



BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



24 February – 09 March 2009

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ARMS CONTROL (GENERAL)

Obama Offers Missile Deal to Russia in Secret Letter

New York Times 03 March 2009, <http://www.nyt.com>

President Obama sent a secret letter to Russia's president last month suggesting he would back off deploying a new missile-defense system in Eastern Europe if Russia would help stop Iran from developing long-range weapons, U.S. officials said Monday. (408 words)

[Click here for full text.](#)

CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (CWC)

Status of Chemical Demilitarisation as at February 2009

Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, 20 February 2009, <http://www.opcw.org/>

States Parties that have declared chemical weapons are moving steadily towards the goal of complete destruction of their stockpiles. (1,174 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

Operation Swift Solution Reaches Critical Milestone

The Richmond Register, 28 February 2009, <http://www.richmondregister.com/>

Operation Swift Solution, the Army initiative to eliminate three deteriorating steel containers storing a mixture of GB nerve agent and its decontamination breakdown products, reached another critical milestone... (446 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

Russia Destroys 12,000 Tons of Toxic Chemical Agents by March 2009

ITAR-TASS, 06 March 2009, accessed via *Open Source Center*

Russia has destroyed 12,000 tons of toxic chemical agents so far within the country's commitments under [the CWC]... (174 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

New Russian Chemical Weapons Site Begins Operations

Global Security Newswire, 06 March 2009, <http://gsn.nti.org/gsn/>

Russia has begun to operate a U.S.-backed chemical weapons disposal facility near the Ural Mountains, the environmental organization Global Green USA announced yesterday. (334 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

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NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY (NPT)

Task Force Urges Broader Role for Nuclear Labs

The Washington Post, 05 March 2009; <http://www.washingtonpost.com/>

The nation's nuclear weapons laboratories would be spun out of the Energy Department and become the center of an independent Agency for National Security Applications under a proposal to be released today... (603 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

Multinational Fuel Bank Proposal Reaches Key Milestone

International Atomic Energy Agency, 06 March 2009, <http://www.iaea.org/>

A proposed multinational fuel bank under IAEA control reached a milestone this week... (593 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

STRATEGIC ARMS REDUCTION TREATY (START)

New START Treaty Could be Ready by Yearend

RIA Novosti, 02 March 2006, <http://en.rian.ru/>

A new treaty between Russia and the U.S. on the reduction of strategic nuclear arsenals could be prepared by the end of 2009, a senior Russian diplomat has said. (262 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

U.S., Russia Could Set Table for Nuclear Talks Today

Global Security Newswire, 06 March 2009, <http://gsn.nti.org/gsn/>

An informal schedule for U.S.-Russian nuclear arms control talks could emerge from a meeting today in Geneva between U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, the Associated Press reported. (380 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

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Obama Offers Missile Deal to Russia in Secret Letter

New York Times 03 March 2009, <http://www.nyt.com>

President Obama sent a secret letter to Russia's president last month suggesting he would back off deploying a new missile-defense system in Eastern Europe if Russia would help stop Iran from developing long-range weapons, U.S. officials said Monday.

The letter to President Dmitri Medvedev was hand-delivered in Moscow by top administration officials three weeks ago. It said the United States would not need to proceed with the interceptor system, which has been vehemently opposed by Russia since it was proposed by the Bush administration, if Iran halted any efforts to build nuclear warheads and ballistic missiles.

Russia's military, diplomatic and commercial ties to Iran give it some influence there, but it has often resisted the United States' hard line against Iran. "It's almost saying to them put up or shut up," said a senior administration official. "It's not that the Russians get to say, 'We'll try and therefore you have to suspend.' It says the threat has to go away."

Russia has not responded, but a Russian official said Monday that Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov would discuss missile defense with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton when they meet Friday in Geneva. Obama and Medvedev then will meet for the first time April 2 in London, officials said Monday.

Obama's letter, sent in response to one he received from Medvedev shortly after his inauguration, represents part of an effort to "press the reset button" on U.S.-Russian relations, as Vice President Joseph Biden put it last month. Among other things, the letter discussed negotiations to extend a strategic arms treaty expiring this year and cooperation in opening supply routes to Afghanistan.

