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INLEIDING

In dit nummer van Facts & Reports wilden we de aandacht vestigen op een aantal crisis gebieden in de wereld buiten Irak, evenals de nieuwste ontwikkelingen in de bekende probleemvelden. Daaronder vallen nucleaire bewapening, het raketschild en de stagnerende onderhandelingen in de 'Conference on Disarmament' in Genève. De toespraken van de diplomaten in de januari sessie van de CD vormen een goede illustratie van het ontbreken van enigerlei reële vooruitgang in nucleaire ontwapening. Allerlei zaken die niets direct met ontwapening te maken hadden, werden er bij gehaald. Terwijl de kwestie van Irak en haar massavernietigingswapens alles overheerste de laatste tijd, groeide afzonderlijke crises rondom Noord Korea, Iran en het raketschild. Bovendien bestaat de nucleaire confrontatie in Zuid Azië ook nog steeds. We hopen dat deze verzameling documenten van nut is voor degenen die oog hebben voor de complexiteit van deze crises. Bij het commentaar hebben we ook nog opmerkingen gevoegd over de inhoud van F&R 22. Zoals altijd is het materiaal ook op www.eurobomb.nl te vinden.

Redactie Facts and Reports

NUCLEAIR BELEID VERENIGDE STATEN

MOSCOW TREATY

Boston Globe

Moscow Treaty is Full of Holes

By John F. Kerry (Senator (Democrat) of Massachusetts)

5 March 2003

President Bush claims that his Moscow Treaty "will liquidate the legacy of the Cold War" by eliminating thousands of nuclear arms left over from a bygone era when the United States and Russia faced each other across the nuclear divide. In reality, it does no such thing. The treaty does not reduce the actual number of nuclear forces -- it leaves these weapons and their lethal materials stockpiled across Russia in constant danger of falling to terrorists or rogue nations intent on doing great harm to the United States. Bush is correct that our relationship with Russia should not be driven by Cold War anxieties. But this hollow treaty misses an opportunity to address proliferation and lost or loose nuclear weapons.

Despite its stated goal of reducing the number of US and Russian deployed strategic nuclear warheads, the Moscow Treaty is missing the essential components of a strong, enforceable, and meaningful agreement. It does not require the destruction of missile launchers or the dismantlement of nuclear warheads. It does not address the tactical nuclear weapons so sought after by terrorists. It does not contain verification provisions.

The treaty's most dangerous weakness is the rejection of Ronald Reagan's doctrine of "trust but verify." The administration contends that verifying compliance with the treaty is unnecessary given the new strategic relationship with Russia. That view is shortsighted. Verification is a requirement to ensure American security, even in nonadversarial relationships.

The central problem with the treaty is that it could increase the opportunities for nuclear theft and terrorism by expanding Russian stockpiles of nuclear materials.

It is no secret that there are those who are eager to capitalize on a deadly market for nuclear materials held in unsecured facilities around the world. The General Accounting Office has documented numerous failed attempts to smuggle nuclear materials out of Russia. Out of 20 of these incidents over the last decade, the materials involved in 13, and possibly 15, were traced back to Russian sources. The potential consequences are undeniable. In October 2001, we picked up warnings that terrorists had acquired a 10-kiloton nuclear bomb. If detonated in New York City, hundreds of thousands of Americans would have died, and most of Manhattan would have been destroyed.

If the war on terrorism is to be fought on all fronts, we should seek verifiable reductions in Russia's nuclear arsenal and ensure the dismantlement and destruction of its nuclear weapons and the secure storage of nuclear materials.

It is troubling that this administration's approach to the menace of loose nuclear materials is long on rhetoric but short on execution. It relies unwisely on the threat of military preemption against terrorist organizations, which can be defeated if they are found but will not be deterred by our military might.

We can make our world more secure. We must create mechanisms to help those who would be responsible stewards but lack the financial and technical means to succeed. We must establish worldwide standards for the security and safekeeping of nuclear material and define a new standard of international legitimacy, linking the stewardship of nuclear materials under universally accepted protocols to acceptance in the community of nations. We must revitalize the Cooperative Threat Reduction program by giving it the sustained leadership, attention, and funding it deserves. Over the last decade, the United States has spent about \$7.5 billion to deactivate 6,000 warheads and destroy thousands of delivery vehicles. We must make good on our pledge of \$10 billion over 10 years to the Group of Eight threat reduction partnership and encourage the good faith participation of our allies.

But we can't stop there. A new diplomatic effort should be undertaken to fill the holes in the Moscow Treaty. The United States and Russia should agree upon transparency measures, data exchanges, on-site inspections, and eventually eliminating excess strategic nuclear warheads and their delivery systems. We must also work with Moscow on new arms control measures designed to eliminate each nation's smaller, more portable, tactical nuclear weapons, thousands of which remain in Russia.

The legacy of the Cold War is nuclear weapons. Today's danger is that these weapons will wind up in the hands of terrorists or rogue nations. To "liquidate" this Cold War legacy in actions, not just words, will take more than cosmetic treaties that leave Russia's nuclear arsenal in place.

US State Department

U.S. Senate Unanimously Approves Moscow Treaty

By Merle D. Kellerhals, Jr., Washington File Staff Writer
6 March 2003

Washington -- The U.S. Senate March 6 unanimously approved the Moscow Treaty, which will reduce U.S. and Russian long-range nuclear warheads by two-thirds by the year 2012.

The treaty, which is formally known as the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty, requires the two countries to reduce their deployed nuclear arsenals to between 1,700 and 2,200, down from 6,000 warheads for the United States and 5,500 for Russia. The Russian parliament has yet to ratify the treaty, which was signed by Presidents Bush and Vladimir Putin last May in Moscow.

"This historic agreement will reduce the nuclear arsenals of the United States and Russia to their lowest levels in decades," President Bush said March 7 in a brief statement. "The treaty will benefit both our peoples and contribute to a more secure world.

"The Moscow Treaty helps lay to rest the legacies of Cold War competition and suspicion, and marks a fundamentally new era in relations between the United States and Russia. The strategic offensive reductions codified and made binding under international law in this Treaty are essential steps toward achieving greater political, economic, and security cooperation between our two countries."

Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Richard Lugar, an Indiana Republican, hailed the 95-0 vote as "truly remarkable," adding that it represents an important step toward a safer world.

The new treaty is a three-page document that was quickly worked out by U.S. and Russian negotiators ahead of the May 2002 Bush-Putin summit. Ratification is expected in the Russian state Duma and Federation Council within weeks. No further action is need in the U.S. Congress, because the Constitution vests the Senate sole authority over foreign treaties.

Bush said he is hopeful that the Russian Duma and Federation Council will soon give their approval to ratification, "so that President Putin and I can exchange instruments of ratification and the Moscow Treaty can enter into force."

"As important as the substance is, it is the form -- the trust between the United States and Russia -- that shines through," said Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, a Republican of Tennessee.

The Moscow Treaty also calls for the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) to remain in force, expiring in 2009 unless both parties agree to an extension. It also creates a bilateral implementation commission to meet no less than twice each year to discuss "transparency" and other issues that might arise.

The new treaty will remain in force until December 31, 2012 when either nation may withdraw upon three months notice. Finally, it requires the treaty to be registered with the United Nations.

ANP

Rusland stelt ratificering nucleair verdrag uit

18 maart 2003

MOSKOU (ANP) - Het Russische parlement heeft dinsdag de ratificering van een verdrag over nucleaire wapens met de Verenigde Staten uitgesteld „vanwege een verandering in de politieke situatie" door de dreigende oorlog tegen Irak. Dat maakte een parlementswoordvoerder bekend.

Het parlement zou het zogeheten Verdrag van Moskou op 21 maart bespreken, maar dat debat is nu uitgesteld tot begin april. Volgens de woordvoerder heeft het uitstel te maken met „nog nooit vertoonde druk" die de Verenigde Staten hebben uitgeoefend op Rusland en andere landen die een vreedzame oplossing van de Irak-crisis nastreefden.

WAPENBEHEERSING

US State Department

Interview with Assistant Secretary of State for Arms Control Stephen Rademaker

4 March 2003

Question: What are your primary areas of responsibility?

Answer: My primary areas of responsibility are the implementation of existing arms control agreements and consideration of possible new agreements.

Q: You mentioned possible new agreements, is there something under consideration?

A: This is on my mind, in part, because I just returned from the Conference on Disarmament (CD) in Geneva, which is a permanent U.N.-affiliated body that looks at possible arms control agreements, and there are a number of issues that are before the CD. There is one in particular, the Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty, or FMCT, that the U.S. favors negotiating -- if a way can be found to agree on a mandate for an ad hoc group to negotiate it within the CD.

Q: What is preventing the successful conclusion of a FMCT?

A: We haven't even begun the negotiation of a FMCT, and the reason for that is there has been an inability in Geneva for the past six years to agree on the mandate for the ad hoc committee that would negotiate it. The principal sticking point is the linkages that have been established by certain other delegations where they take the position that they would not be prepared to agree to the initiation of negotiations on a FMCT unless there were also agreement within the CD to commence negotiations, or at least a discussion of other proposed arms control agreements. There are three such agreements, in particular, that have been linked, in one way or another, to the initiation of a FMCT negotiation. They are the so-called PAROS (Prohibition of an Arms Race in Outer Space) agreement, another having to do with nuclear disarmament and a third that concerns negative security assurances for non-nuclear weapons states.

Q: What are they looking for in terms of nuclear disarmament?

A: The proposal that's been on the table for several years would be to establish an ad hoc group with a mandate to discuss possible steps that could be taken in the direction of nuclear disarmament, and there has been resistance to that not just from the United States, but from a number of the nuclear weapons states under the NPT (Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty).

Q: Do you think arms control is still viable in the 21st century?

A: Well, clearly, we just negotiated a major arms control agreement with Russia, in the form of the Moscow Treaty, which provided for the largest reduction ever in deployed strategic nuclear warheads, so there certainly remains room for arms control.

But the approach of the Bush administration has been to proceed cautiously because we don't share the attitude that you can find elsewhere that any agreement in the area of arms control has to be a good thing. And that means that we are not prepared to sign up to negotiations just because the process of negotiating is a good thing. We don't accept the notion that process is more important than substance. And I think you do find that many other countries that have a strong devotion to the process of arms control.

Often times, for example, we want to talk about compliance because there is a whole raft of existing arms control agreements and we think it's important that all the parties to existing agreements live up to their obligations. Discussions about compliance become very uncomfortable because as you engage in such a conversation you eventually come to the point of having to make accusations and then you might, perhaps, have to even confront the question of how to penalize violators. And that becomes very awkward and there are a lot of countries, we find, that would prefer not to address that. They just want to go on and negotiate new agreements without doing the hard work of making sure that the existing ones are complied with.

Q: Do you think most of the world has been slow to address the potential threat of nuclear, chemical, biological or radiological weapons, or perhaps naïve about possible use?

A: We have existing agreements that limit nuclear weapons to five countries, that prohibit chemical weapons, and that prohibit biological weapons. We don't have an international agreement about radiological weapons. On the other hand, we have no country that today deploys radiological weapons so that seems to have been a less pressing issue in the past. I don't think the world has been remiss in addressing these arms control challenges through the negotiation of international agreements. Where the world has been, perhaps, remiss is in ensuring that there is global compliance.

Today, we have the NPT that speaks to nuclear non-proliferation and the NPT is in trouble, not because the NPT as an agreement doesn't work, but because some countries are moving in the direction of violating it -- particularly North Korea which has a nuclear weapons program and has now announced its intention to

withdraw from the Treaty. So, the solution to that is not to go negotiate another NPT, it's for the international community to figure out how we can persuade North Korea to come back into compliance with the existing NPT.

And, we see similar problems in the area of chemical and biological weapons where the problem is not the existing prohibitions; the problem is the degree to which all countries are living up to their existing obligations.

Q: Has any progress been made since the G-8 (the group of seven industrialized nations plus Russia) announced last year its partnership against the spread of weapons of mass destruction, or do you expect a progress report this June when they meet again?

A: Given the potential of that initiative, I'm sure that it will be discussed in June. Under Secretary of State (for International Security and Arms Control John) Bolton is going to Moscow at the end of February to continue discussions with the Russians on this issue.

The basic problem that we've encountered is that to carry out these programs in Russia, there have to be understandings reached about some practical details of implementing the programs. And we are not prepared, for example, to spend a lot of money to establish assistance programs only to have to pay taxes or import duties and pay fees in order to do what we think enhances our security as well as Russia's security. This has been a recurring problem, not just for the global partnership, but also for programs that have been in existence for years. And it's been a problem not just for the United States, but also for Japan, Germany, Canada, and the other countries that have been serious about these kinds of issues.

Q: Are there any practical arms control issues that the U.S. is working on within NATO?

A: We coordinate closely with our NATO allies on arms control issues, and particularly conventional arms control issues in Europe, which is the area of NATO's responsibility. For instance, there is the Adapted CFE (Conventional Armed Forces in Europe) Treaty, which we hope to bring into force. We are working very closely with our NATO allies on that, consulting regularly on the steps that need to be taken for the Treaty to be submitted to parliaments for ratification.

Q: What are the obstacles and is there a timeframe for the Adapted CFE accord?

A: The basic obstacle to ratification and entry into force of the Adapted CFE Treaty is the so-called Istanbul commitments. These are commitments made by Russia in Istanbul in 1999 when the Treaty was signed. And, with regard to the countries of Georgia and Moldova, they were commitments by Russia to withdraw their forces from deployments in those countries. In the case of Georgia, it involves two bases that Russia has not yet agreed to close as required by the Istanbul commitments. And in the case of Moldova, it requires the withdrawal of their forces, but in order for them to withdraw their forces there is a large amount of ammunition that has to be withdrawn, and there have been some practical problems encountered regarding ammunition withdrawal. So until those two issues are worked out, the understanding within NATO is that no NATO country will proceed to ratify.

We are also still working within NATO on missile defense issues. This is not really an arms control issue, although there is an important arms control dimension to it. This has become an issue that NATO is paying increasing attention to.

[...]

Q: With respect to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), how has the U.S. been working recently to strengthen implementation?

A: Over the past year, we became concerned about the leadership of the OPCW, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons -- the administering agency of the CWC. And we worked with other countries that were also concerned to replace the previous leadership of the organization with a new Director-General.

The campaign took a great deal of effort to succeed, but it did ultimately succeed and there is now a new Director-General that is doing an excellent job. Shortly after his election, we chose to make a voluntary contribution of about \$2 million to the OPCW to demonstrate our continued strong support of the organization and its work.

We've also recently decided to upgrade the status of our representation to the OPCW. We're in the process of sending an ambassador to the OPCW. We have not had in the past a resident ambassador to the OPCW in The Hague.

On a practical level we will continue our close cooperation with the OPCW. We're working with the new Director-General to assist him and strengthen the management there and enhance the stability of the organization.

Q: Is the United States grateful that countries like Guatemala continue to ratify the CWC?

