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BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW

14 June – 27 June 2011

DTRA

GENERAL ARMS CONTROL

Senate Panel Authorizes Nuclear Stockpile, Nonproliferation Funding

Global Security Newswire, 20 June 2011, gsn.nti.org

The Senate Armed Services Committee on Thursday approved legislation that authorizes funding for various U.S. nuclear stockpile and nonproliferation operations. *(429 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (BWC)

Panel Calls for Refining, Paring Select-Agent List

CIDRAP News, 15 June 2011, www.cidrap.umn.edu

A federal advisory committee is recommending that 11 bacterial species and viruses on the current "select agent" list, including anthrax and Ebola virus, be singled out for special safeguards and that another 19 agents be dropped from the list entirely. *(600 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

BWC Only Holds Power on Paper, Expert Says

BioPrepWatch, 21 June 2011, www.bioprepwatch.com

The 1975 BWC has good intentions, but because it contains no enforcement mechanism, it only holds power on paper and very little in reality, according to David E. Hoffman, a Pulitzer Prize-winning author and contributing editor to Foreign Policy. *(435 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (CWC)

Blue Grass X-Ray Operations Complete

U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency, 15 June 2011, www.cma.army.mil

Chemical crews completed a munition X-ray assessment within the Chemical Limited Area at Blue Grass on June 14. *(109 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

ACWA Weapons Destruction Program Re-Certified

Richmond Register, 16 June 2011, richmondregister.com

The Chemical Destruction Citizen Advisory Board received some live news as it met for its quarterly briefing Tuesday. *(627 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

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CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (CWC) (CONT.)

Pentagon on Chemical Weapons: Not So Fast

The Pueblo Chieftain, 22 June 2011, www.chieftain.com

Pentagon analysts have told the Army agency overseeing the destruction of weapons at the Pueblo Chemical Depot and the Bluegrass Army Depot in Kentucky that it needs to be less optimistic about the timeline that the job will get done. *(503 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

Citizens Group Head Not Worried by Revised Chemical Weapons Disposal Schedule

Global Security Newswire, 23 June 2011, gsn.nti.org

The head of a citizens group that monitors activities at the Pueblo Chemical Depot in Colorado on Tuesday expressed little concern about a new Defense Department warning that it might take an extra two years to destroy the site's chemical weapons stockpile. *(235 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

Ready for Shipment: CAMDS' Explosive Containment Cubicle Slated for Reuse

U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency, 23 June 2011, www.cma.army.mil

Chemical Agent Munitions Disposal System (CAMDS) workers have safely removed the 170,000 pound Explosive Containment Cubicle (ECC) from the facility's ECC building as it is readied for demolition. *(194 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

Depot Gets 'Good Inspection' On Chemical Weapon Storage

Richmond Register, 24 June 2011, richmondregister.com

Inspectors from the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), located in The Netherlands, arrived Monday to conduct its annual inspection of the weapons stored at the Blue Grass Army Depot. *(172 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR TEST-BAN TREATY (CTBT)

Ghana Becomes the 154th State to Ratify the CTBT

CTBTO, 15 June 2011, www.ctbto.org

The Republic of Ghana has ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), bringing the total number of Treaty ratifications to 154. *(359 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

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

CTBTO Member States Appoint Two Female Directors

CTBTO, 15 June 2011, www.ctbto.org

In addition to two of the five directors now being women, six of the organization's 31 senior management staff are women, bringing female representation at that level to 22 percent. *(372 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

NEW START TREATY (NST)

NNSA Conducts Two Successful W80 JTA Flight Tests

National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), 24 June 2011, nnsa.energy.gov

The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), working with the U.S. Air Force, conducted two successful W80 Joint Test Assembly (JTA) flight tests last week, helping ensure the safety, security, and reliability of the nuclear stockpile. *(236 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

OPEN SKIES TREATY

Russian Air Crew to Inspect U.S. Territory under Open Skies Agreement

Moscow Interfax, 24 June 2011, accessed via Open Source Center

Russian military experts will fly an inspection mission over the United States aboard a Tupolev Tu-154 Lk-1 under the Open Skies treaty arrangements. *(145 words)* ***Click here for full text.***

