on nuclear testing. "That moratorium was there to allow for negotiations on a complete ban on nuclear testing and negotiations took place in Geneva, but the moratorium had been very fragile from the beginning," Thunborg said. Nuclear tests by the former Soviet Union and the United States broke the treaty and set off what Thunborg called a "virtual nuclear testing frenzy." She said over 250 nuclear bombs were tested in the 16 months following the breaking of the moratorium and in October 1962, the world was brought to the brink of nuclear war through the Cuban Missile Crisis.

"So to connect to fifty years ago, the treaty hasn't entered into force, it hasn't taken legal effect so we actually still have a moratorium," she said. "We're living with a moratorium for fifteen years and we all know history has taught us how unreliable moratoria can be."

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Legal Prohibition only Way to Realize World Free of Nuclear Testing, Weapons, Deputy Secretary-General Says during Observance of International Day

United Nations, 02 September 2011, www.un.org

Stressing that the voluntary moratoriums of nuclear weapon states were no substitute for a legal prohibition, Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro today urged governments that had not yet done so to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty [CTBT] and bolster other efforts to create a world free of nuclear testing and nuclear weapons.

“It is time for this treaty to enter into force,” she told the General Assembly’s informal meeting in observance of the International Day against Nuclear Tests. “Achievement of this goal will further reinforce the growing opposition to nuclear weapons throughout the world.” That was a top priority of the Secretary-General, Ms. Migiro added, emphasizing that the fate of global efforts to achieve it would affect everyone, and have an impact on the planet’s future.

The International Day, observed on August 29, also marked the twentieth anniversary since the closure of the Semipalatinsk nuclear weapons test site by the government of Kazakhstan. Almost 500 nuclear-weapons tests at the site had exposed civilians to the harmful effects of nuclear radiation and caused widespread environmental degradation and economic loss, she said, expressing full support for efforts by the Kazakh Government and people to overcome those effects.

General Assembly President Joseph Deiss (Switzerland) also urged governments to sign the treaty so that it could become fully operative. He also encouraged states, civil society, academia and the media to engage in celebrations of the International Day while enhancing public awareness and education about the effects of nuclear testing.

Ermek Kosherbayev, Deputy Governor of East Kazakhstan, said the closure of Semipalatinsk had led to the shutting down of test sites in Nevada, in the United States, Lop Nor in China and Novaya Zemlya in the Russian Federation. The Kazakh government had spent some \$550 million since 1999 in compensation to people affected by Semipalatinsk, but those living nearby continued to suffer, he said, citing the high local death rate, low life expectancy and high incidence of cancer.

During the sixty-sixth General Assembly session, Kazakhstan would present a draft resolution on strengthening international cooperation and coordination of activities to rehabilitate Semipalatinsk’s population and environment, he continued, calling upon Member States to support and co-sponsor that text. He also requested monetary assistance to bolster the Semipalatinsk region’s economy, health and infrastructure, noting that \$23 million was needed

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to create a modern radiation assessment centre, in addition to \$1.34 million required to modernize the overall infrastructure and technical equipment of the Institute of Radiation Safety and Ecology.

Geoffrey Shaw, Director and Representative of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) at the United Nations in New York, said the Agency would continue its efforts to help the Kazakh government assess the radiological contamination of affected territories. It planned to launch a technical cooperation project in 2012 that would support radio-ecological studies by providing a sound basis for predicting the long-term behavior of radionuclides and helping to assess their current and future impacts.

Enkhtsetseg Ochir (Mongolia), Chair of the Assembly's Second Committee (Economic and Financial), said that several United Nations agencies had provided substantial assistance to help the Kazakh population suffering the effects of nuclear fallout from Semipalatinsk. However, more help was needed to address challenges in several priority areas, including radiation safety, socio-economic development, health care, raising public awareness of nuclear-testing risks, and strengthening efforts by non-governmental organizations to carry out socio-economic initiatives. The human suffering caused by nuclear testing raised fundamental questions, she continued, emphasizing that military and political considerations were not more important than people's health and well-being. "The early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is not a choice, it is an imperative."

Echoing those sentiments, several speakers expressed their commitment to the treaty, saying that nuclear testing not only harmed human health and the environment, it also created distrust among nations. Annika Thunborg, Spokesperson and Head of Public Information, and Representative of the Executive Secretary to the Preparatory Commission of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, said that between 1945 and 1996, more than 2,000 nuclear tests had been conducted in over 60 different locations, poisoning the environment to the extent that future generations would continue to live with the legacy of nuclear testing for centuries and even millennia to come.