A: Yes we are. It is our view that treaties like the CWC and the BWC (Biological Weapons Convention) should be universally subscribed to, and so we actually make it a practice to encourage countries that have not

yet acceded to the treaties to do so. Just within the last two months, I personally met with the President of Palau and urged him to consider acceding to both treaties. And the response was favorable. Just a few days ago (February 3) Palau acceded to both of those treaties. This is something that we encourage and we hope that eventually every country in the world will be a party to these treaties.

Q: And what issues does the U.S. hope will be addressed at the April Review Conference in The Hague?

A: We are still in the process of working with the other States Parties to determine how we are going to structure the Review Conference, but we are working toward a thematic approach to the major issues that are before the OPCW. The idea would be to review the progress that has been achieved in those areas, such as inspections and the types of activities that are the focus of inspections and how to achieve consensus on how to carry forward the work of the organization over the next five years.

Q: You were talking earlier about the NPT. Is the United States concerned that the regime might unravel if additional nations decide to unilaterally withdraw from it?

A: It's been a concern with the NPT for a long time that if countries began to develop nuclear weapons in violation of the NPT that would lead other countries to conclude that they needed to do the same in order to defend themselves -- that they could no longer rely on the NPT for defense against nuclear-armed neighbors and some would say they need to resort to developing their own nuclear weapons.

And even today you read in the press speculation that if the North Korean nuclear problem is unresolved then Japan or South Korea may feel compelled to develop nuclear weapons. In fact, in Japan now, some politicians are starting to talk about how that might be something that Japan might be required to do. So that's the kind of unraveling that people have long been concerned about. We naturally don't want to see the NPT unravel and so the best way to avoid that is to ensure that the NPT's norms of behavior are adhered to by all countries, including North Korea.

We're gratified that the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) last week (February 12) voted to refer the North Korean matter to the U.N. Security Council. This is a threat to international peace and security that warrants consideration by the Security Council.

Q: Do you think the United States and Russia have been given sufficient credit for reducing nuclear weapons under the 2002 Moscow Treaty? And are arms control proponents making the connection between the bilateral treaty and obligations under Article VI of the NPT?

A: We make the point that in negotiating the Moscow Treaty we were taking significant steps in accordance with Article VI of the NPT, but I'm not sure that everyone wants to give us credit for that because I do hear complaints that we haven't done enough. I think a two-thirds reduction from the existing levels -- which is what is provided for under the Moscow Treaty -- has to be considered progress by any measure, so we will continue to make the point that we're moving in the direction required by the NPT. We can't force other countries to give us credit for that, but I think the facts speak for themselves.

Q: When do you expect the Senate to take up the Moscow Treaty and do you see Senate action as pro forma, or do you anticipate any contentious issues to crop up?

A: As you know the Treaty has been approved by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee unanimously and our understanding is that it will be on the floor of the Senate as soon as the end of February.

There is the possibility of amendments being offered and we've not seen the text of any amendments. We understand that there may be one or two amendments that are offered to the resolution of ratification. It's not possible to amend the Treaty, but it is possible to seek to amend the resolution of ratification. So, we'll have to address that. We're satisfied with the text of the resolution as it was reported by the Committee, so the administration doesn't favor amendment to the Senate resolution on the floor.

Q: What is the U.S. position with respect to the draft treaty that is currently being negotiated in Central Asia to ban nuclear weapons there?

A: There are a number of Nuclear Weapon-Free Zones around the world, and in the past the United States has worked with Nuclear Weapon-Free Zones and on occasion provided binding negative security assurances. So we are waiting to see what emerges in Central Asia and once it is clear we'll have to consider how to apply our policy to this new zone.

Q: Generally speaking, are you looking with favor on it?

A: The Bush administration has not previously confronted the question of what to say to or how to respond to Nuclear Weapon-Free Zones, so I think once this issue ripens it may force us to look at the question as an administration for the first time. We haven't begun the process of looking at it. And I'm not even sure what they are going to ask of us, so until we see it, it's premature for me to tell you what precisely we are going to do.

Q: Does the U.S. view the IAEA as an effective international mechanism for curbing nuclear non-proliferation?

A: The IAEA tries very hard to police the nuclear non-proliferation regime. They've had some success, as in North Korea, and they've had some failures as in Iraq prior to the (Persian) Gulf War. It's my impression they've learned from the failures and are trying hard. (Director General) Mohamad ElBaradei is on his way to Iran today (February 20) to talk about their nuclear activities, so the IAEA is working hard and has our support as it goes about its business.

Q: Is the U.S. doing anything either to strengthen it or boost its budget?

A: Absolutely. First of all, in the past year the Bush administration submitted to the Senate the so-called "Additional Protocol," which is an enhanced inspection arrangement. That Protocol is awaiting Senate action.

The reason we did this is to demonstrate to other countries that this is an important step that we would hope they would take as well. Frankly, the Additional Protocol doesn't make a whole lot of sense by itself for the United States because the point of the Additional Protocol is to provide for enhanced inspections to ensure compliance with the NPT and as a member of the NPT we admit that we have nuclear weapons. There isn't much to be done (by the U.S.) under the Additional Protocol other than to confirm that we are what we say we are, which is a nuclear weapons state. But it is an important thing for other countries to do. So, as a demonstration of our support for the Additional Protocol, we signed it and submitted it to the Senate.

With regard to the IAEA budget, the United States is the largest contributor to the IAEA both in terms of assessed contributions and also with regard to voluntary contributions. Quite honestly, if you speak to supporters of the IAEA I think you would find some that actually would not want the U.S. to give more money to the IAEA because if we were to do so it might become harder to refute the notion that the IAEA is an extension of the U.S. government, which is a charge that the North Koreans and others have made.

Q: When do you think the Senate might take up the Additional Protocol?

A: I don't know the answer to that.

Q: Does the United States have to ratify it first, before other nations do so?

A: No, we don't have to go first. A number of other countries have signed and ratified. The intention is to try to get every NPT adherent to sign and ratify the Additional Protocol.

Q: Can you talk about what has been going on behind-the-scenes since the 5th Review Conference on the BWC was held in Geneva in November?

A: We're preparing for two meetings that will take place this year in accordance with the decisions that were reached at the Review Conference. There will be an Experts Meeting for two weeks in August this year and a meeting of the States Parties in November. Internally, we are developing papers and we're focusing a lot of energy on trying to give substance to the elements of the work program that are the subject of this year's meetings: national implementing legislation for the BWC, and enhanced security for biological pathogens.

Q: What is the issue with the pathogens?

A: The issue is how does a country protect anthrax and other pathogens, like smallpox, that exist in laboratories or medical facilities, and how does a country ensure that those pathogens that are needed for research and medical purposes are kept out of the hands of people who might try to turn them into biological weapons? So that is one of two elements of this year's work program and the idea is to convene the States Parties to talk about what we are all doing individually to enhance the security of such pathogens in our countries.

A big part of what we're trying to do is identify what States Parties have already done, and the idea of the meeting will to compare notes and maybe come to some understandings about what we think the best practices are in this area and suggestions about what other countries should do.

Q: You've talked a bit about missile defense in the NATO context, but what kind of cooperation is taking place with countries like Japan, the U.K., and Israel?

A: We're working with a wide range of countries, including Russia, on missile defense issues. The President, on December 17, outlined the initial deployment that he envisions for a missile defense system to protect the United States and our allies. This is just the initial phase of it, but even the initial phases require some cooperation by our allies. There are radars on territory controlled by the U.K. and by Denmark that we hope to upgrade as part of the initial missile defense deployment. Also, there are issues between the United States and Canada that have to do with NORAD, the North American Aerospace Defense Command, and its role in missile defense. So with those three countries, in particular, we look toward close cooperation in the initial phase.

As we look at additional steps that are going to be taken further down the road, we see allies in both Asia and Europe as increasingly important. In the case of Japan, we are already engaged in joint research activities to develop technologies that we hope to incorporate into the system.

Q: What are the Russians saying? Are they seeking shared information, are they wanting to do research?

A: We are still in a dialogue with them about exactly how we will work together in this area under the CGSS, the Consultative Group for Strategic Security, that was set up at the last U.S.-Russian Summit in Moscow.

There is a working group that focuses on missile defense issues that has been meeting over the past year. There is some joint research that we are trying to do with the Russians to develop technologies that can have applications in the missile defense area. The RAMOS (Russian American Observation Satellite) program that we have worked on for a number of years is a major research program that is under way. There is the Joint Data Exchange Center which is, in the first instance, a mechanism for exchange of early warning data on missile launches, but it could also, over time, evolve to have missile defense applications.

Q: Is there any serious thought being given to introducing a proposal in the Conference on Disarmament, or elsewhere, to restrict the global export of non-self-destructing anti-personnel landmines?

A: Yes. We proposed such an initiative last week at the CD in Geneva.

Q: What kind of a reception did you receive?

A: It was in the context of a long speech so I'm not sure that everyone at the CD focused on it immediately. But it was our hope that given the gridlock that still exists in the CD where there are these four issues that have been basically bundled together: FMCT, PAROS, nuclear disarmament, and negative security assurances -- if those four issues remain wedded to one another and no progress is possible on one of them without progress on all of them --- which has meant over the past six years no progress at all -- our idea was to see if we could put an idea forward that, perhaps, could be worked on independently of these things that have been tied together. That was the spirit in which we made a proposal on non-self-destructing landmines.

Whether it is possible in today's Conference on Disarmament to initiate any negotiations on anything without addressing these other four issues is something that remains to be seen.

Q: Were there any follow-up queries about it?

A: There were a few follow-up queries at the time and we promised to provide some additional information about what we have in mind.

Q: Is anything active right now on Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBMs)? For example, is there any hope for any CSBMs in the context of the Middle East Peace process or is anything happening in Latin America?

A: The notion of CSBMs has achieved its greatest success in Europe with the CFE (Conventional Armed Forces in Europe) Treaty and the Vienna Document. There are periodic efforts to try to model CSBMs in other regions along the lines of what has been achieved in Europe.

For instance, there was a conference last week in Miami to talk about confidence building measures that could be agreed on within Latin America. It was sponsored by the OAS (Organization of American States) with State Department participation.

One of the innovations of the Bush administration with regard to policy on the Korean Peninsula was to call for some progress in the area of conventional arms control so we have been looking at these types of measures in the context of Korea, but that work has been overshadowed now by the breakdown of the Agreed Framework between the United States and North Korea.

But CSBMs are something that remain under active consideration in a worldwide context.

MOGELIJK KERNWAPENGEBRUIK TEGEN IRAK

Los Angeles Times

Our Nuclear Talk Gravely Imperils Us

By Edward M. Kennedy (Senator (Democrat) of Massachusetts)

29 January 2003

Notion of a first-strike use in Iraq carries the seed of world disaster.

A dangerous world just grew more dangerous. Reports that the administration is contemplating the preemptive use of nuclear weapons in Iraq should set off alarm bells that this could not only be the wrong war at the wrong time, but it could quickly spin out of control.

Initiating the use of nuclear weapons would make a conflict with Iraq potentially catastrophic.

President Bush had an opportunity Tuesday night to explain why he believes such a radical departure from long-standing policy is justified or necessary. At the very minimum, a change of this magnitude should be brought to Congress for debate before the U.S. goes to war with Iraq.

The reports of a preemptive nuclear strike are consistent with the extreme views outlined a year ago in President Bush's Nuclear Posture Review and with the administration's disdain for long-standing norms of international behavior.

According to these reports, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has directed the U.S. Strategic Command to develop plans for employing nuclear weapons in a wide range of new missions, including possible use in Iraq to destroy underground bunkers.

Using the nation's nuclear arsenal in this unprecedented way would be the most fateful decision since the nuclear attack on Hiroshima. Even contemplating the first-strike use of nuclear weapons under current circumstances and against a nonnuclear nation dangerously blurs the crucial and historical distinction between conventional and nuclear arms. In the case of Iraq, it is preposterous.

Nuclear weapons are in a class of their own for good reasons -- their unique destructive power and their capacity to threaten the very survival of humanity. They have been kept separate from other military alternatives out of a profound commitment to do all we can to see they are never used again. They should be employed only in the most dire circumstances -- for example, if the existence of our nation is threatened. It makes no sense to break down the firewall that has existed for half a century between nuclear conflict and any other form of warfare.

A nuclear bomb is not just another item in the arsenal.

Our military is the most powerful fighting force in the world. We can fight and win a war in Iraq with precision bombing and sophisticated new conventional weapons. The president has not made a case that the threat to our national security from Iraq is so imminent that we even need to go to war -- let alone let the nuclear genie out of the bottle.

By raising the possibility that nuclear weapons could be part of a first strike against Iraq, the administration is only enhancing its reputation as a reckless unilateralist in the world community -- a reputation that ultimately weakens our own security. The nuclear threat will further alienate our allies, most of whom remain unconvinced of the need for war with Iraq. It is fundamentally contrary to our national interests to further strain relationships that are essential to win the war against terrorism and to advance our ideals in the world.

This policy also deepens the danger of nuclear proliferation by, in effect, telling nonnuclear states that nuclear weapons are necessary to deter a potential U.S. attack and by sending a green light to the world's nuclear states that it is permissible to use them. Is this the lesson we want to send to North Korea, Pakistan and India or any other nuclear power?

The use of nuclear weapons in Iraq in the absence of an imminent, overwhelming threat to our national security would bring a near-total breakdown in relations between the U.S. and the rest of the world. At a minimum, it would lead to a massive rise in anti-Americanism in the Arab world and a corresponding increase in sympathy for terrorists who seek to do us harm. Our nation, long a beacon of hope, would overnight be seen as a symbol of death, destruction and aggression.

In the introduction to his national security strategy last fall, the president declared: "The gravest danger our nation faces lies at the crossroads of radicalism and technology." On that he was surely right -- and the administration's radical consideration of the possible use of our nuclear arsenal against Iraq is itself a grave danger to our national interests, our nation and all that America stands for.

Senate

108th CONGRESS - 1st Session

S. RES. 76

Expressing the sense of the Senate that the policy of preemption, combined with a policy of first use of nuclear weapons, creates an incentive for the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, and is inconsistent with the long-term security of the United States.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

March 5, 2003

Mr. DURBIN submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate that the policy of preemption, combined with a policy of first use of nuclear weapons, creates an incentive for the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, and is inconsistent with the long-term security of the United States.