FULL TEXT OF BI-WEEKLY ARTICLES FOLLOWS:

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Senate Panel Authorizes Nuclear Stockpile, Nonproliferation Funding

Global Security Newswire, 20 June 2011, gsn.nti.org

The Senate Armed Services Committee on Thursday approved legislation that authorizes funding for various U.S. nuclear stockpile and nonproliferation operations. The fiscal 2012 defense authorization bill covers Defense Department spending and the Energy Department's national security activities. It allows for certain expenses, but actual funding amounts are included in separate appropriations bills.

The Senate legislation addresses "the threats from nuclear weapons and materials by strengthening and accelerating nonproliferation programs, maintaining a credible nuclear deterrent, reducing the size of the nuclear weapons stockpile, and ensuring the safety, security, and reliability of the stockpile, the delivery systems, and the nuclear infrastructure," the panel said in a press release. The full Senate must also approve the bill, which would then be meshed with the House version of the legislation and delivered to President Obama for signing or veto.

The committee approved $2.5 billion for the Pentagon and the Energy Department's semiautonomous National Nuclear Security Administration to augment threat-reduction efforts, "including securing vulnerable fissile material in four years and increasing focus on preventing proliferation globally by expanding threat reduction partnerships," the release states.

The bill would allow $508.2 million in spending for the Defense Department's Cooperative Threat Reduction program, which aims to secure and eliminate WMD materials in the former Soviet Union and beyond. It also "supports joint U.S. and Russian efforts to destroy 34 metric tons each of weapons usable plutonium by fully funding the U.S. plutonium disposition program," the committee said.

Senators proposed a $4.2 million boost, to $33.2 million, for the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board and called on congressional auditors to assess "external oversight options" for the Energy Department's defense nuclear sites. Another $1.1 billion was authorized for ongoing work to develop next-generation vessels to replace today's nuclear-armed Ohio-class submarines. The legislation would also "improve the ability of the armed forces to counter nontraditional threats, focusing on terrorism, cyber warfare, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery," the release states.

The bill supports the full $1.5 billion spending request for the Pentagon's Chemical and Biological Defense Program. It also includes $633 million for acquisition of 100 Stryker vehicles with technology for identifying biological, chemical and nuclear warfare materials.

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The panel backed the Pentagon's $1.2 billion request for its Ground-based Midcourse Defense antimissile system, along with $1.1 billion and $1.6 billion for, respectively, preparing and acquiring the Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense and Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense systems. The Aegis system would receive a $30 million boost "to permit improved production capabilities of the Standard Missile 3 Block 1B interceptor missile," the release says. […]

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Panel Calls for Refining, Paring Select-Agent List

CIDRAP News, 15 June 2011, www.cidrap.umn.edu

A federal advisory committee is recommending that 11 bacterial species and viruses on the current "select agent" list, including anthrax and Ebola virus, be singled out for special safeguards and that another 19 agents be dropped from the list entirely. The committee is also calling for various screening and monitoring steps to ensure the reliability of personnel who conduct research on select agents and toxins, along with measures to improve computer security.

The recommendations are for the National Select Agent Program (SAP), which regulates the possession, use, and transfer of biological agents and toxins that are used in some U.S. laboratories and are deemed to pose a risk of exploitation by terrorists. The recommendations are intended "to better align laboratory security measures for biological agents and toxins with the risk each might pose to the United States if used in a terrorist attack," the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) said in a press release yesterday. Current regulations require the same security measures for all 82 agents and toxins on the select agent list, HHS said.

"The members of the panel believe strongly that biological select agents and toxins work is crucial to national security," said George Korch, PhD, panel co-chair for HHS and the HHS acting deputy assistant secretary for preparedness and response. "The measures recommended by the panel represent best practices for personnel and physical security developed to increase security without unduly burdening the regulated community."

