



BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



15 January – 28 January 2008

DTRA

CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (CWC)

India Completes Destruction of 93 Percent Chemical Weapons, Rest by 2009

PTI News Agency, 20 January 2008, accessed via Open Source Center

India has completed the destruction of 93 percent of its chemical weapon stockpile and assured the international community of their total elimination by April 2009. (507 words)

[Click here for full text.](#)

GAO Says Army Destroying Chemical Weapons Faster than Planned

Defense Environment Alert, 22 January 2008, accessed via Lexis Nexis

A new report from the Government Accountability Office (GAO), the investigative arm of Congress, contends the Army is destroying its stockpiled chemical weapons faster than it projected three years ago, saying costs may be exaggerated. (918 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

Last Self-Propelled Chemical Munition Eliminated at Umatilla: All VX Nerve Agent Rockets in Oregon Stockpile Destroyed

Chemical Materials Agency, 23 January 2008, <http://www.cma.army.mil/>

Workers at the Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (UMCDF) safely destroyed the last of the Oregon stockpile's 14,519 M55 VX nerve agent rockets and warheads just after 5 a.m. PST today. (727 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

Central African Republic Designates OPCW National Authority

OPCW, 25 January 2008, <http://www.opcw.org/>

In compliance with its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), the Central African Republic has informed the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) that it has designated the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as its National Authority.

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

More Delays at Russian CW Destruction Site

Global Security Newswire, 25 January 2008, <http://www.nti.org/>

Russian officials have again postponed chemical weapon destruction activities at the nation's Maradykovsky facility, ITAR-Tass reported yesterday. (269 words) [Click here for full text.](#)



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COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR TEST-BAN TREATY (CTBT)

Barbados Ratifies the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty

CTBTO, 15 January 2008, <http://www.ctbto.org/>

Barbados signed and ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) on January 14, 2008. (123 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

Malaysia Ratifies the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty

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Malaysia ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) on January 17 2008, bringing the total number of ratifications to 143. (266 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

China Now Pays Troops Involved in Nuclear Tests

New York Times, 28 January 2008, accessed via Lexis Nexis

China has begun paying military personnel involved in nuclear tests, as part of its effort to improve benefits for veterans, the state news media reported over the weekend. (302 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

INTEGRATED SAFEGUARDS

China Willing to Help Resolve Iranian Nuclear Issue

BBC Worldwide Monitoring, 18 January 2008, accessed via Lexis Nexis

State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan met Jalili, special envoy of the Iranian president and secretary of the Iranian Supreme National Security Council, in Zhongnanhai on the morning of January 18, 2008. (235 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

Areva in Talks with Indian Companies for Nuclear Power Equipment Unit

Asia Pulse, 28 January 2008, accessed via Lexis Nexis

France's Areva has begun talks with Indian companies for setting up a nuclear power equipment manufacturing base in India. (223 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

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NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION TREATY (NPT)

Australia to India: No Uranium Sales until You Join the NPT

Associated Press, 15 January 2008, accessed via Lexis Nexis

Australia's new government told an Indian envoy Tuesday that it will not sell uranium to his country while it is not a member of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). (281 words)

[Click here for full text.](#)

National Nuclear Security Administration Helps North Africa Prepare for Nuclear Power

U.S. Fed News, 17 January 2008, accessed via Lexis Nexis

A four day workshop designed to educate participants on the nuclear safeguards, safety, and security challenges associated with the development of a civil nuclear power program wrapped up today at the National Nuclear Security Administration's (NNSA) Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. (277 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

OTTAWA CONVENTION

Belarus May Destroy Stockpiles of Antipersonnel Mines in 2008 – 2009

BBC Monitoring, 15 January 2008, accessed via Lexis Nexis

Belarus may destroy its stockpiles of about 3.5m PFM-1 antipersonnel fluid-filled mines in 2008–2009 if the European Commission organizes a tender to this effect in the near future. (135 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

STRATEGIC OFFENSIVE ARMS REDUCTIONS TREATY (SORT)

Over 750 U.S. Inspections at Russian SMF Sites over 20 Years

Russia & CIS Military Newswire, 25 January 2008, accessed via Lexis Nexis

The specialists of the Strategic Missile Force's Treaty Verification Center have received over 750 U.S. inspections from 1988 – 2007, according to an SMF press release issued on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the center. (157 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

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India has completed the destruction of 93 percent of its chemical weapon stockpile and assured the international community of their total elimination by April 2009.