Whereas press reports show that the December 31, 2001 Nuclear Posture Review states that the United States might use nuclear weapons to dissuade adversaries from undertaking military programs or operations that could threaten United States interests;

Whereas the Nuclear Posture Review, according to such reports, goes on to state that nuclear weapons could be employed against targets capable of withstanding non-nuclear attack;

Whereas the Nuclear Posture Review is further reported to state that, in setting requirements for nuclear strike capabilities, North Korea, Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Libya are among the countries that could be involved in immediate, potential, or unexpected contingencies;

Whereas the September 17, 2002 National Security Strategy of the United States of America states that '[a]s a matter of common sense and self-defense, America will act against such emerging threats before they are fully formed,' and that '[t]o forestall or prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries, the United States will, if necessary, act preemptively';

Whereas the December 2002 National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction states that '[t]he United States will continue to make clear that it reserves the right to respond with overwhelming force--including through resort to all of our options--to the use of [weapons of mass destruction] against the United States, our forces abroad, and friends and allies';

Whereas United States nuclear policy, outlined in 1978 and restated in 1995 and 2002, includes, in the context of gaining other nations' support for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, a 'negative security assurance' that the United States would not use its nuclear force against a country that does not possess nuclear weapons unless that country was allied with a nuclear weapons possessor;

Whereas the Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, John Bolton, recently announced the Administration's abandonment of the so-called 'negative security assurance' pledge to refrain from using nuclear weapons against non-nuclear nations;

Whereas reports about the Stockpile Stewardship Conference Planning Meeting of the Department of Defense, held on January 10, 2003, indicate that the United States is engaged in the expansion of research and development of new types of nuclear weapons;

Whereas this expansion of nuclear weapons research covers new forms of nuclear weaponry that threaten the limitations on nuclear weapons testing that are established by the unratified, but previously respected, Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty;

Whereas these policies and actions threaten to make nuclear weapons appear to be useful, legitimate, first-strike offensive weapons, rather than a force for deterrence, and therefore undermine an essential tenet of nonproliferation; and

Whereas the cumulative effect of the policies announced by the President is to redefine the concept of preemption, which had been understood to mean the right of every state to anticipatory self-defense in the face of imminent attack, and to broaden the concept to justify a preventive war initiated by the United States, even without evidence of an imminent attack, in which the United States might use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that the President's policy of preemption, combined with a policy of first use of nuclear weapons, creates an incentive for proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, and is inconsistent with the long-term security of the United States.

ONTWIKKELING NIEUWE KERNWAPENS

Washington Post

Pentagon Pursues Nuclear Earth Penetrator

New Weapon Would Be Aimed at Missile Production Facilities Underground

By Walter Pincus - Friday, March 7, 2003

The Pentagon is about to take the first public step toward obtaining a controversial, high-yield, earth-penetrating nuclear weapon that could be aimed at North Korea's underground nuclear and missile production facilities, according to senior Bush administration officials.

Within a week, an Air Force report is to be delivered to the House and Senate Armed Services committees stating the military requirements for the "robust nuclear earth penetrator," a device designed to dig into the ground before it explodes and crushes any facility buried beneath it. Already five times more powerful than the device detonated at Hiroshima, the bomb would have an even greater impact because a nuclear weapon's force is multiplied when its shock wave penetrates the rocky crust of the earth.

Meanwhile, the Pentagon this week sent to Capitol Hill language that would, if approved, lift an eight-year-old congressional restriction on development of a so-called low-yield warhead, one below five kilotons. Such

a device would be used to attack facilities holding chemical or biological weapons. In principle, the heat or radiation of the low-yield weapon would destroy the toxicity of the agents before they were spread by the force of the blast.

These moves drew criticism yesterday after Energy Department officials were questioned at a House Armed Services Committee hearing.

Noting the Bush administration's standoff with North Korea over that country's plans to build nuclear weapons, Rep. Ellen Tauscher (D-Calif.), a senior member of the Armed Services panel, said, "I don't see how we look at all the nuclear wannabes in the face when we have announced a half-hearted attempt to take down half our own big nuclear weapons and we are going to now launch ourselves into a whole series of new weapons."

David Albright, a physicist who is president of the Institute for Science and International Security and an expert on North Korea, said, "It is a bad idea to develop these things, which probably would never be used, and do so openly. It develops a lot of paranoia among proliferating states who believe the U.S. is planning to attack them."

When the "earth penetrator" was first discussed in the 1990s, it was conceived as having a low yield -- a relatively small output of radiation, heat and explosive force -- so that if it exploded in the basement of a palace in the outskirts of Baghdad, it would not create much fallout.

Today, however, the goals are different. Potential enemies are hiding their war-making facilities underground, said Everet H. Beckner, deputy administrator for defense programs at the National Nuclear Security Administration, and there is a need for developing a weapon whose nose cone could penetrate frozen soil or rocks.

One of the suspected sites for North Korea's covert uranium enrichment plant is a uranium milling facility built underneath a mountain. Three other suspected nuclear production sites are also hidden near or in large areas carved out of mountains.

Guardian

Pentagon wants mini-nuke ban to be lifted

Julian Borger in Washington - Friday March 7, 2003

The Pentagon has asked the US Congress to lift a 10-year ban on developing small nuclear warheads, or "mini-nukes", in one of the most overt steps President George Bush's administration has taken towards building a new atomic arsenal.

Buried in the defence department's 2004 budget proposals, sent to congressional committees this week, was a single-line statement that marks a sharp change in US nuclear policy.

It calls on the legislature to "rescind the prohibition on research and development of low-yield nuclear weapons".

If passed by Congress, the measure would represent an important victory for radicals in the administration, who believe the US arsenal needs to be made more "usable", and therefore a more meaningful deterrent, to "rogue states" that have weapons of mass destruction, or WMD.

A Pentagon official said yesterday the research ban on smaller warheads "has negatively affected US government efforts to support the national strategy to counter WMD, and undercuts efforts that could strengthen our ability to deter or respond to new or emerging threats".

Democrats fought off earlier Republican attempts to lift the ban on researching and developing warheads under five kilotons (a third of the power of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima), fearing they would lead to an end to the US moratorium on nuclear testing, and to a new arms race.

Since the Republicans won back control of the Senate last year, the administration believes it is in a strong position to lift the "Spratt-Furse restriction", named after two Democrat congressmen who proposed the ban in 1993.

"It's significant because this is the first time the administration - and it comes from the department of defence - has said it wants low-yield weapons," said Kathryn Cran dall, a nuclear weapons expert at the British American Security Information Council.

She said the policy statement contradicted denials from administration officials that they had any ambitions to build new weapons.

The Pentagon official, who did not want to be named, said a repeal of the ban would not commit the US to producing and deploying low-yield warheads. "Such warhead concepts could not proceed to full-scale

development, much less production and deployment, unless Congress authorises the substantial funds required," the official said.

Congressional Republicans approved \$15m (£9.4m) last year for research on nuclear "bunker busters", designed to penetrate reinforced underground targets before exploding; but the weapons, the B83 and the B61, are modifications of high-yield bombs. Developing low-yield devices would probably require testing.

The Senate never ratified the comprehensive test ban treaty, but the US imposed a moratorium on testing in 1992.

"Here we have the administration in one of its more open steps so far," said Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Washington-based arms control association. "The only reason why the administration might want to pursue low-yield nuclear weapons is to develop a weapon they believe is less damaging to the immediate environment. "In the strange logic of these people, it would be more 'usable' - the political costs, they believe, will be lower," he said.

John Spratt, one of the ban's two authors, said: "Some in the administration and in Congress seem to think that the US can move the world in one direction while Washington moves in another - that we can continue to prevail on other countries not to develop nuclear weapons, while we develop new tactical applications for such weapons, and possibly resume nuclear testing."

IPPNW

International Physicians Warn Use of Nuclear Bunker Busters in Iraq Could Result in Thousands of Radiation Victims

March 2003

International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) has released an important new study on the medical consequences of the use of nuclear earth-penetrating weapons (EPWs), also known as bunker busters. The study was produced by a team of experts on the medical consequences of the use of nuclear weapons led by Victor W. Sidel, MD, of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York. Princeton University physicist Robert W. Nelson, an expert on the physical effects of low-yield, precision nuclear weapons, was also a co-author.

The IPPNW study concludes that even a very low-yield nuclear EPW exploded in or near an urban environment such as Baghdad will inevitably disperse radioactive dirt and debris over several square kilometers and could result in fatal doses of radiation to tens of thousands of victims.

Moreover, if EPWs are used against underground bunkers containing biological or chemical weapons or weapons materials, there is a high probability that these deadly agents will not be completely incinerated and will be dispersed on the ground and into the atmosphere.

The United States currently deploys both conventional and nuclear EPWs, including about 50 nuclear-tipped B61-11s, which can penetrate 2-3 meters and have reported yields between 0.3 kilotons and 340 kilotons. The 2003 Department of Energy (DOE) budget specifically requests funding for a "Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator" (RNEP) that would be more effective than the B61.

"Our findings unequivocally refute the contention by the Bush administration and the Pentagon that nuclear bunker busters could be used in Iraq or anywhere else with minimal so-called collateral damage," Dr. Sidel said.

"The nature of that 'collateral damage' would be fatal doses of radiation to anyone within a kilometer of the explosion and acute radiation sickness for potentially thousands of people who would die excruciating deaths over several days to a week or more."

The use of low-yield nuclear weapons would also undermine global security. "Were the US to use such weapons," Dr. Sidel said, "it would be crossing the nuclear threshold for the first time since the US used nuclear weapons on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki more than 50 years ago. This is not only morally repugnant, but it would start us down the slippery slope to the use of nuclear weapons of greater yield — something the entire world has been trying to prevent since Hiroshima and Nagasaki."

The study concludes with a policy assessment in which the authors state that further development of EPWs could require underground nuclear testing, breaking the current world moratorium and destroying prospects for eventual universal accession to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). Both the resumption of nuclear testing and the production of new nuclear weapons will fuel global nuclear weapons proliferation.

Statement of Spencer Abraham, Secretary, U.S. Department of Energy

Committee on Armed Services - United States Senate - March 20, 2003

[...] **Weapons Activities:** One of my most important responsibility as Secretary of Energy is to certify to the President the safety and reliability of our nuclear stockpile. Our nuclear weapons capability protected the nation and helped us to win the 50-year Cold War. Today it continues to be a key strategic component of our Nation's security posture. Our challenge today is large and complex: we must maintain the safety; security; reliability; and effectiveness of our aging nuclear weapons stockpile without resort to underground testing. We must also provide a manufacturing base for the production of a replacement weapon if the need should arise.

Our FY 2004 Budget proposes \$6.4 billion for the Weapons Activities program, which also includes funding for safeguards and security for NNSA sites and for rebuilding our national security infrastructure. For the last seven years, the Stockpile Stewardship program has allowed the Secretaries of Energy and Defense to certify to the President that (1) the Nation's nuclear weapons stockpile is safe, secure and reliable and (2) that there is no need to resume underground testing.

To ensure that the existing stockpile continues to meet it's military requirements, the NNSA also has a comprehensive refurbishment program known as stockpile life extension. It is presently working on 4 warhead types in the enduring stockpile; the W87, W76, B61, and the W80. This program designs, builds, tests and installs new subsystems and components thereby extending the operational service life for these warheads for some 30 years.

NNSA is also restoring the full suite of manufacturing capabilities needed to respond to any stockpile contingency. NNSA is installing an interim pit production capability at Los Alamos. Later this year Los Alamos will deliver a W88 pit that will meet all quality manufacturing requirements for use in the stockpile. This will be the first pit made by the United States since the shutdown of Rocky Flats in 1989. NNSA has begun work on design and siting for a modern pit facility that will be capable of manufacturing all pit types for the current stockpile and any new requirements, should they arise. To complete the materials supply story, NNSA will begin producing new tritium for the stockpile by irradiation of tritium producing rods in a TVA reactor this fall.

We are also investing in the leading edge scientific and engineering tools required to support the stockpile now and into the future. Three areas deserve special mention. First, with the advanced scientific computing initiative (ASCI), NNSA is working with U.S computer manufacturers to acquire the world's fastest and most capable computers to address nuclear weapons performance issues that several years ago were impossible to solve. Second, the Dual Axis Radiographic Hydrotest Facility at Los Alamos is providing Acat-scan-like@ images of weapons implosion processes. This test bed provides critical data to validate the ASCI codes. Third, later this year, the world's most powerful laser, the National Ignition Facility, will begin to carry out experiments at the Lawrence Livermore national laboratory in support of the nuclear weapons stockpile.

As the NPR highlighted, the threats we face today are dramatically different from those we faced a few years ago. To ensure that future American presidents have deterrence options to deal with these threats, we have a modest Advanced Concepts program (\$21m) underway. \$15 million will be allocated to the Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator (RNEP). This program will examine whether or not two existing warheads in the stockpile B the B61 and the B83 B can be sufficiently hardened through case modifications and other work to allow the weapons to survive penetration into various geologies, with high reliability, before detonating. The remaining funds will be divided between the weapons laboratories for studies of other advanced concepts work.

DOE supports about \$1 billion annually for ongoing operation of NNSA facilities at the government-owned, contractor operated, national laboratories, production plants, and test site. In addition, \$273 million is requested in FY 2004 for eight new construction starts and 12 ongoing construction projects. The Facilities and Infrastructure Recapitalization Program (\$265 million) is responsive to the Nuclear Posture Review infrastructure guidance, and is in its third year to restore, rebuild and revitalize the physical infrastructure of the nuclear weapons complex that has deteriorated and is in immediate need of attention. This program is tightly structured to address highest priority needs, to eliminate deferred maintenance requirements, and eliminate excess space in all nuclear weapons complex facilities. Our responsibilities also encompass security for the nuclear weapons complex. In the past year, we have placed the highest priority on addressing urgent, emergent concerns about the safeguards and security posture of our nationwide complex of facilities and transportation systems following the events of September 11, 2001. In addition to increasing our protective forces, enhancing training, and upgrading equipment, we will begin a modest R&D effort to try to improve the effectiveness of technologies for physical and cyber security. We also upgraded our emergency response assets, which are available to be deployed in emergencies around the world. [...]

MISSILE DEFENCE

New York Times

Missile-Defense Critic's Suit Is Dismissed

By William J. Broad – 8 March 2003

At the request of the government, a federal judge has dismissed a suit against a contractor for the nation's antimissile defense system. The judge agreed with the government's contention that national security would be endangered if the suit went forward.

The suit was brought by Dr. Nira Schwartz, an engineer who once worked for the contractor, TRW Inc. Dr. Schwartz has long argued that the key component of the system is flawed and that the company and the government have conspired to cover up its problems. Dr. Schwartz worked on the system when she was employed by TRW.

The government had argued that hearing her suit in court would result in public disclosure of information that would harm national security.

Judge Ronald S. W. Lew of the Federal District Court in Los Angeles agreed. "The only way to eliminate the security risk posed by these lawsuits is to dismiss them," Judge Lew said in a decision on Feb. 24, according to a court transcript.

On Thursday, Dr. Schwartz filed a petition asking the judge to reconsider. "The court has overlooked the abundance of unclassified documents that are available," she wrote.

The case began when Dr. Schwartz, a senior engineer in 1995 and 1996 at TRW, a military contractor now owned by the Northrop Grumman Corporation, accused her employer of falsifying test results on a prototype sensor meant to distinguish enemy warheads from decoys. Subsequently, TRW fired her.