The advisory group, called the Federal Experts Security Advisory Panel (FESAP), was created by a presidential order in July 2010. The move came in response to federal and nonfederal reports on biosecurity and after the FBI concluded that government scientist Bruce Ivins probably perpetrated the 2001 anthrax letter attacks, according to HHS. The presidential order required the designation of a subset of select agents that pose the greatest risk for misuse leading to mass casualties or devastating effects on the economy and public confidence, according to the report.

The panel picked the following 11 agents for this "Tier 1" classification:

- Bacillus anthracis (anthrax)
- Burkholderia mallei
- Burkholderia pseudomallei
- Ebola virus
- Foot-and-mouth disease virus

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- Francisella tularensis (the cause of tularemia)
- Marburg virus
- Variola major (smallpox) virus
- Variola minor virus (a milder strain of smallpox)
- Yersinia pestis (the cause of plague)
- Botulinum toxin and Clostridium botulinum species that produce it

The panel picked 19 agents for deletion from the list because of "their diminished risk for use in a high-consequence event," the HHS statement said. The committee recommended six other toxins for eventual removal from the list, saying other regulatory controls over their possession should first be identified and confirmed. The panel also said it decided not to put the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) virus on the list.

The panel suggested a number of measures to guard against misuse of select agents by lab workers. Following are some examples.

- For foreign nationals who request access to Tier 1 agents, the Department of Justice should look into the feasibility of obtaining the same level of criminal background check as is done on U.S. citizens.
- If possible under statutory authority, the SAP should require credit checks to assess workers' financial responsibility.
- Once personnel are granted access to select agents, their reliability should be monitored on an ongoing basis through steps such as checking their credit and criminal status.

HHS and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which together manage the SAP, will consider the panel's recommendations, HHS officials said. Any changes in the program will be announced and public comments invited this coming fall.

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BWC Only Holds Power on Paper, Expert Says

BioPrepWatch, 21 June 2011, www.bioprepwatch.com

The 1975 Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention has good intentions, but because it contains no enforcement mechanism, it only holds power on paper and very little in reality, according to David E. Hoffman, a Pulitzer Prize-winning author and contributing editor to Foreign Policy. For much of December 2011, the BWC signatories will meet in Geneva for the seventh review conference – [a review conference is] held every five years. Hoffman has little hope that the conference will produce much more than a few tweaks to the convention, according to Foreign Policy. "The treaty is pretty tattered, and the review conference won't change that," David Hoffman wrote, Foreign Policy reports.

Hoffman said that there is little contained in the treaty that could halt a determined effort by a country or terrorist organization to build an illicit biological weapons program. […] As evidence of the lack of enthusiasm for the treaty among its signatories, Hoffman points out that last year only 73 of the 163 of the states parties sent in their annual declaration forms.

U.S. Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama both concluded that any verification mechanism in the BWC would be fatally flawed. Rapid technological advances in the biological sciences have moved forward ahead of the traditional means to keep countries to their word. Biological weapons research can be easily hidden and most research is dual-use, Hoffman wrote in Foreign Policy.

Laura Kennedy, the U.S. ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva and a special representative on the BWC, recently said that part of the U.S. strategy will be to focus on the development of health security. "So we've got to work together to strengthen disease surveillance and detection capabilities around the world, as well as national and international preparedness, coordination, and response capabilities," Kennedy said, ArmsControl.org reports.

Hoffman concluded that, while a laudable goal, health security is outside of the basic mission of the BWC and there are already large agencies, such as the World Health Organization and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, that deal with them. Kennedy said that the aim of the BWC is to rid the world of biological weapons, and to do so, countries must participate in confidence-building measures like submitting annual declarations. Yet, there is no penalty for countries that fail to submit their declarations and many of them are not even made public.

Hoffman wrote in Foreign Policy, "the concerns that were originally behind the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention – the horrors of germ warfare – have not disappeared. It would be nice to see more than just a talking shop at the review conference in Geneva."

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Blue Grass X-Ray Operations Complete

U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency, 15 June 2011, www.cma.army.mil

Chemical crews completed a munition X-ray assessment within the Chemical Limited Area here June 14.