The plan to build a high-tech radar facility in the Czech Republic and deploy 10 interceptor missiles in Poland - a part of the world that Russia once considered its sphere of influence - was a top priority for President Bush to deter Iran in case it developed a nuclear warhead to fit atop its long-range missiles. Bush never accepted a Russian proposal to install part of the missile-defense system on its territory and jointly operate it.

Now the Obama administration appears to be reconsidering that idea, although it is not clear if it would want to put part of the system on Russian soil where it could be flipped on or off by Russians. Obama has been lukewarm on missile defense, saying he supports it only if it can be proved technically effective and affordable.

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Status of Chemical Demilitarisation as at February 2009

Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, 20 February 2009, <http://www.opcw.org/>

Following are the paragraphs related to chemical demilitarisation contained in the opening statement by the OPCW Director-General to the Executive Council at its 55th session:

States Parties that have declared chemical weapons are moving steadily towards the goal of complete destruction of their stockpiles. In this respect, as at 31 January 2009, OPCW inspectors had verified the destruction of 29,741 metric tonnes of Category 1 chemical weapons, or 42.76 percent of the total stockpiles declared by six possessor States. The amount of Category 2 chemical weapons destroyed remained unchanged at 915 metric tonnes, or 51.8 percent of the total declared.

India, Libya, Russia, and the United States submitted their sixth and seventh reports on the progress made towards completing the destruction of their Category 1 chemical weapons in a timely manner. As on previous occasions, the Secretariat was able to reconcile the data collected during systematic verification of destruction with the information provided in these reports. In addition, China and Japan each submitted two reports on the progress made towards the destruction of chemical weapons abandoned by Japan on the territory of China.

The United States has to date destroyed about 16,126 metric tonnes, or 58 percent, of its stockpile. Two destruction facilities in that State Party—Tooele and Pine Bluff—are currently destroying mustard in one-ton containers. In addition, an OPCW inspection team has been tasked with the monitoring of operations related to the completion of the agent campaign at Anniston and the post treatment of the hydrolysate resulting from the destruction of three leaking containers at Blue Grass. Umatilla, and soon thereafter Anniston, are preparing for the mustard campaign, scheduled to commence in April and June respectively; the Explosive Destruction System at Pine Bluff continues to be in a period of inactivity.

I wish to mention here, since I am referring to the United States, a letter addressed to me by President Obama in response to my own letter of congratulation to him last November. In that letter, President Obama indicates his readiness to “work together in a spirit of peace and friendship to build a more secure world ...” This, indeed, gives us grounds for satisfaction for all of the OPCW and we continue to look forward to promoting and enhancing cooperation with the United States of America towards the success of the Convention.

On its part, Russia has accomplished destruction of about 11,960 metric tonnes, or 29.84 percent, of its Category 1 chemical weapons. The destruction of chemical weapons at Leonidovka commenced on 2 September 2008, with the insertion of reagent in air bombs filled

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with VX. The draining of the resulting reaction mass is currently ongoing. For the time being, no chemical weapons are being reported as destroyed at this facility, as the thermal treatment and mutilation units are not processing. Two other facilities—Kambarka and Maradykovsky—are also operating currently in Russia. Kambarka is close to completing the destruction of the residual lewisite in bulk storage tanks. Maradykovsky, on the other hand, continues the thermal treatment of the reaction mass and of the previously mutilated (by nose-thread welding) empty munitions bodies. A final engineering review of the Shchuchye facility took place in November 2008, when this facility was in the final stage of preparations, equipment installation and testing for the commencement of chemical weapons destruction. Recently, Russia notified the Secretariat that Shchuchye would commence equipment testing with live agent beginning on 5 March 2009. Consequently, an inspection team will be deployed at the site to ensure systematic verification of destruction as per the current notification.

I also wish to mention that, having due regard to States Parties' obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention and in response to a request from Russia, the Secretariat has agreed with that State Party on an adjustment of the reported figure for the aggregate quantities of chemical weapons initially declared. This adjustment, relating to thickeners forming part of viscous chemical agents, does not affect or limit the obligation of this State Party to destroy its entire chemical weapons stockpile. This State Party will be required to agree on the relevant practicalities with the Secretariat. The Secretariat will provide further information in the 2008 and 2009 Verification Implementation Reports and in other relevant documents.