The schedule for completing the process of destruction of these weapons was discussed at a high-level meeting in the Cabinet Secretariat during which the agenda for the National Authority for Chemical Weapons Convention (NACWC), was outlined, official sources said.

The NACWC was set up to monitor the commitment made by India to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), an international watchdog to ensure chemical weapon free world.

According to the latest update of the Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO), 93 per cent destruction has been completed of the Category 1 Chemical Weapon stockpile, they said.

Category 1 weapons include bombs, grenades, canisters and other munitions that contain chemical agent like Sarin, VX, Lewisite, Mustard, Phosgene, Tabun and Soman.

During the meeting, schedule of activities was drawn up for complete destruction before the extended deadline of April 29, 2009. The DRDO was directed to ensure completion of destruction of all chemical weapons and their production facility well before April 2009.

India had been granted time till 2007 to complete the process but the authorities, seeking another two year period, attributed the delay due to the slow process of destruction which required adequate precautions from point of view of safety of personal and environmental pollution.

It was also advised that the schedule of completion be compressed in a manner so as to ensure sufficient cushion to take into account any "unforeseen technical problems" that might arise, the sources said.

The meeting was apprised about the visit of a technical team of OPCW to the destruction facility for a joint review and verification parameters. The sources said while the progress presently was satisfactory and as per target schedule, "there is a pressing need to continuously monitor the progress at the highest level in order to ensure that the extended time line is comfortably met."

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During the current year, India also plans setting up of two add-on plants - one for destruction of bulk vessels and other for destruction of vectors, used for giving direction to missiles.

The meeting was informed that after some initial problems, the erection and commissioning of the add-on plant for decontamination of bulk vessels was proceeding as per schedule and the target to operationalize this facility in March 2008 to conduct initial trial would be met. A private firm, roped in for destruction process, has given an undertaking of completing this job by October this year.

Earlier, the government had approached OPCW for extending the deadline, which agreed after some terms and conditions. These include India completing the destruction of its Category 1 chemical weapons no later than April 28, 2009.

India had in June 1997 become one of the six states that declared possession of chemical weapons stockpile and production facilities. By 2005, India was the only one to meet its deadline for verified Chemical Weapon destruction and for inspections of its facilities by the OPCW.

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A new report from the Government Accountability Office (GAO), the investigative arm of Congress, contends the Army is destroying its stockpiled chemical weapons faster than it projected three years ago, saying costs may be exaggerated. GAO calls on the Army to update its schedule, while also urging it to improve its contract award process and risk management practices.

The news comes as legislation likely to be enacted will call for the whole stockpile to be eliminated ahead of DoD's current schedule.

DoD, responding on behalf of the Army, largely supports the GAO recommendations, according to the report.

The report, requested by the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Terrorism and Unconventional Threats and Capabilities, calls into question the Army's current projections for time required to complete the chemical demilitarization program, and the funding to support the work, in light of an apparent acceleration in the pace of agent destruction. It questions whether cost and speed should not figure more highly in the Army's decision-making when awarding contracts, and also calls upon the Army to revise its risk management practices. The findings appear to turn the corner on what had been a spiraling of cost and schedule plaguing the program over many of its years.

The document, released to DoD for comment in December, comes as the pending fiscal year 2008 defense authorization bill, agreed to by both chambers of Congress but now re-opened for negotiation with the president over an unrelated matter, is calling for all U.S. stockpiled chemical weapons to be destroyed by 2017. The measure was advocated by Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY), who has long been a watchdog of the military's chemical weapons disposal program, in particular expressing concern over safety and management issues at the Blue Grass chemical weapons storage facility in his state.