During the operation, 176 mustard (H)-filled munitions were assessed to identify what portion of the stockpiled mustard munitions may contain solidified agent, known as heel. This data may provide insight into removing bursters from the munitions, to support efforts by the U.S. Army Element, Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives (ACWA) in safely and efficiently destroying the chemical weapons stockpile stored at Blue Grass Army Depot.

The operation was conducted at the request of ACWA and the U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency, the organization responsible for safely storing the chemical weapons stockpile, and was completed safely.

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ACWA Weapons Destruction Program Re-Certified

Richmond Register, 16 June 2011, richmondregister.com

The Chemical Destruction Citizen Advisory Board [CDCAB] received some live news as it met for its quarterly briefing Tuesday. CDCAB co-chair Craig Williams left the meeting for a conference call with Sen. Mitch McConnell's office and Pentagon officials. He returned to announce the program had passed a mandated review under the Nunn-McCurdy Act.

The act requires the Secretary of Defense to provide a detailed justification of any military procurement program that exceeds cost estimates by 25 percent. If unsatisfied with the explanation, Congress can terminate a program or require the military to find an alternative.

Pentagon officials informed the CDCAB in February that the Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives (ACWA) program, which will destroy through neutralization chemical agents still stored in Kentucky and Colorado, had surpassed cost estimates by 25 percent.

ACWA is a first-time program, and its plant designs were only one-third complete when cost estimates were last made, Williams said in February, explaining why they were so wide of the mark. Most of the nation's chemical weapon agents were destroyed by incineration.

Also during Tuesday's meeting, Lt. Col. Steven Basso, commander of the depot's chemical activity, said he had just been informed that X-rays begun May 25 of random samples from the 15,400 mustard-agent projectiles at the depot, had just been completed.

The X-rays were conducted to determine if the components of the projectiles had fused or their liquids had solidified, as was the case with similar rounds stored in Colorado. Problematic rounds could get stuck in the automated destruction plant, requiring personnel to retrieve them in a dangerous procedure, the CDCAB has been told in previous sessions.

David Velazquez, civilian director of chemical activities at the depot, said 96 rounds had been selected for X-raying, 32 from each of the three storage igloos that house mustard rounds. Statistically, that number of sample gives a 95-percent confidence rate, he said. At first, three to four X-rays were taken of each sample, Velazquez said, but later, two to three X-rays were found to be adequate. Eight rounds were selected for a second series of X-rays.

Analysis of the X-rays will be completed prior to the CDCAB's September 13 meeting, said Jeff Brubaker, the ACWA site manager for Kentucky.

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After the chemical agents from all of the weapons are neutralized, by combining them with a sodium hydroxide solution, the resulting caustic hydrolysate will be further broken down through a process called supercritical water oxidation (SCWO).

Dr. John Barton, chief scientist for Bechtel Parsons Blue Grass, the project's civilian contractor, explained how SCWO works. Water enters a supercritical state, he said, if heated above 705 degrees Fahrenheit under pressure greater than 3,206 pounds per square inch (PSI). The chemical weapons hydrolysate will be diluted with water and heated to 1,200 degrees under 3,400 PSI, he said.

Those conditions will cause rapid, thorough destruction of organic materials not easily dissolved in water or steam, Barton said. Relatively small amounts of hydrolysates will be treated for 15 seconds in three cylinders 10 feet long with an internal diameter of 7.6 inches. Although the process requires large amounts of water, the system will reuse about 70 percent of the water it consumes, he said.

Final disposal of the SCWO-treated solution remains to be determined, Barton said, but deep-well injection is one possibility.

Brubaker said construction of the destruction plant is 32 percent complete. The SCWO building's foundation was recently poured, he said. The last of 17 doors to the blast-containment building also was recently put in place, another project milestone.

Tom McKinney, Bechtel Parson's new site manager for Kentucky, said the rainy spring had caused some work delays, but he expressed confidence that the lost time can be made up. Lightening storms also prevented work on the plant's steel infrastructure, he said. […]
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Pentagon on Chemical Weapons: Not So Fast

The Pueblo Chieftain, 22 June 2011, www.chieftain.com

Pentagon analysts have told the Army agency overseeing the destruction of weapons at the Pueblo Chemical Depot and the Bluegrass Army Depot in Kentucky that it needs to be less optimistic about the timeline that the job will get done.