I also look forward to my forthcoming visit to Russia, in the second week of March, where I will have the privilege to call on H.E. Mr Sergey V. Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and on other senior officials and Members of Parliament.

India has progressed to destroy a quantity of Category 1 chemical weapons corresponding to 98.72 percent of the total amount of such declared weapons. Following the completion of destruction of the unrecoverable heel in bulk storage tanks, the destruction facility in this State Party commenced the destruction of the remaining mustard-filled chemical munitions in January. To increase capacity, a second incineration plant was built at the facility, which is planned to complete the destruction of its entire chemical weapons stockpile by 29 April 2009. We very much look forward to India completing the destruction of its declared stockpile of chemical weapons.

The Secretariat conducted a final engineering review of the Ruwagha Chemicals Reloading System in Libya between 7 and 14 January 2009. The team of the Secretariat noted that the site was not prepared to start reloading operations as originally scheduled for 15 January 2009, due

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to the absence or incomplete installation of required process and monitoring equipment. During the visit, as well as in their seventh report on the progress made towards completing the destruction of their Category 1 chemical weapons, the Libyan authorities emphasized that the final assembly and commissioning of the facility will not take place earlier than 15 March 2009, when a further review would be required prior to the actual start of reloading operations.

China and Japan, on their part, have just completed the first trial excavation at Haerbaling. The results of this and other, similar trials are expected to provide more information on the condition of buried abandoned chemical weapons there, which will be important for eventual recovery efforts. Both China and Japan have begun discussions with the Technical Secretariat regarding a draft facility agreement and detailed plan for verification. The second series of meetings on this subject is scheduled for the end of this month here in The Hague. While, to date, there has been no destruction of chemical weapons abandoned by Japan on the territory of China, and construction of destruction facilities has not begun yet, we deeply appreciate these States Parties' efforts and look forward to destruction beginning at the earliest opportunity. The Technical Secretariat fully supports them in accordance with the Chemical Weapons Convention.

A final point about destruction activities relates to the Dzerzhinsk lewisite chemical weapons production facility (CWPF), in Russia. Once all conditions for certification of the destruction of this facility had been met, the Secretariat issued in January 2009 a certificate of destruction for that production facility.

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Operation Swift Solution Reaches Critical Milestone

The Richmond Register, 28 February 2009, <http://www.richmondregister.com/>

Operation Swift Solution, the Army initiative to eliminate three deteriorating steel containers storing a mixture of GB nerve agent and its decontamination breakdown products, reached another critical milestone Thursday when two trucks holding the caustic wastewater, known as hydrolysate [which is] generated during the neutralization process, were received at Veolia Environmental Services near Port Arthur, Texas.

The United States received credit under the Chemical Weapons Convention treaty for chemical destruction when the hydrolysate was off-loaded at the Veolia site.

The arrival of the shipment brings the operation one step closer to completion. The project was initiated in late summer 2007 after one of the containers leaked and the others showed similar signs of corrosion. In order to address health and safety concerns and eliminate the possibility of future leaks, a multi-agency team determined a course of action to destroy the containers, resulting in months of stringent planning and testing, coordination with federal, state and local officials, and discussions with community leaders.

"I appreciate the support we've received from the Kentucky Department for Environmental Protection, as well as citizens groups, in making this a reality," said Kevin J. Flamm, who manages the Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives program, the agency responsible for destruction of the Army's chemical weapons stockpiles in Kentucky and Colorado. "This has truly been a team effort, and I am proud of the men and women who are working to eliminate this hazard."

Destruction operations on the steel containers, which began November 12, have been safely conducted to date without incident by a Maryland-based unit from the Edgewood Chemical Biological Center (ECBC), using a transportable neutralization process called the Chemical Agent Transfer System.

"Our team has reached the beginning of the end," said Timothy A. Blades, ECBC director of operations, "We now are focused on the closure work that must also be carried out with no less strict attention to safety."

Final operations will involve shipping some additional wastes from the BGAD to Veolia, and dismantling of the facilities and equipment for return shipment to Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. In addition, the decontaminated steel container halves will be shipped to Rock Island Arsenal, Ill., to be recycled.

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“Operation Swift Solution gives us an excellent real-world opportunity to test our procedures for command and control, emergency response notification, inspection and oversight of chemical agent,” said Lt. Col. David L. Musgrave, who commands the Blue Grass Chemical Activity and is responsible for safe, secure chemical weapons storage at the depot. “We are all better prepared for the future.”