Dr. Schwartz sued the company charging wrongful dismissal and also brought suit in 1996 under the False Claims Act, a federal law that allows heavy fines against contractors who lie about their government work. TRW has denied any wrongdoing.

As the False Claims Act case recently began moving into its pretrial discovery phase, TRW subpoenaed 38 military documents, including one that listed the technical requirements for its work on the antimissile system. TRW argued that it could not properly defend itself without the documents, and the government said they must not be made public.

In his Feb. 24 decision, Judge Lew said there was "a reasonable danger that the compulsion of the evidence will expose matters which in the interest of national security should not be divulged."

In an interview yesterday, Dr. Schwartz said her petition included unclassified documents, including government ones, that made her points without exposing secrets.

"I hope that judge will read those attachments and see that the government's own documents prove my claims," Dr. Schwartz. If that does not happen, she said, she will appeal.

BASIC

Missile Defense Update

10 March 2003

£9 billion for Missile Defense in 2004

Commenting on President Bush's military budget proposal for 2004, released on February 3, Fred Kaplan noted that \$9.1 billion is a 20% increase over last year's missile defense expenditure and nearly three times what President Reagan spent on the Strategic Defense Initiative in any of his years in office. He concludes that if President Bush were serious about countering the threat to the United States, he would not have declined the \$814 million on offer from the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, to be transferred from missile defense to Homeland Security.

It was also revealed in these budget proposals that the Missile Defense Agency plans to conduct nine flight tests between FY '04 and FY '08 to develop a test bed for an interceptor system able to shoot down missiles in their boost phase. The objective is to have a sea-based capability by the end of FY '11. Additionally, the budget indicated that the MDA plans to conduct the first satellite launch for a space-base boost-phase interceptor test bed toward the end of FY '08.

Report for 2002 – could do better?

On February 20 Thomas Christie, Director of Operational Test and Evaluation at the Pentagon, presented the missile defense section of the FY 2002 Annual Report. It states, “The GMD [Ground-Based Midcourse Defense] element has yet to demonstrate significant operational capability. The GMD test program in FY02 has suffered from the lack of production representative test articles and test infrastructure limitations.” A decision has been taken to deploy a GMD system by 2004 and some testing objectives are expected to be accomplished. However: “Key exceptions are demonstrating kill vehicle performance in the absence of detailed foreknowledge of target characteristics and against tumbling or off-normality deployed targets.”

The report refers to the on-going problem with booster vehicle rockets, which resulted in the MDA changing from Boeing to Lockheed Martin as lead contractor, as reported in the previous issue of BASIC’s Missile Defense Update. Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense (Aegis BMD) work is apparently still in its early stages as the test strategy “has been commensurate with the early maturity level of the system” and concludes: “There are significant capabilities yet to be demonstrated before the engagement conditions can be considered operationally realistic.”

Theater High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD), which is intended to intercept incoming ballistic missiles using kinetic energy “hit-to-kill” technology, has made limited progress but has no “operational capability because there is no deployable hardware.”

The Patriot (PAC-3) air-defense system tests were “adequate to assess [its] potential operational effectiveness, sustainability, survivability and lethality.” The Medium Extended Air Defense System (MEADS) is intended to be a highly mobile air defense system for the protection of deployed forces and fixed assets and is an international program for the United States, Germany and Italy. In 1996, NATO formed the MEADS Management Agency to lead program activity. However, it has not yet entered the design and development phase and “has demonstrated no operational capability to date.”

The Airborne Laser (ABL) is intended to shoot down ballistic missiles during their boost phase from modified Boeing 747s. During 2002, “the detection and tracking capabilities of the passive infrared sub-system were tested” with some success but it is too early to predict whether it will have “Battle Management” capability as: “There is currently no ABL emergency capability apart from some passive detection capabilities.”

In his conclusion, Thomas Christie indicated that the “business-as-usual” approach was inadequate “to meet the challenges of transforming the U.S. military”. Earlier in his introduction, he stated: “One of my chief concerns is the potential for systems to circumvent the rigorous acquisition process and enter into full-rate production or into the hands of our warfighters without learning the operational capabilities and limitations demonstrated by adequate operational testing and evaluation.”

Exemption from testing request

Senator Carl Levin (D-Mich.) revealed on February 13 that the Department of Defense had requested exemption from operational testing requirements in order to begin the deployment of Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) systems in 2004. The submission of a testing waiver had been quietly submitted at a hearing of the Senate Armed Services Committee as part of the DOD budget proposal for fiscal year 2004.

In a letter to Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Ca) wrote: I believe that any deployed missile defense system must meet the same requirements and standards that we set for all other fully operational weapons systems. Indeed, given the potential cost of a failure of missile defense, I believe that, if anything, it should be required to meet more stringent test standards than normally required.”

Last year, Rumsfeld gave the MDA unprecedented managerial autonomy and removed procurement procedures for new weapons programs. According to the Los Angeles Times, “Critics maintain the new independence and secrecy of what has become a vastly expanded missile defense program increases the chance that the Pentagon will spend ten of billions of dollars on an antimissile system that doesn’t work.”

On March 6 Senator Levin predicted that there would be “a real battle” in Congress over the proposed waiver as “That is going to be a very contentious issue.”

Developments overseas

In a Parliamentary statement on February 5, UK Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon said: "I am therefore replying today to the United States Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, conveying the Government's agreement to the US request." Thus, with minimal parliamentary and public debate according to the House of Commons Defence Committee, the Fylingdales Radar Station is to be upgraded for missile defence purposes. Defense. The 2004 military budget proposed that \$54 million be set aside for two interceptor missile flight tests with Japan, scheduled for FY05 and FY06. The system, if and when deployed, is supposedly for defense against missile attack from North Korea. Japan has also shown interest in sea-based systems.

Prime Minister John Howard believes Australia should participate in the missile defense program on offer from the United States and has admitted that interceptor missiles and laser weapons could be placed in his country despite objections from China.

Israel now has a new generation of Patriot anti-missile batteries and new Arrow interceptor missiles, which forms the only operational double-layered system in the world. The Patriot also interfaces with the short-to-medium range Hawk anti-aircraft system. A senior air force officer told reporters, "I believe this system could have protected New York."

The Danish government has indicated its willingness to follow the UK and accede to the upgrade of Thule Radar Station on Greenland. "It could be in Denmark's own political interest to respond positively to Washington's request, and it is not excluded that we in the long term might also want to be protected by a missile defense," a government report concluded. In a similar way to Geoff Hoon, this statement of support comes in advance of a formal response which is expected in late April or early May.

This announcement was not welcomed by Hans Enoksen, the parliamentary leader of semi-autonomous Greenland, who sent a letter of protest to Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen stating: "I find it incomprehensible that the Danish government choose to publish this report before it was even translated into Greenlandic. I think it is very difficult to accept that Copenhagen did not demonstrate a greater understanding of the importance of including Greenland's leaders in this."

VERENIGD KONINKRIJK

Guardian

Hoon under fire over star wars deal

Richard Norton-Taylor - Thursday January 30, 2003

MPs yesterday delivered a stinging attack on Geoff Hoon, the defence secretary, accusing him of stifling a debate on the decision to allow the US to use the Fylingdales radar base for its missile defence system.

The Commons defence committee said it "deplored" the way in which the Ministry of Defence handled the request to upgrade Fylingdales on the North York Moors. "It has shown no respect for either the views of those affected locally by the decision or for the arguments of those opposed to the upgrade in principle," it said.

It added: "Despite the secretary of state's unequivocal statement that he wanted the decision to be informed by public and parliamentary discussion, he has acted in a way that has effectively curtailed such discussions."

Mr Hoon told the Commons on January 15 that he had come to the "preliminary conclusion" that he should agree to the US request. That was barely a month after the MoD issued a "public discussion" paper and promised a proper debate on the issue.

Yesterday the defence committee disclosed that the MoD wants to give Washington its formal agreement by tomorrow. It said Mr Hoon had offered "no good reason" for his refusal to allow a proper public debate and urged him to publish more information, covering the timescale for the upgrade, and for its incorporation into the US missile defence system, and how the system would be able to track missiles.

In particular, it said the MoD should address the issue of radiation emissions and other local concerns about possible health hazards. "The MoD has not done as much as it could to present the full facts and explain carefully how such misgivings are misplaced," it said.

The MPs say the request did not simply involve a "technical upgrade" of Fylingdales computers. It involved a change to the purposes to which information collected by the radar would be put - not just to identify and track missiles, but to "support the capability of the interceptor missiles".

Upgrading Fylingdales requires an amendment to the US-British agreement covering American use of the radar base, the MPs said. A separate agreement would also be required if the US wanted to use its satellite space-based infra-red missile tracking system at Menwith Hill, in North Yorkshire, for the missile defence project.

The MPs said it was in Britain's interests to respond positively to the US request if Britain wanted to keep open the option of fully participating in a missile defence system in the future.

MOD responds to U.S. request to upgrade RAF Fylingdales

Press Notice no: 025/03 - 05 February 2003

The Secretary of State for Defence, Geoff Hoon, today responded to the United States' request to upgrade RAF Fylingdales.

In a written statement to the House of Commons, Mr Hoon said:

"On 17 December I informed the House of the receipt of a request from the United States Government to upgrade the early warning radar at Fylingdales for missile defence purposes.

"The Government has encouraged Parliamentary and public discussion of the issues involved. On 17 October, I informed the House of current work in the US on missile defence and, on 9 December, published a discussion paper, inviting interested parties to contribute their views. We have received a large number of responses both from individuals and organisations, and we have considered all contributions carefully. I have visited North Yorkshire to explain what the upgrade would involve and to hear at first hand the views of local people. We have engaged in initial discussions with the planning authorities. In an oral Statement on 15 January, I informed the House of the Government's preliminary conclusion that it was in the UK's interest to agree to the US request. I gave evidence to the Defence Select Committee on the same day and addressed points raised by hon Members in the Defence Debate on 22 January. I welcome the Select Committee's conclusion, in their report published on 29 January, that the UK should agree to the upgrade.

"In the course of these discussions we have been able to clarify that: the upgrade essentially comprises computer hardware and software modification, and involves no new development or change to the external appearance or power output of the radar; the radar will continue to fulfil its long-established Ballistic Missile Early Warning System (BMEWS) role; it will continue to be operated and staffed by the Royal Air Force, and we will continue to enjoy full access to its data; and the upgrade does not of itself commit the UK Government to any greater participation in the US missile defence programme. It does, however, keep open the prospect of acquiring missile defence capabilities for the UK, should we desire such protection at some point in the future. We will continue discussions with the local planning authorities on the detail of the upgrade work.

"I am now satisfied that we have been able to take fully into account the views of all interested parties in coming to a decision. I am therefore today replying to the United States Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, conveying the Government's agreement to the US request. We are separately negotiating a technical Memorandum of Understanding to give British industry the best possible opportunities to win work on the US programme."

Guardian

Hoon confirms Fylingdales star wars deal

Wednesday February 5, 2003

The British government today gave formal permission for the US to house an early warning system for its controversial national missile defence system at the Fylingdales base in North Yorkshire.

The official decision comes as no surprise after the defence secretary, Geoff Hoon, told MPs last month he was "minded" to give the US request the go-ahead.

However, Mr Hoon did not appear in person in the Commons today to announce his formal confirmation, instead announcing the move in a written answer.

In it he said he was "satisfied that we have been able to take fully into account the views of all interested parties in coming to a decision".

He added: "I am therefore today replying to the United States secretary of defence, Donald Rumsfeld, conveying the government's agreement to the US request."

Mr Hoon had told the Commons on January 15 that the government's preliminary conclusion was to allow the upgrade of the North York Moors base for the so-called "son of star wars" system.

Campaigners and some Labour backbenchers have argued that its use would make Britain a target for any rogue states whose missile attacks on the US it is designed to help foil.

The commons defence select committee also criticised the Ministry of Defence for not consulting properly with local people.

Mr Hoon today insisted there had been consultation both locally and through parliament, with him giving evidence to the defence committee and replying to a defence debate in the Commons on January 22.

He said he had been able now to clarify that the upgrade of the base - once famous for its golfball-style radar domes - would consist of changing computer software and hardware and would involve no new development. He added the changes would not involve any "change to the external appearance or power output of the radar". Mr Hoon went on: "The radar will continue to fulfil its long-established ballistic missile early warning system role, it will continue to be operated and staffed by the Royal Air Force and we will continue to enjoy full access to its data.

"The upgrade does not of itself commit the UK government to any greater participation in the US missile defence programme. It does, however, keep open the prospect of acquiring missile defence capabilities for the UK, should we desire such protection at some point in the future.

"We will continue discussions with the local planning authorities on the detail of the upgrade work."

The defence secretary said a memorandum of understanding would be negotiated with the US "to give British industry the best possible opportunities to win work on the US programme".

DENEMARKEN

BASIC

European Governments' Official Positions on Missile Defence

Paper on international security – nr. 42 – February 2003

[...]

Denmark and Missile Defence

By Kirsten Sparre

On 18 December 2002 the Danish government received an official request from the American Secretary of State, Colin Powell, to allow the US military to upgrade the early warning radar at the Thule Airbase in Greenland so it can become part of the planned American missile defense programme.

The request has ended the official wait-and-see policy of two successive Danish governments to postpone any real decision-making on the missile plans until such a time where the Americans might bring up the issue formally. Now the Danish government has committed itself to replying to the American request by April 2003 after a thorough public and parliamentary debate has taken place in Denmark and in Greenland.

There are going to be two equally important aspects to the coming debate. One is whether or not Denmark wants to be included in the missile defence project at all. The other rather more sensitive issue concerns the inclusion of the Thule Air Base in the project and who has the right to make decisions about the airbase.

Greenland

The American use of the Thule Air Base is based on the Defence Agreement of 1951 between Denmark and the United States. The agreement was made at a time when Greenland was a Danish colony. However, in 1979 home rule was introduced in Greenland, and in November 2002 a unanimous Greenland Foreign Affairs and Security Committee informed the Danish government that any further development of the Thule Air Base facilities may only take place following a new defence agreement which replaces the Defence Agreement of 1951 between Denmark and the United States and recognises Greenland as an equal partner in a new defence treaty. So far neither Denmark nor the US have been willing to consider a new defence agreement but have only stated a guarded willingness to consider small changes and amendments.

January 2003 saw the collapse of a newly formed government coalition in Greenland between the Inuit Ataqatigiit and Siumut parties. It was later replaced by another coalition of the Siumut and the liberal Atassut parties. The coalition agreement contains an ambition to draw up a new defence agreement to replace the 1951 agreement, but it does not specifically address the issue of the use of the Thule Airbase. However, Josef Møtsfeldt of the Inuit Ataqatigiit informed Colin Powell in November 2002 that an upgrade of the Thule Air Base will not be allowed if Greenland considers it a threat to world peace or likely to lead to a new arms race.

Denmark

In Denmark, the minority coalition government consisting of the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party is positive about the American missile defence plans particularly because the protection eventually will be extended to Europe. The government's main parliamentary support, the Danish People's Party, has also welcomed the American request and urges a quick and positive Danish reply.