Conrad Whyne, acting manager of the Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives (ACWA) program, was in Pueblo on Monday for the change of command ceremony at the depot. While in Pueblo, Whyne said that part of the recent Nunn-McCurdy recertification of the program included a warning that it could take two years longer than expected to finish the destruction of the weapons.

ACWA and its primary contractor, Bechtel, have planned to start destroying weapons in 2015 and finish by the end of 2017. That's also the deadline mandated by Congress, which has made the weapons destruction a priority.

Bluegrass officials have not been as optimistic about meeting the 2017 date – still five years past the deadline set in an international treaty – because the Kentucky depot has nerve agent and a wider variety of weapons and containers.

Pueblo only has mustard agent in 780,000 mortar rounds and artillery shells, which will be opened and washed out – the agent neutralized in hot water and the wastewater treated with bacteria to break down remaining hazardous elements.

A law, authored in 1982 by Senator Sam Nunn (D-GA) and Dave McCurdy (D-OK), orders that any time a defense program's costs rise 25 percent over estimates, it must be recertified to Congress. ACWA's cost estimate rose 33 percent, to $10.6 billion.

Whyne, who also heads the Army's Chemical Materials Agency (CMA), said the program met all five criteria:

- it is essential national security;
- there are no alternatives;
- the cost increases are reasonable;
- the program deserves to be a priority; and
- management can control costs.

The reason some Pentagon officials think it will take longer to [destroy] the weapons is because, even though most of the construction of the facility here is [complete], [there are] several years

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of developing systems and testing new, first-of-its-kind equipment [yet to] be completed before the first weapons are moved to the [demil] plant.

Whyne said, for example, it may be estimated that a robotic process can take three minutes to remove explosives from a weapon. “It might take two minutes with this weapon, but that other weapon could take four or five minutes.”

He said the Pueblo program has received data from earlier tests of its robotic systems at the Anniston Army Depot in Alabama, but there are many more parts to the process that need to be examined.

Whyne emphasized that doesn’t mean it will take until 2019 to finish the work, but that the analysts are looking at statistical estimates that build in the risks of things taking longer. “I’m still charged with pulling it back to the left as [far as] I possibly can,” he said of the timeline. He also said that the program is still fully funded and that the new timelines will not affect that.

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Citizens Group Head Not Worried by Revised Chemical Weapons Disposal Schedule

Global Security Newswire, 23 June 2011, gsn.nti.org

The head of a citizens group that monitors activities at the Pueblo Chemical Depot in Colorado on Tuesday expressed little concern about a new Defense Department warning that it might take an extra two years to destroy the site's chemical weapons stockpile, the Pueblo Chieftain reported.

Pentagon analysts have advised the Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives [ACWA] program, which is preparing for destruction operations at Pueblo and at a sister site in Kentucky, that new chemical neutralization technology might require a longer preparation and testing period than was previously believed.

Colorado Chemical Demilitarization Citizens Advisory Commission Chairwoman Irene Kornelly said "these risk factors are extremely conservative." "There's a chance that some of these risk factors will not happen and there's a chance that some of them will happen," the chairwoman said.

The present schedule at Pueblo foresees disposal operations for 2,611 tons of mustard agent beginning in 2015 and wrapping up in 2017. […]

Kornelly said similar concerns over the amount of time required for testing new technology were raised at other U.S. chemical demilitarization plants before they began operating. Those plants, operated by the Army Chemical Materials Agency [CMA], are expected to complete their work close to the April 2012 deadline set by the international Chemical Weapons Convention.

"Those same types of risk factors were put into all of the facilities and in very few cases did any of those risk factors occur," Kornelly said.