Construction on the full-scale facility to destroy the remainder of the chemical weapons stockpile at BGAD is under way.

[Weekly advisories on Operation Swift Solution progress are available at www.pmacwa.army.mil]

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Russia Destroys 12,000 Tons of Toxic Chemical Agents by March 2009

ITAR-TASS, 06 March 2009, accessed via Open Source Center

Russia has destroyed 12,000 tons of toxic chemical agents so far within the country's commitments under Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction (Chemical Weapons Convention), chief of the Federal Service for Environmental, Technological and Nuclear Supervision (Rostekhnadzor) Nikolai Kutysin said at an enlarged meeting of the service's board on Friday.

"Russia has fulfilled all commitments at the second stage to implement the Convention," Kutysin said. "As of March 1, 2009, Russia has destroyed 12,000 tons of toxic agents or more than 30 percent of the country's stock. The third stage of the program should be completed in 2009, when up to 45 percent of toxic agents should be destroyed," he said.

The chief of the service noted that additional dumping sites would be built to implement the program to destroy some stocks of chemical weapons.

"The implementation of the program is an important task in 2009. It is necessary to ensure security of dumping facilities and fulfill all commitments under the convention," Kutysin said.

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New Russian Chemical Weapons Site Begins Operations

Global Security Newswire, 06 March 2009, <http://gsn.nti.org/gsn/>

Russia has begun to operate a U.S.-backed chemical weapons disposal facility near the Ural Mountains, the environmental organization Global Green USA announced yesterday.

The U.S. Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) provided roughly half the funding for construction of the Shchuchye plant in the Kurgan Oblast. The site stores about 5,400 metric tons of various nerve agents contained within nearly 2 million artillery shells and 1,000 missile warheads.

Operations and system testing using nerve agent began yesterday at one primary destruction building, while the other plant is not expected to open for at least one year, according to Global Green. When fully operational, the site should be able to eliminate 1,600 tons of nerve agent each year.

"The initial opening of the Shchuchye facility in Russia to eliminate some 5,400 tons of deadly nerve agents is a major milestone in Russia's program to safely destroy its 40,000 tons of chemical weapons," Paul Walker, security and sustainability chief at Global Green, said in a press release. "It will be extremely important that the U.S. remain involved in oversight and technical support for this major threat reduction and nonproliferation effort in order to make sure it moves forward safely, securely, and efficiently. We have to be 100 percent certain that no accidents or incidents happen to derail this expensive and dangerous process, and we do not want these man-portable weapons to wind up in the wrong hands."

A total of seven chemical weapons disposal plants are anticipated in Russia. One has finished operations, while three others are conducting disposal and two remain unfinished.

The Bush administration provided no money for Russian chemical demilitarization activities in its fiscal 2008 and 2009 defense budgets, Global Green said. The group called for the Obama administration to provide funding for support operations at Shchuchye and to back disposal of more than 2 million nerve agent artillery shells stored at Kizner in the Udmurt Republic.

Under the Chemical Weapons Convention, Russia has until April 2012 to complete elimination of its stockpile of banned materials.

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Task Force Urges Broader Role for Nuclear Labs

The Washington Post, 05 March 2009; <http://www.washingtonpost.com/>

The nation's nuclear weapons laboratories would be spun out of the Energy Department and become the center of an independent Agency for National Security Applications under a proposal to be released today by a bipartisan task force formed by the Stimson Center, a research organization devoted to security issues.

Changing the status of Los Alamos, Lawrence Livermore and Sandia National Laboratories and making wider use of the labs for other research would help reestablish and assure "the nation's global science and technology leadership in the 21st century," said the task force report. At present, the labs are directed by the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), which is a semiautonomous part of the Energy Department.

"This action would enable the laboratories to remain trusted third party advisors as well as providers of capabilities, but it would initiate a full transformation from a Cold War, industrial age mindset and culture," according to the task force, which was chaired by Frances Fragos Townsend, who was an assistant to President George W. Bush for homeland security and counterterrorism, and retired Lt. Gen. Donald Kerrick, who was deputy national security adviser to President Bill Clinton.