Under DoD's current schedule, the whole program would wrap up in 2023, when the last facility to close, Blue Grass, would shutter its gates. In April 2006 then-Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld conceded DoD would miss an international treaty deadline of 2012, and in early 2007 DoD formally certified a plan to stretch out the cost and schedule for destruction of stockpiled weapons for the last two sites, saying it would make the program affordable on an annual basis despite higher total costs.

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GAO notes that progress at facilities managed by the Army's Chemical Materials Agency (CMA), which are mainly incinerating their chemical agent, has been faster than projected under the current schedule, and that therefore cost estimates may be exaggerated. The report deals primarily with these facilities, rather than the other two stockpile sites, in Pueblo, CO, and Blue Grass, that are due to dispose of their agent by "neutralization" and are managed by a separate DoD program, known as the Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives (ACWA) program. The two ACWA sites are the last sites to dispose of their weapons, and therefore would be the most affected by the 2017 deadline.

"With most of the chemical agent destruction sites significantly ahead of the 2005 program office schedule, the program milestones appear to be overly conservative," says the report, adding that "the program schedule milestones may no longer be a realistic baseline for measuring program performance."

One environmental activist argues that overall the GAO report fits with the 2017 deadline demanded by Congress, as it makes the case that more money is available for the ACWA program than recently estimated by the Army.

However, the GAO report finds fault with CMA's risk management practices, which it says need improvement, and also recommends that the agency's criteria for awarding contracts be reviewed in light of the faster than anticipated pace of destruction. "CMA could improve its use of award fees to incentivize the systems contractors to try to meet the [Chemical Weapons Convention] treaty deadline," GAO says. The auditors also found that the question of closing costs, which include cleanup and dismantling of facilities after all agent has been destroyed, has not been adequately addressed.

GAO makes 13 recommendations for DoD to correct management weaknesses in the weapons destruction program. In its responses, DoD concurs either partially or fully with 12 of them. DoD takes issue with a requirement that realistic facility closure costs be estimated for each of the sites, arguing that it is redundant in light of another, accepted by DoD, which calls for more accurate cost estimates over the lifetime of the program.

DoD's concurrence with most of GAO's recommendations comes as the Army's CMA prepares for a switch in leadership. Current Acting Director Dale Ormond is leaving his post this month for a more senior position at the Pentagon. He will be replaced by his deputy, Conrad Whyne.

The environmental activist welcomes the findings of the GAO report, arguing that if savings can be made in the CMA-managed segment of the program due to early completion, then those

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should be used to accelerate the pace of destruction at the two ACWA-managed sites. The activist, who supported use of neutralization at Pueblo and Blue Grass and opposes incineration, argues that opting for neutralization has not delayed the elimination of the U.S. stockpile, pointing to numerous delays in the overall program dating back to the 1990s.

CMA did not issue a separate response from the DoD position articulated in GAO's report.

The activist believes that the handover of CMA leadership will not lead to a radical change in policy by the agency, as Whyne has been in his position for some time and will still have to take Pentagon direction.

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Last Self-Propelled Chemical Munition Eliminated at Umatilla: All VX Nerve Agent Rockets in Oregon Stockpile Destroyed

U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency, 23 January 2008, <http://www.cma.army.mil/>

Workers at the Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (UMCDF) safely destroyed the last of the Oregon stockpile's 14,519 M55 VX nerve agent rockets and warheads just after 5 a.m. PST today. The VX rockets also were the last of a total of 105,961 VX-filled and GB (sarin)-filled rockets destroyed in Oregon, and the last self-propelled chemical munitions in the Umatilla Chemical Depot (UMCD) stockpile.

"This is a true team accomplishment," said Don Barclay, site project manager for the Army. "The Army and its contractors worked many years to reduce the risk of chemical munitions and reach this important milestone. Our community is just that much safer now."

Chemical munitions remaining in the Oregon stockpile include VX artillery projectiles, VX land mines, and mustard agent ton containers. Some of these munitions contain explosives as well as agent, but none of them contain propellant motors as rockets did. M55 rockets were capable of flying up to six miles if launched. They were never used by American troops in combat.

"The most important accomplishment was to reach this milestone safely and in compliance with all environmental requirements," said Doug Hamrick, project general manager for URS Washington Division, the company that built and operates the disposal plant for the Army.