Daryl Kimball, Executive Director of the Arms Control Association, called on governments to redouble efforts to end nuclear testing, refrain from pursuing new types of nuclear weapons and halt the development of new ones, while paying in full their assessments to the Preparatory Commission and helping to complete the international nuclear monitoring system. They should also improve national and global programs to better understand and responsibly address the health and environmental damage caused by past nuclear testing.

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NNSA Ships Additional Special Nuclear Material from LLNL

National Nuclear Security Administration, 31 August 2011, nnsa.energy.gov

The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) today announced that Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) has removed 90 percent inventory of nuclear material requiring the highest level of security protection.

The move is part of NNSA's efforts to consolidate Category I and II special nuclear material, requiring the highest level of security, at five sites by the end of 2012. This initiative will further improve security and reduce costs as part of NNSA's overall effort to transform the Cold War era nuclear weapons complex into a 21st century nuclear security enterprise.

"I applaud the safe and efficient work done at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory to package and remove nuclear material no longer needed at the site," said Don Cook, NNSA's Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs. "The men and women at Livermore continue to make big strides in reaching NNSA's goal of removing Category I and II special nuclear material from Livermore by the end of 2012, and they are doing this while continuing to perform vital national security work. The removal of the material meets NNSA's goal of transforming a Cold War nuclear weapons complex into a more robust nuclear security enterprise that is smaller, safer and more efficient."

All shipments have been completed in full compliance with safety and environmental laws and procedures. All federal and receiver site requirements were met for these shipments. The de-inventory project was initiated in October 2006.

NNSA had originally planned to remove high-security material from LLNL by 2014. However, NNSA has developed an accelerated timeline to remove the material safely and securely by 2012.

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Nuclear Warheads Converted to Fuel

The Voice of Russia, 04 September 2011, english.ruvr.ru

More than 420 tons of highly enriched uranium have been processed into fuel under the 500-ton Megatons to Megawatts Russian-American program, also known as the HEU-LEU program, the United States Enrichment Corporation (USEC) reported this week.

In 1993, Russia and the United States signed an intergovernmental agreement on a 20-year program to convert 500 metric tons of uranium from Soviet-era nuclear warheads into fuel for U.S. atomic power plants. By now, the program has been 85 percent fulfilled, which means that 17,000 nuclear warheads have been scrapped, which is equivalent to 10 billion barrels of oil, or two years worth of U.S. oil imports.

The contract expires in 2013. [...] At present, half of all nuclear reactors in the United States are powered by Russian fuel. USEC is keen to continue cooperation. This March, it signed a 10-year contract with Russia's Techsnabexport company. The \$3-billion deal offers Russia more advantages, but the fuel will no longer come from nuclear warheads.

Russian nuclear expert, Bulat Nigmatulin, said "We have many enrichment facilities, nearly 50 percent of all facilities in the world. If uranium is supplied to us from other countries, we enrich it and sell it. We do this using our technology. The price is based on modern production costs, which makes it cost-effective."

Meanwhile, competition on international uranium markets is tending to grow. France, China and other countries that have enrichment facilities of their own are eager to put them to commercial use. Preliminary estimates suggest that after 2013, U.S. enriched uranium imports may account for 20 percent of all uranium consumed by all nuclear reactors in America.

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IAEA to Host Forum on Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone for Middle East

International Atomic Energy Agency, 02 September 2011, www.iaea.org

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is to host a forum among its Member States to consider how the experience of Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zones (NWFZ) in several regions of the world could be relevant to the Middle East. In a letter to Member States, IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano indicates that the Forum on Experience of Possible Relevance to the Creation of a Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone in the Middle East will be held at the Agency's headquarters in Vienna on 21-22 November 2011.

Reflecting the consensus of the IAEA's Member States on the importance of establishing such a zone, it will consider the experience of the five existing NWFZs. The main focus of the Forum would be to:

1. study the lessons of other regions in terms of the context that prevailed there before a NWFZ was considered;
2. review existing, multilaterally agreed principles for establishing such zones;
3. review the theory and practice of establishing the five existing NWFZs;
4. discuss the experience of representatives from the five NWFZs in setting up and implementing such zones; and
5. discuss the region of the Middle East in this context.

The gathering follows a request by Member States at the IAEA's General Conference in 2000 that the Director General convene a forum where participants from the Middle East and other interested parties could learn from the experience of NWFZs in other regions. Agreement on holding such a meeting proved elusive for over a decade, but a letter in March 2011 from Director General Yukiya Amano to Member States of the Middle East region led to consultations indicating that a forum was possible this year.

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Safety Questioned at Savannah River Site Nuclear Weapons Tritium Program

The Augusta Chronicle, 24 August 2011, chronicle.augusta.com

Weakened safety programs for Savannah River Site's tritium project could increase the potential for accidents, according to a federal oversight board that has given the U.S. Energy Department 90 days to address a series of new concerns. In a letter last week to National Nuclear Security Administration director Tom D'Agostino, the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board said the concerns involve "changes in the safety philosophy" that place too much reliance on untested procedures.