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Ready for Shipment: CAMDS' Explosive Containment Cubicle Slated for Reuse

U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency, 23 June 2011, www.cma.army.mil

Chemical Agent Munitions Disposal System (CAMDS) workers have safely removed the 170,000 pound Explosive Containment Cubicle (ECC) from the facility's ECC building as it is readied for demolition.

With the shackles secured to a hook connected to the crane, workers guided the massive ECC as it was lifted through a hole that was cut from the roof of the building. The ECC was placed on a trailer specially equipped to evenly distribute the weight of the load as it is transported across the country to the Army's Edgewood Chemical Biological Center (ECBC) in Maryland.

"The ECC is a piece of CAMDS history as it was used to test equipment developed for chem demil," explained CAMDS Site Project Manager Jerry Linn. "I am glad that we were able to work with ECBC and put this equipment to use once again."

The ECC will be installed at ECBC's engineering test facility where it will be used to support the activities of response teams who are called on to safeguard recovered warfare materials. In addition, the equipment may also be used to test protective equipment and body armor developed for soldiers, law enforcement personnel and emergency responders.

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Depot Gets 'Good Inspection' On Chemical Weapon Storage

Richmond Register, 24 June 2011, richmondregister.com

Inspectors from the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), located in The Netherlands, arrived Monday to conduct their annual inspection of the weapons stored at the Blue Grass Army Depot.

The five inspectors, who were from Slovakia, Russia, Netherlands, Mongolia and China, assured accountability of every chemical weapon declared to be in storage at the depot as part of the United States compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention.

“It was a good inspection,” said Deborah Boston, the Blue Grass Chemical Activity treaty compliance officer. “I was greatly impressed by the professionalism and the courtesy of the international inspectors.”

This marks the 15th time that Blue Grass has been inspected by the OPCW, with every inspection showing that the Blue Grass Army Depot is in full compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention.

“To do a complete inventory of 45 igloos containing in excess of 100,000 individual weapons in such a short time called for extraordinary coordination between my toxic chemical workers and the inspectors,” said LTC Steven Basso, the activities commander.

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Ghana Becomes the 154th State to Ratify the CTBT

CTBTO, 15 June 2011, www.ctbto.org

The Republic of Ghana has ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), bringing the total number of treaty ratifications to 154.

“This important and timely step highlights the importance of the CTBT for global, regional and national security”, said Tibor Tóth, the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO). “Following the entry into force of the Pelindaba Treaty last year, Ghana's ratification of the CTBT further solidifies the resolve of African nations to forever rid the continent and the world of nuclear weapons and nuclear weapon testing. I salute the government of Ghana for taking this step and believe it will inspire other non-ratifying states to hasten their own ratification processes."

Ghana signed the CTBT on October 3, 1996 and [signed] the Treaty of Pelindaba, which established a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Africa, on April 11, 1996. Also, in February 2010, Ghana commissioned its CTBT National Data Center so that it can support international efforts to monitor nuclear weapons testing more effectively.

Adherence to the CTBT is almost universal, with 182 states having signed the treaty to date. In Africa, only two countries have yet to sign the treaty – Mauritius and Somalia – whereas 12 countries have yet to ratify – Angola, Chad, Comoros, Congo (Republic of), Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, the Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Sao Tome and Principe, Swaziland and Zimbabwe. Among these, ratification by Egypt, an Annex 2 state, is mandatory for the treaty to enter into force.

The remaining eight Annex 2 states that have yet to ratify are China, North Korea, India, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, Pakistan and the United States. The other 35 Annex 2 states have ratified the treaty, including the three nuclear weapon states – France, Russia and the United Kingdom.

The CTBT bans all nuclear explosions. A verification regime is being built to monitor compliance with the treaty. By the time the treaty enters into force, 337 facilities will monitor the oceans, underground and the atmosphere for any sign of a nuclear explosion. Two hundred and sixty-four facilities have been certified to date and are sending data on a continuous basis to the CTBTO’s International Data Center in Vienna.