The proposal comes at a time when the future of the nation's multibillion-dollar nuclear weapons complex is under review. Congress last year halted a Bush administration plan to develop a new nuclear warhead and delayed an expensive plan to reduce the size of the complex and modernize many of its 50-year-old facilities. Members held up these programs while awaiting development of a comprehensive nuclear strategy that would determine the future size of the nation's nuclear stockpile and the complex needed to build or refurbish it.

A congressionally mandated commission is studying that issue and is to report later this year. The Defense Department's approach to the stockpile's future also will be determined by year's end, when it completes its Nuclear Posture Review. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) had ordered the Energy Department and the Defense Department to study the costs and potential benefits of transferring budget and management of NNSA or any of its components to Defense beginning in fiscal 2011.

Though still in its initial stage, the OMB idea of putting the nuclear complex under the Pentagon has already drawn widespread criticism from Capitol Hill and elsewhere. Rep. Ellen O. Tauscher (D-Calif.), who is chairman of the House Armed Services strategic subcommittee and whose district includes the Livermore laboratory, wrote to OMB Director Peter Orszag last month

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opposing the idea. Saying that moving the NNSA into the Defense Department had been rejected in the past, Tauscher wrote that "civilian control over our nuclear weapons laboratories and related facilities was established to ensure some independence from the military."

The Stimson task force recommendations stem primarily from concerns that reduced spending on nuclear weapons would result in a funding cut for the national laboratories at a time when their parent agency, the Energy Department, faces other growing financial demands.

For several decades, in order to draw some of the nation's best scientists, the laboratories have taken on work in addition to dealing with nuclear weapons. The task force said nuclear weapons funding in the lab budgets ranged from 43 percent at Sandia to 60 percent at Lawrence Livermore. But the remainder of the work they do, for the Pentagon, State Department, intelligence community and Department of Homeland Security, helps "to innovate new technologies to help address emerging national security threats."

As currently operated, however, the task force said, the NNSA has to work within "an excessively bureaucratic" Energy Department culture that "has infiltrated NNSA as well," with the laboratories the eventual losers.

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Multinational Fuel Bank Proposal Reaches Key Milestone

International Atomic Energy Agency, 06 March 2009, <http://www.iaea.org/>

A proposed multinational fuel bank under IAEA control reached a milestone this week when Kuwait pledged a financial contribution of \$10 million. The pledge—announced at the IAEA Board of Governors meeting in Vienna—means that the international financial target for the fuel bank has been reached, putting into motion the efforts for a future decision by the Agency's Board to actually create it.

In welcoming the achievement, IAEA Director General Mohamed ElBaradei said that the next steps are to develop a proposed framework for the fuel reserve for the consideration of the Board hopefully at its mid-year meeting in June.

"The proposed fuel bank is a bold agenda and it is clearly not going to happen overnight. But bold measures, including assurances of nuclear fuel supply and multinationalizing sensitive parts of the nuclear fuel cycle, are vital if we are to enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world while curbing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and eliminating them altogether," he said in his statement to the Board this week.

The initiative for an IAEA-led fuel reserve was financially kicked off in 2006 by the Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI) with a \$50 million contribution. The offer was contingent on securing an additional \$100 million in matching funds. Kuwait's pledge this week adds to contributions and pledges made by Norway (\$5 million), the USA (\$50 million), the United Arab Emirates (\$10 million) and the European Union (€25 million).

Dr. ElBaradei outlined what he called an "ideal scenario" for a proposed framework that in his view would start with a nuclear fuel bank under IAEA auspices, based on three principles:

- Any such mechanism should be non-political, non-discriminatory and available to all States in compliance with their safeguards obligations;
- Any release of material should be determined by non-political criteria established in advance and applied objectively and consistently; and
- No State should be required to give up its rights under the Non-Proliferation Treaty regarding any parts of the nuclear fuel cycle.

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One part of a possible new framework is to reach agreement that all new enrichment and reprocessing activities should be placed exclusively under multilateral control, to be followed by agreement to convert all existing facilities from national to multilateral control as well.

The NTI proposal of a low-enriched uranium fuel bank under IAEA auspices is one among several multilateral nuclear approaches currently being proposed. Decision on location, organization, and conditions for access to an eventual fuel bank are the prerogative of the Agency and its Member States.