However, the government wants a broad consensus in Parliament on the missile defence plans as well as the inclusion of the Thule Air Base in the new system, and the views of other parties are therefore very important to the final outcome.

Two left-wing parties have already spoken out against the plans and the main opposition party, the Socialdemocrats, together with two small centre parties are very sceptical about the proposal. The Socialdemocrats fear that the missile defence plans will lead to a new arms race and are concerned that it will not be able to address the problems of terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The smaller parties are concerned that the missile defence system will use resources that would be better spent on development assistance.

Agence France-Presse

Greenland furious over Danish move on US missile defense

Agence France-Presse - March 5, 2003

Nuuk - Political leaders in Greenland, a Danish semi-autonomous territory, were in an uproar Wednesday after the government in faraway Copenhagen said it was ready to approve US plans for a controversial missile defence shield.

The head of Greenland's local government, Hans Enoksen, said he had sent a letter of protest to Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen.

Denmark announced on Tuesday in a report that it was ready to allow Washington to modernise its radar station on Greenland as part of plans to develop the controversial National Missile Defense (NMD) programme.

But Greenland's 57,000 residents generally oppose the US plan because they fear it will put their island at the centre of a new conflict.

The United States has formally asked Denmark to allow a technical upgrading of the Cold War-era Thule base, in the northwest of the Arctic island, thought to be one of the major listening posts required for the shield to be operational.

The Danish government said in its report that it was in favour of the US request, but it had not yet taken a final decision.

Enoksen said he was disappointed and frustrated by the contents of the report, which was compiled without any input from Greenlanders.

"We would have liked a document that presented the different points of view on this missile defense shield and this report did not do it," Enoksen said in a statement.

"I find it incomprehensible that the Danish government chose to publish this report before it was even translated into Greenlandic. I think it is very difficult to accept that Copenhagen did not demonstrate a greater understanding of the importance of including Greenland's leaders in this," he said.

Greenland's opposition far-left IA Party has called for large demonstrations to take place on Monday in Greenland to protest against Danish Foreign Minister Per Stig Moeller's visit to Nuuk to discuss Copenhagen's stance.

The Danish government is expected to announce its formal decision at the end of April or early May, according to government officials, but it is known to be favourable to the US plan.

The government has stressed the shield's use as a defense weapon, thereby rejecting Greenlanders' concerns that it would increase instability in the world and fears that their participation would make Greenland a target of "rogue" states.

A member of NATO, Copenhagen said in the report it was convinced it must contribute to the United States' security in order to be in a better position to one day discuss the possibility of a missile defense shield for Europe with NATO allies.

The Thule base, built in 1951 as an early warning station in the event of a Soviet nuclear missile strike on the West, still provides a surveillance operation for the northern hemisphere.

Copenhagen Post

Government geared for yes-vote on Missile Defence

7 March 2003

Denmark is leaning toward a yes-vote on the current US request to use Greenland's Thule Air Base for its Missile Defence (MD) program

The Danish government is leaning toward a clear yes to a US request to expand the Thule Radar as part of a future, US-sponsored Missile Defence (MD) program, according to a government report issued Tuesday.

The government's report notes that Denmark may have independent political interests in supporting the American request. In the long term, the government says, Denmark may have a legitimate military need for missile defence coverage.

A vote in favour of the US request could enable Denmark to contribute to US security. At the same time, Denmark and its European partners in NATO could gain better insight into the possibility of an additional missile shield to cover Europe.

'Security is achieved in partnership. Denmark stands to benefit from a collective security guarantee in NATO. We must ensure that this security guarantee remains as credible as possible,' the government stated, noting that Great Britain has already agreed to the US request to upgrade its radar station in Fylingdales.

The government insists that missile defence is a defensive weapon alone, and says there is no reason to believe that MD would further destabilize the global security situation. The government dismissed concerns that Greenland will become a target for rogue states, if the Thule Base is included under a missile defence agreement.

Foreign Minister Per Stig Møller will travel next week to Greenland, to be followed in the near future by members of parliament's Foreign Policy Committee.

Denmark is expected to reach a final decision on the US request in late April or early May.

Copenhagen Post

Signs of progress in deadlocked Greenland negotiations

11 March 2003

A slow move forward: signs of reconciliation are reported at Monday's meeting between Foreign Minister Per Stig Møller and Greenlandic PM Hans Enoksen in Thule

Despite frigid temperatures in Thule yesterday, there were tenuous signs of a thaw in negotiations between Denmark and Greenland on the use of Thule Air Base as part of the US Missile Defence (MD) program.

According to Greenland's Radioavis, yesterday's meeting between Foreign Minister Per Stig Møller and Greenlandic home-rule PM Hans Enoksen proceeded so positively that there is now real hope of a joint position, prior to the Danish government's final decision to grant the Americans the use of Thule Radar Base in deflecting missiles from rogue states.

A central point of contention in the ongoing talks is the 1951 Danish-American defence agreement, signed when Greenland was still a Danish colony. The agreement gives the Americans broad military rights throughout Greenland. Greenlandic politicians have, up to now, been firm in their insistence on a total redrafting of the defence agreement: a demand neither the US nor the Danish government appears likely to accommodate. Instead, Per Stig Møller has suggested several key amendments to the existing agreement, changing the tone of several phrases so that Greenland seems less a pawn and bridgehead for American military interests.

"My party is no longer fixed on the demand for renegotiation. An appendix to the existing agreement may be the way forward," said the chairman of the Greenlandic parliament's Foreign Committee, Jensine Berthelsen.

After his stay in Thule, Per Stig Møller will proceed later today to Nuuk. Several groups have forewarned mass demonstrations against Møller in the city, and police have tightened security after receiving anonymous death threats against the Danish Foreign Minister.

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

Conference on Disarmament

'Five ambassadors' formally present initiative to end five years of deadlock in Commission on Disarmament

23 January 2003

A group of five Ambassadors to the Conference on Disarmament - all former Presidents of the Conference - officially presented today an initiative in an attempt to break a five-year deadlock and enable the Conference to agree on a programme of work, the Conference Secretariat has announced.

Ambassadors Mohamed Salah Dembri of Algeria, Jean Lint of Belgium, Juan Enrique Vega of Chile, Camilo Reyes of Colombia and Henrik Salander of Sweden introduced the proposal at this morning's plenary of the Conference on Disarmament.

Since 1999, the Conference has not been able to agree on a programme of work. To break the deadlock, the five non-aligned and western ambassadors undertook, in July 2002, consultations with delegations on the basis of a draft they circulated. On August 29, 2002, they issued the results as a non-paper for a programme of work. This morning the document was presented as an official proposal. Members of the group said the proposal's "progressive character" leaves it open for amendments by CD members in efforts to reach an agreement on a programme of work. The Conference works by consensus and may only proceed when all 66 member States agree.

The proposal calls for the establishment of four ad hoc committees on the topics of negative security assurances; nuclear disarmament; a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices; and prevention of an arms race in outer space (PAROS).

The initiative also calls for appointment of three Special Coordinators on the topics of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons, such as radiological weapons; a comprehensive programme of disarmament; and transparency in armaments.

Basing itself on previous proposals, the initiative is an attempt to bridge the gaps between member States of the Conference on the main stumbling blocks of prevention of an arms race in outer space and nuclear disarmament.

The so-called "Five Ambassadors' Initiative" has received considerable interest and support, its authors report, and has created hopes that the momentum which it has triggered will gather strength and allow the Conference to end the stalemate in its work early in its 2003 session.

Formal introduction of the initiative at today's plenary follows on a message of 21 January 2003 to the 25th Session of the Conference delivered by UNOG Director-General Sergei Ordzhonikidze on behalf of United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan. Mr. Annan's message stated in part: "I welcome any proposals aimed at fostering consensus on the programme of work, such as those presented during the 2002 session, especially the unprecedented cross-group initiative of five former Presidents of the Conference. These efforts have given rise to new hopes for dealing with the issues of nuclear disarmament and the prevention of an arms race in outer space."

Conference on Disarmament

Conference on Disarmament debates Middle East, North Korean withdrawal from Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, other topics

30 January 2003

A series of national representatives addressed the Conference on Disarmament this morning as a statement by Israel was followed by a debate on the Middle East conflict and as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and other states sparred over North Korea's announced withdrawal on 10 January from the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT).

Other speakers called variously for universal accession to the Ottawa Convention on anti-personnel landmines; for support for a proposal tabled last week to enable the Conference to agree on a programme of work for the first time since 1999; and for further subscribers to an International Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation, a code established at an international meeting at The Hague last November.

A pre-scheduled statement by Israel which touched -- among other things -- on the issues of terrorism and the threat of terrorists obtaining weapons of mass destruction drew responses from Iraq, Algeria, and Syria. Iraq and Syria charged that Israel had not taken steps toward nuclear disarmament and contended that those resisting Israel's occupation of the Palestinian territories were not "terrorists".

Included in a statement by Argentina on a series of disarmament topics was an appeal to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to reconsider its 10 January announcement to withdraw from the NPT, spurring a give-and-take between North Korea, the United States, the Republic of Korea, Japan, and Sweden.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea contended that withdrawal from the treaty had been caused by a "hostile policy" against the country by the United States, and was solely a bilateral issue to be resolved by negotiations with the United States. The United States termed the withdrawal an international issue -- an opinion seconded by the Republic of Korea and Japan -- and said easing tension on the Korean peninsula required a halt by North Korea of its nuclear programme and a return by that country to the non-proliferation regime.

With Sweden, which is chairing the preparatory committee for the next NPT review conference, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea debated whether it was still a party to the Treaty, since its withdrawal was announced on 10 January and NPT rules prescribe a 90-day period between announcement and actual withdrawal. Sweden said North Korea remained bound by the pact; North Korea claimed its withdrawal was effective 11 January.

Participants in both the Middle East and NPT debates noted repeatedly that the Conference, which is dedicated to multilateral disarmament negotiations, was not the proper forum for such discussions.

Also speaking at today's plenary meeting were representatives of the Netherlands, Austria, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Belgium, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Peru.

Statements

ALREDO CHIARADIA (Argentina) said Argentina attached particular importance to enhancing international security through strengthening the regimes on the banning and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as well as working towards consensus on arms control. Argentina applauded Cuba on its accession to the Tlatelolco Treaty through which it had now joined the nuclear-weapons-free area and expanded it to include all the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty was an essential instrument, and it was essential that it should be universally applied. On 14 January, Argentina had encouraged the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to reconsider its decision to withdraw from the NPT. Argentina reiterated its appeal for the necessary signatures and ratifications to ensure the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), the immediate launching of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a fissile-material cut-off treaty and the establishment of an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament.

It was vital that global norms be established which both restricted the proliferation of missiles and prompted a worldwide culture that opposed ballistic missiles, Mr. Chiaradia said; Argentina supported the view that the relevant International Code of Conduct should be universal in scope. It supported the establishment of a subsidiary body under the Conference on Disarmament to consider issues related to the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects. Argentina's Chairmanship role in the Missile Technology Control Regime for the period 2003-04 reflected the great importance it attached to export controls as part of its policy on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It also thought it of fundamental importance to reaffirm the right of States to the development of peaceful space programmes.

Argentina fully subscribed to the basic mission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and remained fully committed to the process of strengthening the Biological Weapons Convention, Mr. Chiaradia said. It considered the development of transparency and confidence-building measures to be a matter of fundamental importance, and at last year's 11th meeting of the Permanent Committee on Bilateral Security, Chile and Argentina had approved the common standardized methodology for measuring defense spending agreed upon between the two countries, which served as a model for the region as a whole. It should further be noted that the MERCOSUR countries, together with Chile and Bolivia, had proclaimed their region free of anti-personnel landmines. Argentina would continue to campaign actively for the unanimous international acceptance of the Ottawa Convention.

In addition to general political will, Mr. Chiaradia said, great efforts would be required to enable the Conference on Disarmament to resume meaningful substantive arms negotiations.

YAAKOV LEVY (Israel) said establishment of peace in the Middle East should be accompanied and strengthened by confidence-building measures and arrangements regarding conventional weapons, culminating in the eventual establishment of a mutually verifiable zone free of ballistic missiles and of biological, chemical and nuclear weapons. The absence of recognition, lack of direct contact, and the refusal of some States to accept the right of one State in the region to exist undermined the attainment of confidence

and trust. It was therefore Israel's strong belief that the regional context should be the primary and essential framework for advancing critical arms control measures, predicated on a comprehensive and durable peace in the Middle East. In recent years Israel had sought to lay the foundation for peace and stability, among other things through bilateral peace treaties with Egypt in 1979 and Jordan in 1994.

Israel was aware of the difficulties and disagreements regarding the programme of work of the Conference, Mr. Levy said; it had followed carefully the different proposals that had been made, and when one of these was broadly accepted, primarily by the relevant parties to the current disagreement, Israel would determine its position on the merits.

Israel unfortunately had been at the forefront of countries victimized by terrorism, Mr. Levy said; terror had recently taken the unbelievable form of young people, brainwashed by their peers, committing the ultimate insanity of suicide bombings in crowded places. Terror also had taken the form of cross-border attacks and hijackings and attacks on civil aviation. Terror had become a strategic weapon not only in the Middle East but around the world. The danger of a link between terrorism and weapons of mass destruction cast a dark shadow, and there existed a real danger that countries that nurtured terrorism as a tool of diplomacy would provide terrorist groups with non-conventional weapons. The threat of even unconventional attacks had become a normal aspect of daily life in Israel. During the Gulf War 12 years ago, under the orders of the same leader who today was the cause of regional and worldwide instability, Israel had been the target of 39 unprovoked missile attacks. This was the same leader who had used chemical weapons against his own countrymen and had threatened on more than one occasion to use non-conventional weapons against Israel. It was important for member States of the Conference to reflect on the true purpose of their work; disarmament was a fragile and indispensable tool for ensuring the security and well-being of the world. All needed to live up to the Conference's great responsibility.

CHRIS SANDERS (Netherlands) said that to address the rapidly growing problem of ballistic missile proliferation, an International Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation had been launched at The Hague on 25 and 26 November 2002; already the number of subscribing States stood at 101. The Code reflected the outcome of broad-based consultations and represented the widest possible common ground. The Code had achieved its two main purposes: to establish certain fundamental principles regarding missiles where previously there were none; and to set up a framework for further work. The Netherlands had been appointed to serve as the first Chair of the Code until the next regular meeting of Subscribing States this autumn.

Considering the number of complex issues to be elaborated under the Code, it also had been decided to have an ad hoc inter-sessional meeting, open to all Subscribing States, in the first half of 2003, Mr. Sanders said. The meeting would attempt to elaborate on a number of issues regarding the implementation of the Code, including confidence-building measures. The Code was open for further subscription. Once countries subscribed, they could participate in the further development of the Code. The Netherlands hoped the Code would grow and provide the basis for further work to combat the proliferation of ballistic missiles. The Code had been sent to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for distribution. The Netherlands also would send it to the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and request him to circulate it, along with the list of Subscribing States, as official documents of the Conference.