The VX rocket disposal campaign began on October 26, 2007, when rockets were first moved from the depot storage area to the disposal plant. The first VX rocket was safely destroyed on October 29. The last VX rockets were moved from depot storage to the disposal plant on Friday, January 18, 2008. In addition, a simultaneous campaign to dispose of the last VX aircraft spray tanks in the Umatilla and national stockpile began on November 23 and was completed on December 24, 2007.

Rockets and spray tanks comprised 49 percent of the VX nerve agent stockpile tonnage at Umatilla. In addition, a single VX ton container from a mid-1980s "drill and transfer" campaign to eliminate leaking munitions was destroyed on November 26.

"I'm proud of our dedicated storage workers, who have safely moved more than 170 thousand munitions to the disposal plant without incident or accident," said Lt. Col. Bob Stein, depot commander.

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The UMCDF will now perform a “changeover” to process 155mm VX artillery projectiles. This involves changing equipment to handle different-size munitions, reviewing procedures, and providing refresher training for workers. The plant previously processed GB or sarin-filled artillery projectiles, and that same equipment will be used again during the VX projectiles campaign. The changeover to prepare for VX projectiles processing is expected to take about two months. VX nerve agent is a rapid-acting, lethal agent that affects the nervous system by interfering with the signals sent from the brain to vital organs and other parts of the body. It’s an odorless, clear and oily liquid.

Depot storage and disposal workers have safely accomplished several other key milestones during the past four years. The disposal plant started destroying M55 GB (sarin-filled) rockets on September 8, 2004. Destruction of the last of 91,442 of those GB rockets was completed on August 9, 2006. Simultaneous with the GB rockets disposal campaign, the plant began destroying 2,418 GB-filled 750-pound bombs on September 27, 2005 and completed that campaign on June 9, 2006. Workers also destroyed 27 GB-filled 500-pound bombs during May 15-18, 2006. These bombs were the last chemical bombs of any type in the Umatilla and national weapons stockpile.

Overall, the Umatilla storage and disposal team will eventually transport and destroy munitions containing three types of chemical agent. The GB (sarin) nerve agent campaign is complete. The VX nerve agent disposal campaign that started in October 2006 is planned to be completed by spring of 2009. The final campaign will be to dispose of mustard blister agent, also known as HD, stored in bulk containers commonly referred to as “ton containers.”

After the last chemical munition is destroyed, the disposal plant will be disassembled during a three-year closure effort. According to the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Act (BRAC), the entire depot will also eventually be closed when the chemical munitions storage and disposal mission is complete and all closure requirements are met.

Chemical munitions have been stored at the depot since the 1960s. They served as a Cold War deterrent, but are now aging, obsolete, and prone to leaking. They are kept in highly secure storage “igloos” as they await destruction.

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Central African Republic Designates OPCW National Authority

Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, 25 January 2008, <http://www.opcw.org/>

In compliance with its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), the Central African Republic has informed the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) that it has designated the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as its National Authority.

A CWC National Authority is crucial in ensuring the effective implementation of the CWC within each State Party's national jurisdiction.

Article VII, paragraph 4 of the CWC states: "In order to fulfill its obligations under this Convention, each State Party shall designate or establish a National Authority to serve as the national focal point for effective liaison with the Organization and other States Parties. Each State Party shall notify the Organization of its National Authority at the time that this Convention enters into force for it."

The National Authority has the responsibility of implementing the provisions of the CWC at the national level. To meet its basic obligations, each State Party must be able to submit all the required declarations, communicate with the OPCW, cooperate with other States Parties, facilitate OPCW inspections, respond to OPCW requests for assistance, protect the confidentiality of classified information, monitor and enforce national compliance and cooperate in the peaceful uses of chemistry. States Parties are also obliged to declare and to eliminate all chemical weapons stockpiles and chemical weapons production facilities. The National Authority plays an indispensable role in all of these activities.

As of January 24, 2008, 176 of the 183 States Parties to the CWC have established or designated National Authorities.

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More Delays at Russian CW Destruction Site

Global Security Newswire, 25 January 2008, <http://www.nti.org/>

Russian officials have again postponed chemical weapon destruction activities at the nation's Maradykovsky facility, ITAR-Tass reported yesterday.