Among the approaches is one circulated by Russia for the IAEA Board's consideration. It outlines a proposal for a 120-tonne low-enriched uranium (LEU) reserve for IAEA Member States and provides assured export licences and covers all long term costs, with the consumer State paying market rates for any supply of LEU.

Enriched uranium provides the fuel for many of the world's nuclear power reactors, and the enrichment process is a vital process in a multi-step nuclear fuel cycle. The enrichment of uranium to about 5 percent, while a necessary step in the creation of the fuel that powers many of the world's civilian nuclear reactors, can also be employed for use in nuclear weapons when enriched to above 95 percent outside the purview of Agency safeguards or verification.

By providing a secure and reliable supply of the fuel needed for nuclear power generation, a nuclear fuel bank would strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime through an assurance of supply and reliance on the nuclear fuel market.

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



24 February – 09 March 2009

DTRA

New START Treaty Could be Ready by Yearend

RIA Novosti, 02 March 2006, <http://en.rian.ru/>

A new treaty between Russia and the U.S. on the reduction of strategic nuclear arsenals could be prepared by the end of 2009, a senior Russian diplomat has said.

"We are certain that with political will, this document could be prepared before the current START expires, that is before December 5 this year," Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said in an interview with the Nezavisimaya Gazeta newspaper published on Monday.

The Strategic Arms Reduction (START) Treaty signed between the Soviet Union and the United States in 1991 places a limit of 6,000 strategic or long-range nuclear warheads on each side, and limits the number of delivery vehicles, such as bombers, land-based and submarine-based missiles, to 1,600 each.

"We would like to take all the best things from the current START treaty, and put this cooperation experience, which proved to be effective, into a new legally binding document," the deputy minister said.

Commenting on media reports that the U.S. administration would like the number of nuclear warheads on both sides cut to 1,000, or an 80 percent reduction, Ryabkov said Russia still had not received any official confirmation about the reduction parameters that Washington is ready to propose.

"All I can say is that we have no confirmation about the parameters of the cuts the U.S. is prepared to make, as reported in the world press, in particular by the Times and some other newspapers," he said.

"We think that Washington is reviewing its policy in these areas and will make decisions, including on the future reduction parameters, while conducting the review," he added.

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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



24 February – 09 March 2009

DTRA

U.S., Russia Could Set Table for Nuclear Talks Today

Global Security Newswire, 06 March 2009, <http://gsn.nti.org/gsn/>

An informal schedule for U.S.-Russian nuclear arms control talks could emerge from a meeting today in Geneva between U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, the Associated Press reported.

Leaders in both nations have expressed interest recently in negotiating a follow-on agreement to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, which is due to expire in December. That pact set limits on each sides' long-range nuclear warheads and delivery vehicles and established a complex monitoring system to verify the reductions. The Bush administration pursued and completed the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty, which called for deeper warhead cuts but contained no verification provisions.

Washington has not established clear goals for the next agreement, AP reported, but U.S. President Barack Obama's publicly expressed goal of reducing nuclear arsenals has appeared to improve relations with Moscow.

"We have heard these declarations from Obama," Andrei Klimov, deputy chair of the Russian Duma's international affairs committee, told the Christian Science Monitor. "This is very welcome. We are in favor of deep strategic cuts, but there is a complex knot of problems to be resolved. The balance needs to be maintained."

"Nuclear arms control is the one, single area where Russians feel like complete equals when they face their American counterparts across a table," added Fyodor Lukyanov, editor of *Russia in Global Affairs*. "When we start serious talks [on START], it will say to us that Russia is finally back as a serious player."

Russian officials are hoping the talks offer deeper reductions with START-like monitoring.

"This so-called SORT was a page-and-a-half long, and was basically a statement of intention with no follow up mechanisms at all," said Anton Khlopkov of the PIR Center. "Russia was, and is, interested in old-fashioned arms control talks with a full framework of mutual obligations."

A new agreement could also aid the two powers' efforts to deter other nations from pursuing nuclear weapons, he said. "If Russia and the U.S. are interested in keeping the nuclear nonproliferation regime alive, they must do their best to get a new framework for arms control going," Khlopkov said. "Otherwise, many other countries will see it as more hypocrisy from the big powers who, just as in the past, call on others to disarm but do not keep their own pledges."

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