WOLFGANG PETRITSCH (Austria), speaking on behalf of the Human Security Network, of which Austria was the current Chair, said that on 12 September 2002, the Network had issued a Declaration on promoting the universalization of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. Partners and Observers of the Network said in the Declaration that they remained strongly committed to further strengthening of the humanitarian norm established by the Convention. The Declaration stressed members' conviction that no conceivable military utility could possibly outweigh and justify the devastating humanitarian costs of anti-personnel mines. It emphasized the desirability of universal ratification of the Convention. It welcomed the recent ratifications or accessions by Chile, Algeria, Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Nigeria and Suriname and was encouraged by steps taken by other States to be formally bound by the Convention, including Greece, Turkey and Afghanistan.

The number of States that had declared their will to be bound by the Convention now stood at 131 after only three and a half years, Mr. Petritsch said. The Network urged those States that were not yet so bound to accede to the Convention as soon as possible and to abide by the norm it contained until they did so. In his capacity as Co-Chair of the Standing Committee of the General Status and Operation of the Convention, he wished to remind everyone that the first working week of the inter-sessional programme of work of the Convention would take place next week on the premises of the World Meteorological Organization, and encouraged all to participate in this work.

MOHAMMAD REZA ALBORZI (Islamic Republic of Iran), speaking on behalf of the Group of 21, said the Group stressed that the Conference's programme of work should be responsive to the interests and priorities of

all its members and expressed its concern that the Conference had been unable to undertake substantive work on the basis of an agreed programme of work since 1999, in spite of the demonstrated flexibility shown by the Group and the number of formal and informal proposals introduced by some of its members. The Group reaffirmed its proposal contained in CD/1570 and CD/1571 on a programme of work and a draft decision and mandate for the establishment of an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament. The group emphasized that nuclear disarmament remained the highest priority of the Conference. It further expressed its serious concern about the lack of progress following the unequivocal undertaking by nuclear-weapons States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals. The Group expressed its conviction that efforts for the conclusion of a universal and legally binding instrument on security assurances to non-nuclear weapons States should be pursued.

The Group was convinced of the need for a multilaterally negotiated, universal, comprehensive and non-discriminatory approach towards missiles in all their aspects, the Ambassador said. Pending the achievement of such a mechanism, any initiative to address such concerns should be through an inclusive process in a forum where all States could participate as equals, such as the Conference. The Group was also deeply concerned about the progressive erosion of multilateralism and emphasized the importance of collective international efforts to enhance and maintain international peace and security. The Group urged other groups to show matching flexibility and called upon the President of the Conference to intensify efforts to find agreement on a programme of work.

JEAN LINT (Belgium) said that as Chairman of the Fourth Assembly of States to the Convention on the elimination of anti-personnel landmines, he had sent invitations to the first consultative meeting that would take place in Room XXII at 10 a.m. tomorrow. All were invited to the meeting and welcome at it.

A representative of Venezuela said Venezuela wished to express its support for the "Five Ambassadors" initiative for a programme of work. The initiative had undeniable merit, and it was flexible enough to provide a real chance for the Conference to reach agreement and resume its work.

A representative of Ecuador said Ecuador reiterated its deep concern over the stagnation in the Conference. It was discouraging, as this forum had a vital role to play. Disarmament agreements were sorely needed in the world. Countless efforts had been made and proposals put forward by the Group of 21 to enable the Conference to adopt a programme of work and begin substantive negotiations. It was the duty of the Conference to ensure that multilateralism prevailed in the current world climate, and the Five Ambassadors' initiative was a laudable effort to achieve a programme of work; it was flexible and left room for improvement. It was an opportunity that should not be wasted. Ecuador supported the draft and appealed to all the main parties concerned to support this effort to break the stalemate in the Conference.

A representative of Iraq said it was necessary to reply to what was said by the Ambassador of Israel. Israel, while showing no restraint itself, wished to forbid other people from doing as they wished. Israel had put forward inaccurate statements. The international community had not seen any real, practical steps taken by Israel to disarm in the nuclear field. As all knew, Israel had nuclear weapons. It had signed the treaties prohibiting chemical and biological weapons, and yet no one knew where its stocks of those weapons were. Israel complained that it was subjected to terrorist actions yet forgot that it had annexed the territories of other countries, had erected unlawful settlements and killed women and children. When people resisted such an invasion, there were called "terrorists". Whereas Israel claimed it had peaceful goals, it constantly pursued expansionist designs that violated international standards and Security Council resolutions. Since Israel's house was made of glass, it shouldn't throw any stones.

A representative of Peru said the proposal for a programme of work put forward by the "Five Ambassadors" was a rational, reasonable, basically balanced proposal. Peru therefore supported it. The initiative was flexible and could be adjusted as needed. Peru would elaborate its stand further in future statements.

A representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea said his country's withdrawal from the Non-Proliferation Treaty was a self-defense measure in response to the unfair resolution adopted by the IEAE against the DPRK, which unfairly infringed on North Korea's sovereignty. The DPRK did not have the intention to produce nuclear weapons, as it had said when it declared its intention to withdraw from the NPT. It could confirm this through separate verification by the United States. The matter in fact was a bilateral problem between the DPRK and the U.S. Having other international fora get involved would not help solve the problem. Taking one-sided attitudes would not help, either. Encouragement for solving the dilemma was what was needed, not one-sided criticism.

A representative of Algeria said that following that statements made by Israel and Iraq he wished his remarks to be understood as free of any polemical elements. But he felt some sadness that his distinguished colleague of Israel should have presented a strong statement. He wished the representative of Israel could have announced, for example, that his country had decided to submit to inspections by the IAEA. He would have welcomed a statement from Iraq stating that Iraq would comply with relevant Security Council resolutions. He

could only hope that these announcements would be made in the countries' next statements. All condemned terrorism, and Algeria had suffered from terrorism long before 11 September, and in the face of universal indifference. All were affected by all civilian victims of terrorism. The Conference was here to work through peaceful dialogue and to build international peace and security. It was time to see beyond the prevailing arguments to the opportunities in the region of the Middle East for peace, such as those broached by the Beirut Summit. Israel's exercise of memory about efforts at peace had been somewhat selective, moreover -- what about the Oslo agreement, for example? Why had Israel skipped over that agreement? Was it that the Oslo agreement was no longer being adhered to?

The representative of Israel, responding, said the statement he had made outlined Israel's views and policies in relation to the Conference. There were sufficient fora elsewhere for discussing the wild accusations launched by the representative of Iraq and the more reasoned issues raised by the representative of Algeria. Israel could discuss terrorism with similar concern and compassion as that expressed by the representative of Algeria. Israel did feel the Oslo Agreement had been abrogated -- by one party, the Palestinian State. But these issues were more for other fora of the United Nations, not for the Conference on Disarmament.

A representative of the United States said that in response to the remarks of the representative of the DPRK, he wished to underscore that the withdrawal of the DPRK from the NPT was not solely a bilateral matter between the United States and DPRK. It was a threat to the peace and stability of north Asia and a threat to the nuclear non-proliferation regime and was of deep concern to the entire international community. The United States called on North Korea to cease entirely its nuclear programme and to return to the international non-proliferation regime. It welcomed today's statement that North Korea had no intention of producing nuclear weapons. A return to the NPT would help to reassure the international community on this matter.

A representative of Syria said that as if the dilemma of the Conference in not being able to resume its work was not bad enough, the representative of Israel had complicated the matter by talking about things that had nothing to do with this forum. Syria did not want to raise any polemics, but wanted to shed light on some points. Syria, along with other Arab States, condemned terrorism in all its forms, and particularly State terrorism, a form at which Israel had distinguished itself. Israel's acquisition of nuclear weapons was a huge danger to its neighbours and to the region as a whole. Israel not only had these weapons but had means of delivering them to all the countries of the Middle East. And it refused to open its facilities to inspection.

Israel talked of being exposed to terrorism, but when one looked at the Israeli statement today it sounded like what Israel itself was practicing -- attacks, cross-border attacks, hijackings. . . Who was actually perpetrating all this? Who was attacking its neighbours? Israel had attacked Egypt in 1956; it had attacked in 1967 its Arab neighbourly countries; it had attacked Lebanon twice and occupied its territories. Who had attacked an Egyptian airliner and downed it, and a Libyan airliner? Israel had. Israeli mercenaries had abducted Palestinians across borders, and these people were still in detention. Who had led the suicide bombers to the "insanity" the Israeli representative mentioned?

The representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea said the U.S. had said the DPRK's withdrawal was an international issue, but the DPRK saw it otherwise. The withdrawal was caused by U.S. hostility to the DPRK, and so had to be resolved by bilateral negotiations. The U.S., in bringing in the international element, was trying to confuse the issue. The DPRK's withdrawal from the NPT would pose no threat to the region once the DPRK's sovereignty was respected. The withdrawal had resulted from an increase in the U.S.'s hostile policy against the DPRK. The U.S. could help matters by signing a non-aggression treaty with the DPRK.

The representative of Israel said this was not the place for polemics on the situation in the Middle East; there were other fora for that. And he would not therefore go into the history of Syrian aggression in the region, nor would he go into details about the Syrian regime's atrocities against its own citizens and against people in other countries. He would however, read the names of 10 terrorist organizations based in Syria, along with the names of their leaders. It would be a pleasure for the Conference if the Syrian Government took action to close the offices of these organizations and to arrest these leaders of terrorist organizations. This would be much more productive than any eloquent speech Syria could deliver.

The representative of Syria said the drift in this debate was away from disarmament, and this was sad. Perhaps it was because the representative of Israel wished to avoid mention of Israel's nuclear arsenal, let alone discussion of whether Israel would allow inspections of its nuclear facilities. In his other remarks, the Israeli representative had turned truth upside down. The Palestinians mentioned were present in Damascus because Israel was occupying Palestine. If Israel would leave, they would not be in Syria. These groups were protecting Palestinians' right to an independent State and to self-determination. Despite the accusations made, there were only information offices in Syria related to Palestine, and this was a legitimate activity.

A representative of the Republic of Korea said the Republic of Korea did not think the Conference on Disarmament was the proper forum for discussing North Korea's recent decision to withdraw from the NPT.

However, he felt he had to respond. The Republic of Korea regarded North Korea's recent steps as an unacceptable and serious breach of its international agreements. These steps were truly an international issue and not just a bilateral matter between North Korea and the United States. They were a challenge to the region and to the international non-proliferation regime. North Korea was called upon to retract its decision to withdraw from the NPT, to completely dismantle its nuclear-weapons programme, and to comply fully with its safeguards agreement with the IAEA. The 6 January resolution of the IAEA on the matter had been adopted by consensus by 45 members of the IAEA's Board of Governors. South Korea welcomed the statement today by North Korea that it did not have the intention of producing nuclear weapons. It called on North Korea to respond to the various international initiatives made in a positive and prompt manner.

The representative of Israel said he wished to remind the Syrian Ambassador that this was not the Commission on Human Rights; the Commission provided six weeks for exchanging these barbs. But he wished to state that the political and electoral procedure in Israel was free and democratic; he would recommend its establishment in the country the Syrian Ambassador represented. It might prove a useful and enlightening innovation.

The representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea said the country's withdrawal from the NPT was an exercise of its right to do so according to the terms of the treaty. It was quite wrong that someone asked the DPRK, which was now not a member, to adhere to the treaty. Instead of asking for a reversal of the withdrawal, he hoped that South Korea would ask the United States to withdraw all nuclear weapons so that the Korean peninsula could be turned into a nuclear-free zone.

A representative of Japan said Japan shared the view of the United States as expressed this morning on the issue of security in East Asia. But she agreed with all members of the Conference, including the DPRK, on the claim that the Conference was not the most appropriate forum for discussing this issue. She further agreed that this problem was to be solved in East Asia through dialogue and other peaceful means.

The representative of Syria said he had not talked about the political regime or the elections in Israel; he had talked about the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Israel, not the electoral process. With their ideas, they had inspired the one who had killed Prime Minister Rabin. That was what he had said. How Israel managed its elections was a matter of its own sovereignty and Syria had nothing to say about that.

The representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea said that in response to the statement of Japan, the issue on the Korean peninsula was a matter between North Korea and the United States. No one could solve the issue as long as the hostile policy of the U.S. was unchanged. All members of the Conference were called upon to ask the two sides to sit together and reach a peaceful solution to the problem.

The representative of Israel said that for the record, the accusation made by the Syrian Ambassador just now, and others he had made, were false.

The representative of Sweden said that as current Chairman on the preparatory committee on the NPT, he wished to correct an incorrect statement made by the DPRK on the terms of the NPT. The DPRK, under the rules of the treaty, was still a member of the NPT.

The representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea said that since the issue had been raised, he wished to make it clear that the DPRK was no longer a member of the NPT, following its withdrawal declaration earlier this month, on 10 January. The decision to withdraw was effective 11 January.

The representative of Japan said the United States appeared, as she understood it, to be seeking dialogue and a peaceful solution to the issue of North Korea's withdrawal from the NPT.

The representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea said the "peaceful solution" mentioned by the U.S. was not the real solution. The U.S. had asked North Korea, always, to move first, by disarming itself; but with an empty hand it could not negotiate with the U.S. as long as the U.S.'s hostile policy against the DPRK remained. The U.S. had no reason not to accept this simple demand; it could easily solve the problem peacefully if it wished to.

The representative of Sweden again stated that States parties to the NPT did not recognize that it was possible to "save" parts of the 90-day withdrawal procedure from one occasion to another. Thus the DPRK was still a party to the treaty.

The representative of Japan said she wished to repeat that she agreed that the Conference was not the most appropriate forum for the discussion of these issues. All had a vested interest in preserving the Conference as a very important and meaningful and constructive place of multilateralism and dialogue. It was not a good idea to create excessive difficulties here that would hinder delegations from the enormous mission the Conference was supposed to be addressing.

The representative of the United States said the U.S. was interested in pursuing a peaceful diplomatic solution to the situation and had no hostile intent against North Korea. A discussion was needed based on the parties agreeing to and returning to and following and implementing their international commitments.

The representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea said this was, indeed, not the proper forum for discussing these matters. North Korea repeated again that it was no longer a party to the NPT, as in 1993 it had informed the relevant authorities that it had withdrawn. Ninety days was normally the period, but its withdrawal back then was also recognized by the U.S. and the Security Council, and had thus accepted North Korea's unique status under the NPT. Based on that precedent and its Jan. 10 withdrawal this year, the country was not longer a party to the treaty.

US State Department

**Statement by Stephen G. Rademaker - U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Arms Control
"The Commitment of the United States to Effective Multilateralism"
To the Conference on Disarmament
Geneva - February 13, 2003**

It is a great pleasure for me to appear before the Conference on Disarmament for the first time. Let me begin by extending my best wishes to the President, Ambassador Sood, for a productive term of office.