The site has been preparing for a next stage of destruction activities after completing some initial work last year. So far, more than 21,000 chemical munitions have been neutralized at the site as well as over 4,000 tons of chemical agent, ITAR-Tass reported.

Maradykovsky houses thousands of gravity bombs containing lethal nerve agent, and Russia has opted to destroy those weapons in a multistage process, according to chemical destruction expert Paul Walker of GlobalGreen.

The first stage entails workers drilling a hole in each bomb casing and pumping in a chemical neutralizer. The bomb then sits for about three months while the chemical reaction fully neutralizes the nerve agent. This stage has already begun, Walker said.

Next, Russian plans call for incinerating the resultant liquid waste in the bombs in a process similar to U.S. chemical weapons destruction activities at Newport, Indiana.

The bomb casings themselves are also supposed to be mutilated in a way that permanently disables them from any future use, Walker said.

Russia has repeatedly delayed the start of the incineration process, Walker said, leading to international disputes over whether the neutralized weapons should be counted as "destroyed" by the terms of the Chemical Weapons Convention. Russia has asserted that once the chemical neutralization has occurred, Russia should be able to count that weapon toward treaty requirements to destroy certain quantities by certain deadlines, Walker said.

The United States, however, has argued that treaty rules preclude counting weapons as destroyed until the waste water is burned, according to Walker.

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CTBTO, 15 January 2008, <http://www.ctbto.org/>

Barbados signed and ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) on January 14, 2008. This brings the total number of Treaty signatures to 178 and the total number of Treaty ratifications to 142.

Adherence to the CTBT is almost universal. To enter into force, however, the Treaty must be signed and ratified by the 44 States listed in Annex 2 to the Treaty. These States participated in the negotiations of the Treaty in 1996 and possessed nuclear power or research reactors at the time. Thirty-four of these States have ratified the Treaty, including the three nuclear weapon States France, Russia, and the United Kingdom. The ten remaining States are China, Colombia, North Korea, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, Pakistan, and the United States.

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Malaysia ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) on January 17, 2008, bringing the total number of ratifications to 143.

"We welcome the decision by Malaysia to ratify the CTBT," said Tibor Toth, the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) in a statement. This is very important internationally, but also regionally: Malaysia's ratification tips the balance in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) where 6 out of 10 countries now have ratified the Treaty.

In ASEAN, Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Vietnam have now ratified the CTBT, whereas Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Myanmar and Thailand have yet to ratify it.

Malaysia is very active on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation issues. It chaired the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in 2004 – 2006, and coordinates the NAM on CTBT issues in 2006-2009. Malaysia also hosts radionuclide station RN42—one of the stations in the global alarm system that is being built to monitor compliance with the CTBT. The station is in an advanced stage of construction, and will be included in the global alarm system by the end of 2008. "This is an additional achievement and a very positive development," said Toth...

The CTBT bans all nuclear explosions. A verification regime is being built to monitor compliance with the Treaty, and 337 facilities world-wide will monitor the underground, the oceans, and the atmosphere for any sign of a nuclear explosion. Today, nearly 225 facilities have been included in the global alarm system and send data continuously to the International Data Centre at the CTBTO in Vienna.

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The New York Times, 28 January 2008, accessed via Lexis Nexis

China has begun paying military personnel involved in nuclear tests, as part of its effort to improve benefits for veterans, the state news media reported over the weekend.

In the first public acknowledgment of the new benefit, the minister of civil affairs, Li Xueju, said that the government had started the "subsidies" to veterans of nuclear tests last year, the official Xinhua news agency reported late Saturday.

In a visit to a unit of the People's Armed Police on Friday, Mr. Li said the government paid 15.12 billion yuan, or more than \$2 billion last year, to more than eight million veterans and families of service personnel killed in combat or in public service, an increase of 34.8 percent over outlays in 2006, Xinhua said.

The total included payments to "some military personnel and civilians" who had taken part in nuclear tests, Xinhua reported Mr. Li as saying, without details.