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CTBTO Member States Appoint Two Female Directors

CTBTO, 15 June 2011, www.ctbto.org

The highest decision-making organ of the 182 Member States of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) today endorsed the appointment of Ms. Frances Boyle (USA) as Director of the Division of Administration and Ms. Vorian Johanna Andrén Maryssael (Mexico) as head of the International Monitoring System [IMS] Division. This will be the first time that a woman has held the position of director at the CTBTO.

In addition to two of the five directors now being women, six of the organization's 31 senior management staff are women, bringing female representation at that level to 22 percent. The percentage of all women professional staff at the CTBTO currently stands at around 30 percent, while women represent about 40 percent of the total staff.

U.S. delegation led by Assistant Secretary of State Rose Gottemoeller

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance, Rose Gottemoeller, led the U.S. delegation at the Member States' meeting. She also visited the CTBTO and met with the Executive Secretary Tibor Tóth.

"I would like to assure you of President Obama's unshakable commitment to ratification of the CTBT and its entry into force at the earliest possible date…We do not expect it will be easy or happen quickly, but we will work hard to make it happen." [Ms. Gottemoeller said.]

Resolve to strengthen on-site inspection capabilities

Member States decided to boost the organization's capabilities to conduct on-site inspections by endorsing a concept for a comprehensive on-site inspection exercise in 2014. The concept includes a host of run-up activities to strengthen human expertise, infrastructure and equipment aspects. A first such comprehensive exercise, the Integrated Field Exercise 2008, was conducted at the former Soviet Union nuclear test site at Semipalatinsk, in Kazakhstan.

Draft 2012 budget below zero real growth

Taking into account the ongoing economic and financial difficulties experienced by Member States, the organization's draft budget for 2012 remains below zero real growth for yet another year, amounting to U.S. $117.4 million in equivalent U.S. dollars at 2011 prices. At the same time, the network of the IMS continues to grow, as do the associated operation and recapitalization costs. To date, 281 of the 337 planned IMS facilities have been established.

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NNSA Conducts Two Successful W80 JTA Flight Tests

National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), 24 June 2011, nnsa.energy.gov

The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), working with the U.S. Air Force, conducted two successful W80 Joint Test Assembly (JTA) flight tests last week, helping ensure the safety, security and reliability of the nuclear stockpile.

During the two separate test missions at the Utah Test and Training Range outside of Salt Lake City, Utah, the Air Force successfully launched an Air Launched Cruise Missile (ALCM) carrying a JTA. A B52-H originating from Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota, launched both of the ALCMs.

A JTA contains a set of sensors and hardware used during flight tests to ensure that weapons perform as designed. The purpose of the test was to evaluate overall performance of the nuclear cruise missile weapon system.

“NNSA and DoD are committed to ensuring that all weapon systems perform as designed, and these successful tests continue to illustrate that commitment,” said Brig. Gen. Sandra Finan, NNSA Principal Assistant Deputy Administrator for Military Application. “This strong NNSA/DoD cooperation is vital as we partner in support of our national security.”

NNSA produced the JTAs in support of the Joint Surveillance Flight Test Program between the Department of Defense and the NNSA. The JTAs were built to simulate the actual W80 weapon configuration utilizing as much war reserve hardware as feasible. The JTAs were assembled at the Pantex Plant in Amarillo, Texas, and were not capable of nuclear yield, as the JTAs contained no special nuclear materials.

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Russian Air Crew to Inspect U.S. Territory Under Open Skies Agreement

Moscow Interfax, 24 June 2011, accessed via Open Source Center

Russian military experts will fly an inspection mission over the United States aboard a Tupolev Tu-154 Lk-1 under the Open Skies treaty arrangements.

"Russian and American military experts aboard the plane will observe the procedures of using surveillance equipment and compliance with the agreements reached," the Defense Ministry said in a statement received by Interfax on Friday.

An observation flight will be performed over the United States between June 26 and July 3 from the Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Ohio. The maximum flight range is 4,900 kilometers.

It will be the 15th observation flight to have been flown by Russian military experts this year over the territories of various signatory states.

The Open Skies international agreement was signed in Helsinki in 1992 to check the declared sites where weapons and troops are deployed. The agreement has been signed by 35 states in Europe and North America.

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