In this, my first speech before this body, I intend to lay out my government's vision of the role of multilateralism in promoting international peace and security.

No one here needs to be reminded that we live in perilous times, confronting dangers that multilateral institutions such as the Conference on Disarmament are uniquely adapted to address. These dangers are not just on the minds of diplomats here in Geneva, and in New York and Vienna. A casual glance at today's headlines demonstrates that these dangers are the great preoccupation of our age. They include, to name just a few, the development and concealment of weapons of mass destruction programs in Iraq, nuclear weapons programs in North Korea, terrorism such as we witnessed on September 11, 2001, and perhaps the biggest fear of all, the risk that terrorists may one day soon acquire weapons of mass destruction of their own.

Regrettably, the CD has for six years failed to agree on how to move forward to address the dangers of weapons of mass destruction -- or any other arms control challenges for that matter. It has become fashionable in some circles to criticize the United States for pursuing a policy of what is referred to as "unilateralism." Those who make this charge, of course, counsel my nation to follow instead the path of "multilateralism". Obviously, if they are referring to multilateralism of the kind we have seen here at the CD for the past six years, the United States can be forgiven for wanting to try something different. Indeed, I would suggest that if multilateralism of the type we have witnessed here were to persist within the CD and spread to other multilateral institutions, we would all soon be unilateralists, or at least something other than multilateralists.

On behalf of my government, however, I reject any suggestion that the United States is not committed to multilateral means of achieving policy goals. To the contrary, properly understood, our policies are profoundly multilateralist. If current U.S. policy differs at all from U.S. policy in the past, it is a result of our recognition that, in the post-Cold War era, multilateralism is more important than ever, and that without leadership -- without backbone -- multilateralism is predictably condemned to failure. In a number of recent instances where we thought it necessary, we have chosen to provide the leadership -- the backbone -- required for multilateralism to succeed. Our insistence that multilateralism be effective may not always make us popular, but it hardly makes us "unilateralist."

Take, for instance, the matter of Iraq. For almost 12 years, the Iraqi regime has defied the United Nations Security Council. In 1991, the United Nations deployed weapons inspectors to Iraq, and for years the work of the inspectors was obstructed and the mandate of the Security Council defied. Iraq's work on weapons of mass destruction may have been slowed down, but it never stopped. United Nations sanctions were supposed to prevent this from happening, but over time those sanctions, like the inspectors themselves, increasingly came to be viewed in some quarters as part of the problem rather than as part of the solution. Iraq finally ceased all cooperation with inspectors in December 1998, effectively terminating their mission in Iraq.

This is not a record that any true supporter of multilateralism can point to with pride, and certainly it is not a record that can give comfort to anyone concerned about the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It was not until this past November, after increasing pressure initiated by the United States, that the United Nations finally decided to squarely confront Iraq's defiance of the international community. Almost two months of difficult negotiations -- working closely with our Security Council partners -- culminated in the unanimous passage of Resolution 1441, which declared Iraq in material breach of its obligations, strengthened inspectors' authorities, and warned that Iraq should seize its final opportunity to disarm or risk facing "serious consequences."

Five days after Resolution 1441's passage, Iraq accepted the return of inspectors and the terms of the Resolution. It was not a sudden change of heart or a strategic decision to disarm on the part of Saddam Hussein that prompted Iraq to acquiesce. Rather, it was the unified resolve of the Security Council to confront Iraq and threaten the use of force if Iraq continued to defy its responsibilities.

In spite of the Security Council's will and the resumption of inspections, Iraq continues to evade its disarmament obligations. To date, it has failed both key tests laid out in Resolution 1441: to provide a current, accurate and complete declaration of its WMD programs and to cooperate fully and actively with inspectors. Iraq remains and, indeed, is in further material breach of its international obligations.

The United States has stayed the multilateral course over the last three months even as Iraq has attempted to pick and choose the terms of its compliance and throw sand into the collective eyes of the United Nations. We have provided the inspectors intelligence, analysis, personnel, and logistical support. We have urged them to utilize the full range of their authorities so as to improve the chances of verifiable and peaceful Iraqi disarmament. Regrettably, as the inspectors themselves have stated to the Security Council, and I quote, "Iraq appears not to have come to a genuine acceptance -- not even today -- of the disarmament that was demanded of it and which it needs to carry out to win the confidence of the world and to live in peace."

The United States and other like-minded nations were essential in creating the conditions that allowed Iraq a final opportunity to disarm. In its warning of "serious consequences," the Security Council knew precisely that the moment might come to deliver on the threat of force. It was as true in November as it is now that the United States understands the importance of a unified, multilateral approach to Iraq. We want the UN process to work, but in order for it to do so, words must be fully backed by concrete action. We want a peaceful solution in Iraq, but we also recognize that Iraq cannot be allowed to indefinitely flout the will of the Council and thus undermine its credibility. Like our Security Council colleagues, we have the responsibility to face up to the challenges set before us and demonstrate the relevance of the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security.

We are well aware of the debate within the Security Council on how to proceed with Iraq. Today we hear many voices arguing that so much progress has been made since last November that we should give the inspections process more time, months or years if necessary. This argument assumes, of course, that the United States can be counted on in the months and years ahead to continue providing the backbone that has finally forced Saddam Hussein to take the United Nations more seriously than he has in years.

The United States appreciates the confidence that others appear to have in our staying power. It is important to remember, however, that the United States is a volunteer in this matter. The United Nations does not usually turn away volunteers. Indeed, the United Nations typically has too few volunteers, not too many -- witness the problems the United Nations encounters whenever it considers setting up a new peacekeeping operation. As a volunteer, our patience is limited, to say nothing of the resources and the willingness of the American people to sustain the current level of commitment to solving what is only one of many serious problems of this nature. It therefore is time for the United Nations to take a stand, to demonstrate its relevance to the international community's collective security.

Having come this far, the United States will not turn back. But we cannot wait much longer to conclude this matter, and when we conclude it, we expect to be in coalition with a large group of like-minded nations. No doubt words will be found to describe those who remain aloof from this coalition, but one term that most assuredly will not be used to describe them is "multilateralist."

Another example of the commitment of the United States to effective multilateralism is the approach we have taken to the problem of nuclear proliferation on the Korean Peninsula. The United States considers the efforts of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) to develop nuclear weapons, and its announced intention to withdraw from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), to be a serious challenge to the non-proliferation regime and a threat to regional and international security. The international community speaks in one voice in calling for a denuclearized Korean Peninsula. We are working closely with our friends and allies, including the ROK (Republic of Korea), Japan, Australia, the EU (European Union), Russia and China, as well as with the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency), to find a peaceful resolution to this problem. The DPRK must visibly, verifiably and irreversibly dismantle its nuclear weapons program.

As Secretary of State Powell told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, resolving this situation is going to be a long and difficult process and will take the entire international community working together. We do not want an incomplete solution that seems to solve the problem but in fact just covers it over so it can surface later on. We will also not provide quid pro quos to the DPRK to convince it to live up to its existing obligations.

For this reason, the United States has consistently supported referral of this matter to the United Nations Security Council -- the institution vested with "primary responsibility for the maintenance of international

peace and security" under Article 24 of the United Nations Charter. Others initially resisted such a referral. They suggested instead that the United States should undertake to solve the problem through a direct dialogue with the DPRK. Surely this is one of the supreme ironies of our times -- the supposedly unilateralist United States seeking to refer a threat to international peace and security to the United Nations Security Council, while others urge that, notwithstanding our reservations, the United States should take it upon itself to solve this problem for the international community.

The premise of those who want the United States to solve this problem unilaterally is that it is primarily our problem and our responsibility. Nothing could be further from the truth. A nuclear-armed DPRK threatens the stability of all of Northeast Asia. Given the DPRK's history of marketing the weapons it produces, it also threatens to spread nuclear weapons rapidly to dangerous regimes around the world.

It has been an article of faith within the arms control community for decades that the norms established by the NPT cannot be allowed to unravel, for if they ever do there may be no logical end to the process. North Korea's nuclear weapons program challenges the international community to uphold these norms. We all know that other regimes are watching the international response, waiting to decide whether it will profit them to follow the path pioneered by the DPRK. The international community must make sure these interested observers decide against following that path. In order to ensure that the nonproliferation regime remains strong and the IAEA remains credible, the IAEA Board had to make a determination of non-compliance and report this to the United Nations Security Council. The IAEA Board met yesterday (February 12) in Vienna and lived up to its responsibilities. We are pleased the IAEA Board of Governors took this action.

The commitment of the United States to effective multilateralism can also be seen in our efforts to strengthen implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention over the past year. Our decision to seek reinvigorated leadership for the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) was not calculated to make my government popular. The expedient course for us would have been to look the other way while the OPCW slowly atrophied. Indeed, many other governments urged us to do precisely that -- including governments that are often more outspoken in their support of arms control than the United States.

We judged the dangers associated with chemical weapons to be so great, however, that we were not prepared to allow polite multilateralism to stand in the way of effective multilateralism. Accordingly, we chose to invest significant political capital in a campaign to revitalize the OPCW, and we are very pleased with the results that have been achieved. The new Director-General, Rogelio Pfrirter, has done an outstanding job during his first months in office, and both he and the OPCW have the full support of my government.

As an indication of our faith in the future of the OPCW, Secretary of State Powell decided to significantly upgrade our diplomatic representation by assigning Ambassador Eric Javits to The Hague. This decision was not taken lightly, and it reflects our commitment to support and promote the work of the OPCW, an international organization that is successfully promoting international security by combating the spread of weapons of mass destruction. As we have made clear from the moment this decision was announced, we will appoint a replacement representative to the CD.

When we look at our accomplishments over the past year, I must also highlight the U.S.-Russian Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions, also called the Moscow Treaty, which we signed on May 24, 2002. While not strictly speaking a multilateral arms control matter, the Moscow Treaty does reflect the willingness of my government to work with other countries to enhance international security. This treaty puts into legal form the respective commitments of the United States and Russia to reduce by approximately two-thirds the number of strategic nuclear warheads deployed by each side, to 1,700 to 2,200 by the end of 2012.

This major step by the United States and the Russian Federation represents the largest reduction ever in deployed nuclear forces. It reflects our commitment to Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

It also is a step that many predicted would be impossible if the United States proceeded with plans to terminate the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. Many warned that the ABM Treaty was the cornerstone of strategic stability, and that if the United States exercised its legal right to withdraw from it, the inevitable consequence would be a new arms race. The conclusion of the Moscow Treaty just five months after President Bush announced his decision to terminate the ABM Treaty proves that such predictions were ill founded.

Not only have we amicably terminated the ABM Treaty, signed the Moscow Treaty, and established a new strategic framework with Russia, but we also have begun the process of deploying missile defenses in cooperation with our traditional allies, as well as Russia. The success of our efforts to date, and the multilateral character of our planning with regard to missile defense, should reassure those who originally questioned our approach to the ABM Treaty.

The United States has also worked hard over the last year to combat the biological weapons threat. The agreed outcome of the Fifth Biological Weapons Convention Review Conference last November demonstrated our commitment to pursue innovative strategies to retard the proliferation of biological and toxin weapons. It also

reflected our determination not to accept half-measures that would give a pass to rogue states that have in place robust programs to develop these weapons.

The point that emerges from the cases I have mentioned is that the United States supports multilateralism when it is effective, and in appropriate cases is prepared to provide the leadership required to make multilateralism effective. For the past six years, the Conference on Disarmament has not been an instrument of effective multilateralism. The question before us today is whether it can be made effective.

The United States would like the CD to transform itself into a more effective multilateral forum. We continue to favor the negotiation here of a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty (FMCT) that effectively and verifiably bans the production of fissile material for use in weapons and advances our national security. So far as we know, no country represented here disagrees with the basic concept of an FMCT. But so far in the CD, that has not been sufficient to commence a negotiation.

The CD operates on the principle of consensus, and for good reason. This principle gives every participant a veto, which helps ensure universal, or near-universal, support for any agreement that might emerge from this forum. However, the evolution of this principle in the CD over the last several years clearly demonstrates how even a good principle can be corrupted in practice. Consensus has in the CD become synonymous with hostage taking and obstruction. It has allowed a few states to make demands that are unrealistic and unobtainable -- to insist on negotiations on subjects that are not ripe for negotiation as a condition for commencing work on subjects where progress might be possible.

The result has been to cast this, the only standing multilateral arm control negotiating body in the world, into such disrepute that responsible governments, including mine, are questioning whether it can retain relevance to the security environment we face today. We must all recognize that the CD as we have known it will not long survive if this malaise continues.

The solution to this problem is obvious: consensus must be preserved, but the states represented here must abandon their tolerance for comprehensive linkages, in which nothing is agreed until everything is agreed. We should negotiate on matters that all agree are ripe for negotiation, while informally exploring other issues until CD members can reach some common ground that could lead to further progress on those issues.

Accordingly, let us agree at this session to approve a "clean" resolution establishing FMCT negotiations. By "clean" I mean a resolution unencumbered by linkages to unrelated proposals about which there is no agreement in this body. The practice in the CD of holding vital international security initiatives hostage to win approval for dubious, unpopular or outdated proposals must end if this body is to have a future.

If, however, we remain gridlocked on the agenda items that have in the past been the focus of attention in the CD, we should explore whether consensus exists to take up other items where progress might be possible. Could we not agree, for example, that the dangers posed by the prospect of terrorists getting access to weapons of mass destruction deserve to be addressed seriously? Would it not be possible to agree on restrictions on the export of all nonself-destructing landmines that have caused untold civilian suffering on virtually every continent? Or will ideas like these also fall victim to the hostage taking that has come to characterize work at the CD?

The CD can also contribute to international peace and security by redoubling efforts to ensure compliance with treaties banning weapons of mass destruction once they have entered into force. Too often states seem eager to negotiate such agreements and then lose interest in their implementation. This is understandable: it is easier and more exciting to negotiate new treaties than to work on the tedious details of implementation and compliance. This may be explainable, but it is not acceptable. Too many rogue states have signed such treaties and have covert programs to build these terrible weapons. We call on all parties to treaties banning weapons of mass destruction to honor their commitments.

Focusing on implementation also gives rise to occasions where some parties to a treaty have to call others to task for non-compliance. Few states like to make such accusations, not least because this can lead to the question of imposing penalties for non-compliance. Nevertheless, if multilateral arms control is to have a future, treaty parties must face up to their responsibilities. They must decide that they will not tolerate non-compliance.

One final matter that I cannot avoid mentioning is Iraq's possible assumption of the CD presidency next month. Let me be clear. Iraq's assuming the presidency of the CD is unacceptable to the United States. It should be unacceptable to all supporters of the CD, as it threatens to discredit this institution to a much greater degree than even the past six years of inactivity.

In conclusion, Mr. President, the United States hopes that this will be the year in which the CD reestablishes itself as an effective multilateral institution. We look forward to working with you and the other delegations to achieve this result.