China conducted 45 nuclear tests at its remote Lop Nur site in the western region of Xinjiang, including 23 in the atmosphere, from 1964 until it signed the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty in 1996.

Beijing maintains tight secrecy about its nuclear weapons program, and access to the Lop Nur site and the surrounding region is tightly restricted.

Some foreign journalists have reported an increased incidence of cancers and other diseases in people near the test site, but China has never spoken officially on the possibility of health risks to staff members or local residents from radiation exposure.

The United States government has paid compensation to people suffering health problems as a result of exposure to fallout from nuclear tests, and veterans in Britain, Canada and Australia are seeking similar payments.

In recent years, Chinese veterans and demobilized soldiers have been more assertive in pressing for improved benefits, job opportunities and retraining.

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China Willing to Help Resolve Iranian Nuclear Issue

BBC Worldwide Monitoring, 18 January 2008, accessed via Lexis Nexis

State Councilor Tang Jiaxuan met Jalili, special envoy of the Iranian president and secretary of the Iranian Supreme National Security Council, in Zhongnanhai on the morning of January 18, 2008.

Tang Jiaxuan said: Under the care of Chinese and Iranian leaders and the joint efforts of the two sides, bilateral relations have made good development in recent years. China and Iran are both important developing countries, and developing mutually beneficial cooperation conforms to the fundamental interests of the two countries and peoples. China wishes to make joint efforts together with Iran to promote continual development of the Chinese-Iranian friendly cooperative relations.

On the Iranian nuclear issue, Tang Jiaxuan said China has always advocated resolving the Iranian nuclear issue through dialogue and negotiations. In the current situation, the international community should step up diplomatic efforts, promote resumption of negotiations as quickly as possible, and seek to resolve the Iranian nuclear issue in a comprehensive manner. China is willing to play a constructive role in this regard.

Jalili said: Iranian leaders attach great importance to the relations with China and hope to actively promote bilateral cooperation. As a signatory of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, Iran is willing to fulfill relevant obligations; Iran also has the right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Iran upholds resolving the Iranian nuclear issue through negotiations and will continue to cooperate with the IAEA to clarify unresolved issues as early as possible.

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Areva in Talks with Indian Companies for Nuclear Power Equipment Unit

Asia Pulse, 28 January 2008, accessed via Lexis Nexis

France's Areva has begun talks with Indian companies for setting up a nuclear power equipment manufacturing base in India.

"We have a lot of discussions with possible partners and suppliers. A lot of Indian industries are interested in becoming partner for global scale," Areva CEO Anne Lauvergeon told reporters on the sidelines of a business meeting of India France Economic Conference.

Her comments came even as India is still in talks with the IAEA on a nuclear safeguards agreement.

The company's Indian subsidiary Areva T&D supplies power transmission and distribution solutions in India and abroad. Areva T&D has early this week won a Rs 2,871.5 crore contract from the Qatar General Electricity and Water Corporation.

On delay in completion of Indo-U.S. civil nuclear deal, Lauvergeon said: "The problem is the timing as it is a political issue in India. It is a matter of negotiations with the IAEA and also with the nuclear supplier group ... as a company we have to wait for the response."

The company is looking for long-term partnerships in India, she said.

Countries such as France are awaiting finalization of an IAEA safeguards agreement to have civil nuclear cooperation. The agreement with France would be a follow up to the India-U.S. nuclear deal—a crucial step for allowing the international community to have civil nuclear trade with India.

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Australia to India: No Uranium Sales until You Join the NPT

Associated Press, 15 January 2008, accessed via Lexis Nexis

Australia's new government told an Indian envoy Tuesday that it will not sell uranium to his country while it is not a member of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT).

The comments uphold a policy that would scuttle the previous government's plans to start negotiating a uranium trade with India to fuel the country's skyrocketing demand for electricity.

Foreign Minister Stephen Smith, appointed after the Labor Party ousted former Prime Minister John Howard's government last November, held talks Tuesday with Shyam Saran, a representative of Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

After the talks, Smith told reporters he had reiterated Labor's policy on uranium sales. "We went into the election with a strong policy commitment we would not export uranium to nation-states who are not members of the [NPT]," Smith said.