"The board believes these changes have weakened the safety posture, reduced the safety margin and increased the potential for both workers and the public to be exposed to higher consequences," wrote board chairman Peter S. Winokur.

The tritium program, which employs about 450 workers, is one of the last nuclear weapons functions still based at SRS and includes periodic recharging of the tritium reservoirs in nuclear warheads. Tritium, a gas that increases explosive power, has a half-life of about 12 1/2 years and requires recharging. Workers also extract tritium from fuel rods produced at Tennessee Valley Authority reactors and from both surplus and active warhead reservoirs.

The board's concerns include a "shift in safety philosophy" that replaces preventative controls with "mitigative or administrative controls." Specifically, the program's new calculations of the effects of a release through fire or explosion are inadequate to replace traditional conservative modeling. "By using these non-bounding, less conservative parameters, the dose to the public is underestimated," the board wrote.

Site officials plan to review and respond to the report soon, but also believe the existing safety programs are appropriate. "Since the board staff's visit a year ago, earthquake drills have been developed and are being implemented in the tritium facilities," site spokesman Jim Giusti said. "These drills provide awareness to employees regarding possible facility conditions after an earthquake and they provide training on immediate response actions required during and after a seismic event." The site's tritium inventory, he added, is only one-third of what it was in the early 1990s, but many of the original safety systems remain in place today.

The safety board's criticisms, which must be addressed within 90 days, come at a time when the National Nuclear Security Administration is implementing a money-saving consolidation of tritium facilities at several federal sites that will lead to a combined cost savings and cost avoidance of hundreds of millions of dollars over the next two decades. Under the long-range Tritium Responsive Infrastructure Modifications plan, several older, Cold War-era buildings will

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be abandoned as the operations are consolidated in newer, more efficient facilities, and the program will shrink from eight nuclear facilities to five.

The modernization plan, officials said, is unrelated to a new management structure that will combine management of the SRS tritium facilities with management of the Y12 National Security Complex near Knoxville, Tenn., and Pantex Plant near Amarillo, Texas. Tasks performed at Pantex include retrofitting and repairing of nuclear weapons, interim storage of plutonium pits and dismantling of surplus warheads.

The Y12 site was part of the World War II Manhattan Project. Its current missions include the reworking of nuclear weapon systems and components, surveillance of nuclear weapons and related materials, and prevention of the spread of weapons of mass destruction. The SRS tritium facilities occupy approximately 29 acres in the northwest portion of H Area. Operations there began in 1955.

The board's concern over the tritium program also raises concerns over the safety of other programs at the site, said Tom Clements, Southeastern Nuclear Campaign Coordinator with Friends of the Earth. "We are concerned that a change in the safety philosophy related to the tritium facility could also indicate that other SRS facilities are likewise at risk of greater accident than calculated and call on the DNFSB to review the safety basis for other facilities handling radioactive materials at SRS," he said, in an email Wednesday.

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Russian Inspectors to Fly Open Skies Treaty Mission over U.S.

Interfax-AVN Online, 26 August 2011, accessed via Open Source Center

A Tupolev Tu-154-M Lk-1 airplane carrying a group of Russian inspectors will fly observation missions over U.S. territory under the international Treaty on Open Skies from August 28 to September 5.

"The aircraft will take off from the McConnell airfield in the state of Kansas. Its maximum distance will be 4,800 kilometers," the Russian Defense Ministry said in a statement received by Interfax-AVN on Friday.

"Russian and U.S. specialists on board the airplane will monitor the use of equipment and observation systems in line with existing agreements," the Ministry said.

It will be this year's 24th observation mission by Russian inspectors over the territory of the signatory countries to the Treaty on Open Skies, which was signed by 35 states in Europe and North America in Helsinki in 1992 to verify information about weapons and troops deployment provided by countries.

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U.S. Inspectors to Make Open Skies Monitoring Flight in Russia

Interfax-AVN Online, 29 August 2011, accessed via Open Source Center

U.S. inspectors will take a flight aboard an OC-135B Open Skies United States Air Force observation aircraft in Russia from August 29 through September 3.

"The jet will follow the coordinated route in strict compliance with the international monitoring rules," says a Russian Defense Ministry report received by Interfax-AVN on Monday.

The jet is incapable of carrying armaments. "The photographic equipment it carries has passed international certification involving Russian specialists," the ministry said.

The Open Skies Treaty was signed in Helsinki in 1992 to verify the correctness of information about armaments and deployment of forces in member countries. In all, the treaty involves 35 states of Europe and North America.

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