While Australia's turnaround is a setback for India, it will not cripple its programs, according to analysts.

"It is a problem, but it is not an irreversible one," said K. Subrahmanyam, a former member of India's National Security Council. "Australia has one of the largest reserves of uranium but there are other nations which also have it."

Under the civilian nuclear deal between India and the United States which has yet to be passed by either side the U.S. agreed to supply India's civilian reactors with nuclear fuel. In the event the U.S. was unable to do so, India would find another supplier.

Saran did not comment after the meeting, but Smith said Saran was not surprised by the position.

The NPT provides civil nuclear trade in exchange for a pledge from nations not to pursue nuclear weapons. India became a nuclear-armed power in 1998 and has refused to sign the Treaty.

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National Nuclear Security Administration Helps North Africa Prepare for Nuclear Power

U.S. Fed News, 17 January 2008, accessed via Lexis Nexis

The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) issued the following news release.

A four day workshop designed to educate participants on the nuclear safeguards, safety, and security challenges associated with the development of a civil nuclear power program wrapped up today at the NNSA's Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. The event, sponsored by NNSA, was held for countries from the Middle East and North Africa interested in pursuing civilian nuclear energy.

"An increasing number of countries are considering nuclear energy to meet fast-growing energy requirements," said NNSA Deputy Administrator for Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation William Tobey. "The United States is committed to working with these countries to ensure that from the start, nuclear energy programs are safe, secure, and consistent with nonproliferation best practices and international commitments."

Attendees to the seminar included officials from nuclear regulatory, research, and energy agencies from Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt and Jordan. Representatives from U.S. government agencies and the DOE's national laboratories also participated.

Discussion at the workshop, held from January 14-17, 2008, focused on the steps necessary to ensure the safe, secure, and sustainable implementation of civilian nuclear energy programs. Some of the issues covered included legal and regulatory frameworks, nuclear safeguards and security, nuclear safety and emergency response, and energy planning. Participants also had the opportunity to simulate the decision-making process involved in the introduction of nuclear power and evaluate the results of their decisions.

NNSA's Office of Nonproliferation and International Security provides technical infrastructure-related assistance through non-binding bilateral arrangements to states developing nuclear energy programs pursuant to Article IV of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), as well as goals outlined by the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP).

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Belarus May Destroy Stockpiles of Antipersonnel Mines in 2008 – 2009

BBC Monitoring, 15 January 2008, accessed via Lexis Nexis

Belarus may destroy its stockpiles of about 3.5m PFM-1 antipersonnel fluid-filled mines in 2008 – 2009 if the European Commission organizes a tender to this effect in the near future, the Belarusian news agency Belapan reported on January 15, quoting the chief of the engineering troops department under the Belarusian armed forces' General Staff, Col. Ihar Lisowski.

Under the Ottawa Convention, Belarus should have destroyed its stockpiles of antipersonnel mines by March 1, 2008. Belarus completed the destruction of TNT-containing mines in December 2006. The European Commission decided to provide Belarus with 4m euros for the destruction of its stockpiles of fluid-filled mines but a tender to this effect was not organized, Belapan said.

Belarus has destroyed a total of 294,775 TNT-containing PMN, PMN-2, POM-2, POMZ-3 and POMZ-2M antipersonnel mines to date, the news agency added.

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Over 750 U.S. Inspections at Russian SMF Sites over 20 Years

Russia & CIS Military Newswire, 25 January 2008, accessed via Lexis Nexis

The specialists of the Strategic Missile Force's Treaty Verification Center have received over 750 U.S. inspections from 1988 – 2007, according to an SMF press release issued on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the center.

"Over 750 U.S. inspections were held for the period, including 346 under the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF) and over 400 under the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions (Moscow Treaty)," it says, noting that the officers of the center escorted 23 U.S. inspections to SMF sites in 2007 alone.

"The verification center is intended to monitor the abidance of sides under international treaties, agreements and accords signed, as well as to control implementation of orders and resolutions of the Defense Minister and the SMF commander with respect to arms limitation and reductions," reads the press release.

The center carries out regular contacts and information exchange on the treaty-limited equipment, updating state parties to the treaties on any changes.

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