Conference on Disarmament

US Statement Draws Responses from Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Iraq

13 February 2003

[...] A representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) said the representative of the United States had kindly asked for a response. He did not understand why; the US seemed to have stressed multilateralism many times, in an aggressive way. But who was pursuing unilateralism? Where was the language of this unilateralism coming from? The US was only giving lip service in its talk of multilateralism; it was a language game. The US representative had said the DPRK was violating its international obligations and doing many bad things to the international community. But as the DPRK had said earlier, the US had pursued a hostile policy against the DPRK for more than half a century; and the US President had recently labelled the sovereign State of the DPRK as part of an "axis of evil". The US also had deliberately violated the framework agreement of 1994. And the US had instigated the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to adopt resolutions against the DPRK.

As had been stated many times, the nuclear programme of the DPRK was aimed at peaceful purposes, mainly for electricity generation. Should the US drop its hostile policy and complete the non-aggression pact on equal footing with the DPRK, the DPRK would cooperate with the inspections being sought. But the current inspection proposals were unfair, unilateral and distorted.

The nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula was due to the hostile US policy towards the DPRK. If the US changed its attitude right now, the issue would be settled immediately, and all the problems would disappear simultaneously. That was why the DPRK called the problem a bilateral one between the US and the DPRK -- it was not multilateral or international. The US was a jealous superpower that wanted to control everything. The US was the main troublemaker which had opened the Pandora's box.

A representative of Iraq said the Presidency of the CD was a periodical procedure that was followed in accordance with the CD's rules of procedure, and was one of the advantages of the operation of this multi-lateral body. Iraq did not think one country should enforce its views on the rest of the Conference on this matter. The Government of the US had a political stance against Iraq and was using flimsy pretexts to launch war against Iraq; obviously the US was not pleased that Iraq could assume the Presidency of the Conference.

But letting the US use unilateral pressure to affect the rules of this Conference would set a very bad precedent. The US had levied many charges against Iraq in this morning's statement. But two international agencies were carrying out inspections in Iraq with full Iraqi cooperation, trying to find the alleged weapons of mass destruction. These bodies had made no allegations that they had found such weapons. The US was charging Iraq with obstruction of these inspections so that it could launch aggression against Iraq. Iraq reaffirmed that it implemented and honoured its obligations under Security Council resolutions. It believed that the Middle East should be free of weapons of mass destruction. It refuted the US's allegations; it reiterated that it had no weapons of mass destruction. The US filed these charges, yet it was the only country to use such weapons. Also it had used depleted-uranium weapons against Iraqi citizens. [...]

Conference on Disarmament

Thirteen countries address Conference on Disarmament

Many Speakers Laud Progress Achieved by Ottawa Convention

27 February 2003

[...]

Statements

[...]

MYKHAILO SKURATOVSKIYI (Ukraine) said the delegation wished to add its voice to those supporting the proposals of the "five Ambassadors". Though these ran short of the expectations of Ukraine -- which was the State party which had pioneered the world process of disarmament -- it was fully aware that one had to reckon with reality and do what could be done under the circumstances. Ukraine could not but express bitter disappointment that the disarmament process so enthusiastically started in the early 1990s had come to a standstill at the beginning of the new Millennium. It also could not ignore the fact that this standstill was caused by an abrupt change of mind and attitude by some of the so-called "main actors", disheartening some States but inspiring those who clung to Cold War values.

Ukraine called for the Conference to work on the basis of the "five Ambassadors" proposals; to urge States that wanted the proposals to be amended to submit their proposals in writing as soon as possible; to proceed from the notion that the proposals were not interdependent, so that the Conference could proceed with some that were agreed upon while continuing to seek consensus on outstanding elements; and to refrain at this stage from trying to add new elements to the proposed programme of work.

MICHAEL SMITH (Australia) said that a world free of nuclear weapons was a goal that all were aspiring to. But it was a goal that would only realistically be achieved through effective, universal nuclear non-proliferation regimes. That was why his country was unwavering in its commitment to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT); that was why Australia was a strong supporter of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT); and that was why Australia advocated the immediate commencement of negotiations to ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. The most powerful barrier to nuclear weapons proliferation was the difficulty of acquiring sufficient quantities of weapons useable fissile material. An effective fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) would tighten international controls on the production of fissile material, further raising the bar to nuclear proliferation. It would bring all nuclear facilities capable of producing fissile material for use in weapons in all States, including the NPT Nuclear Weapon States, under legally binding international verification.

Capping the amount of fissile material available for use in weapons was an essential step towards achieving irreversible nuclear disarmament, Mr. Smith went on to say. It was disappointing that FMCT negotiations had yet to begin, despite the FMCT having been repeatedly endorsed as the next logical step on the arms control and disarmament agenda, most recently in a consensus resolution adopted by the fifty-seventh session of the UN's General Assembly. Australia urged all members of the Conference on Disarmament to agree to a programme of work now, so that the Conference could once again productively contribute to enhancing global security. Until there was a start to formal negotiations at the Conference, Australia would see value in further informal work in Geneva on FMCT issues.

[...]

CHRIS C. SANDERS (the Netherlands) informed the Conference that the total stockpile of anti-personnel mines once possessed by the Netherlands, which in 1996 amounted to more than 250,000, had been destroyed. The last remaining mines were destroyed in December 2002. In doing so, the Netherlands had fully complied with the provisions of the Ottawa Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. Turning to the issue of fissile material, he said that since the 1995 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference and the Shannon mandate (CD/1299), there was in fact consensus that fissile material cut-off (FMCT) negotiations should take place. The Netherlands could support the so-called A-5 (five Ambassadors) proposal as it stood, and was in a position to support the start of work in the Conference on that issue.

Mr. Sanders said that the Shannon mandate did not preclude that issues other than a ban on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other explosive devices were addressed in the negotiations. And it was not a secret that a number of delegations in the Conference certainly would raise the issue of "past production". The Netherlands could accept the inclusion of the existing stocks in the negotiations, but at the same time one felt that the early achievement of an agreement was more important. For that reason one would prefer a limited interpretation of the mandate. However desirable addressing stocks and also acquisition might be from a nuclear disarmament perspective, it could potentially delay the negotiations to an unacceptable degree.

Regarding the issue of stocks, the Netherlands could support a two-stock approach, Mr. Sanders continued, adding that in parallel with FMCT-negotiations, a commitment to negotiating a treaty covering existing stocks would be envisaged as a next step in the process towards nuclear disarmament. In addition, it was the view of the Netherlands that the FMCT-verification regime should be based upon the present system of IAEA-safeguards to ensure coherence of the verification of all fissile materials, whether it be under an FMCT, or under the NPT and the present safeguards system.

RAJMAH HUSSAIN (Malaysia) said the country had hosted on 24-25 February the thirteenth summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, which represented 116 countries pursuing world peace, security and development. Sixty-three Heads of State/Government attended the summit. In pronouncing on the issues of "disarmament and international security" in the final document of the summit, the Heads of State/Government expressed their strong concern at the growing resort to unilateralism and unilaterally imposed prescriptions and in this context strongly underlined that multilateralism and multilaterally agreed solutions, in accordance with the United Nations Charter, provided the only sustainable method of addressing disarmament and international security issues. They reiterated their concerns on several issues of international peace and security, and in particular those related to nuclear disarmament, which remained the highest priority of the Non-Aligned Movement. The Heads of State/Government expressed concern at the lack of progress by nuclear weapons

States in accomplishing the elimination of their nuclear arsenals and emphasized the urgent need to commence negotiations without delay.

The Non-Aligned Movement leaders emphasized the necessity of starting negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified framework of time, including a Nuclear Weapons Convention. They reiterated their calls for the Conference to establish as soon as possible and as the highest priority an Ad Hoc Committee on Nuclear Disarmament. As the new Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement, Malaysia would do its best to lead the Movement over the next three years. Given the significance of the Movement's pronouncement on "disarmament and international security", Malaysia suggested that the Secretariat of the Conference distribute it as an official document of the Conference.

The Conference sadly was now in its sixth non-productive year. The impasse was eroding the credibility of the institution. There were those who saw the deadlock as caused primarily by the inflexible postures of nuclear weapons States with regard to negotiations on nuclear disarmament and measures to prevent an arms race in outer space. Nuclear disarmament should and must remain the paramount concern of the international community. As a member of the Group of 21 within the Conference, Malaysia underlined the Group's concern that nuclear disarmament should be the highest priority of the Conference. Malaysia supported the negotiating mandate for a fissile-material cut-off treaty but was of the view that the negotiations should also include existing stockpiles. It believed that an arms race in outer space should be prevented through a legally binding instrument. It welcomed the "five Ambassadors" initiative.

The Non-Aligned Summit, not surprisingly, had focused as well on the impending war in Iraq. The Movement's voices were strongly raised in unison against such a war and against the unilateralism of big powers. In fact, what better forum was there for considering the actual outlawing of war than the Conference on Disarmament itself? This perhaps could be the Conference's noble goal for the future.

[...]

LAATSTE ONTWIKKELINGEN ROND NOORD-KOREA

Daily Telegraph

Korea 'has missiles that could reach US'

By Robin Gedye, Foreign Affairs Writer, and Richard Spencer in Hong Kong – 13 February 2003

North Korea has nuclear weapons and a missile which could carry them to the west coast of America, the head of the CIA, George Tenet, said yesterday.

Mr Tenet spoke hours after North Korea was declared in violation of nuclear non-proliferation accords and reported to the United Nations Security Council. That could result in economic sanctions which the Stalinist state has warned may lead to war.

"They probably have one or two plutonium-based devices today," Mr Tenet told a Senate armed services committee hearing. "I think one or two is a very good judgment."

Asked if North Korea had a missile that could hit the west coast, he replied: "Yes they could do that."

After the hearing, Vice-Admiral Lowell Jacoby, director of the Defence Intelligence Agency, said North Korea had a three-stage Taepodong 2 missile that could reach that distance. "It has not been tested," he added.

The move to "report" North Korea - taken in Vienna by the International Atomic Energy Agency's 35-nation board of governors - is intended to make clear to Pyongyang that the world is not about to back away from a second confrontation even though it may appear to be preoccupied with the Iraq issue.

It is understood that the Security Council, which wants to avoid any unnecessary provocation of Kim Jong-il, North Korea's eccentric leader, is to refrain from immediate sanctions.

Both the European Union and America are opposed to sanctions at this stage and have suggested issuing a Security Council "statement". They are anxious to avoid an escalation of the crisis while aware of the need to rein in North Korea.

Even China, long seen as North Korea's closest ally, supported the IAEA decision to report Pyongyang to the Security Council while Russia, which had opposed the move, abstained from voting along with Cuba.

The "reporting" of North Korea stopped short of the more stringent sanction of "referring" it to the UN. Under a "report", the IAEA continues to monitor the situation while a "referral" would have meant that the IAEA felt it could do no more and thus was handing the problem over to the Security Council.

Bill Rammell, a Foreign Office minister, said yesterday Britain still believed that Kim's decision to reactivate his nuclear weapons programme was not "the result of a regime bent on confrontation, but a crude attempt to grab attention and seek economic aid".

"We are not calling for sanctions, but there is no doubt that we have a serious situation with North Korea and today's IAEA is intended to send a strong message," he said.

Mr Rammell added that it was imperative for North Korea to understand that what it had done was "unacceptable" and put it right before any concessions were offered.

"We need to make it absolutely clear that it is not right to think that all you've got to do is to act in a visibly dangerous way and you'll get what you want."

In an interview with Reuters news agency yesterday, a senior North Korean official said it would be pleased to see Britain involved in the dispute as a mediator.

"We think because the UK has a special relationship with the US we expect the UK can play a certain role in relations between our country and the US," said the official, Ri Hui-chol.

"The problem is, the US will not talk with us. So the UK can influence the US to talk to the DPRK [North Korea] and agree to a non-aggression treaty."

But Mr Rammell rejected the suggestion, saying: "This isn't a bilateral issue between the US and North Korea. It is an issue for the entire international community."

North Korea restarted a nuclear reactor capable of generating weapons-grade plutonium last October and last month it withdrew from the National Proliferation Treaty.

It is believed that North Korea will be in a position to build six to eight nuclear weapons by the summer, which Kim might be hoping would increase his leverage. He fears that if America wins an easy military victory in Iraq, North Korea, named last year by President George W Bush as part of the "axis of evil", could be next.

Bush's struggle over N Korean threat

By Geraldine Carroll in Washington DC – 7 March 2003

Poised to unleash war on Iraq, the Bush administration is under siege at home and abroad over its failure to ease the growing North Korean nuclear crisis.

Critics say the Stalinist North is far more dangerous than Saddam Hussein, and are worried by President George W Bush's refusal to order direct talks with its leader Kim Jong-il.

Mr Bush is also being accused of standing by as Pyongyang prepares to crank up a reprocessing plant at Yongbyon which could churn out up to six nuclear bombs by midsummer, according to CIA estimates.

William Perry, a former defence secretary who supported the Clinton administration's policy of engagement with the North, has a dire warning for Mr Bush.

"The proposed policy of isolation and containment will not work. It can hardly isolate North Korea more than they are already isolated," he said.

And for Americans still traumatised by the horror of September 11, he warned that with Pyongyang's proliferation record, North Korean plutonium could find its way into the hands of terrorists.

The White House is under increasing pressure following US media reports that the administration has resigned itself to a nuclear North Korea.

In a congressional hearing on Thursday, Secretary of State Colin Powell launched a damage control effort.

"The position of the United States is we don't want to see nuclear weapons in the Korean Peninsula," he said.

Despite refusing direct talks with Pyongyang, Mr Powell said the Bush administration was actively seeking ways to address the issue.

"We have a number of diplomatic initiatives under way, some of them very, very quietly under way," he said.

But US efforts to convene a regional forum on the crisis, including China and Russia, have so far appeared to make no progress.

Domino fears

Mr Bush himself did little to still criticism in a prime time news conference on Thursday night, simply repeating that North Korea was not a US problem alone.

"This is a regional issue. We've got a stake as to whether North Korea has a nuclear weapon. China clearly has a stake as to whether or not North Korea has a nuclear weapon," he said.

US officials see China and Russia as key to pressuring Pyongyang. But Beijing and Moscow want direct US-North Korean talks and have balked at a regional strategy.

The Bush administration says that talking to Mr Kim's regime would simply be a reward for "bad behaviour", his breaching of a 1994 anti-nuclear deal with the US.

But critics of the administration point out that Mr Bush's determination to use diplomacy to stop North Korea acquiring weapons of mass destruction sits at odds with the policy against Iraq.

There are also fears that allowing North Korea to go nuclear could ignite a domino effect.

Democrat Senator Carl Levin said Mr Bush could "send a horrendous message not just in Asia, but also to Iran and to other countries that are contemplating nuclear programmes."

Analysts are particularly worried that Japan may feel compelled to match North Korea's nuclear aspirations, causing a suspicious China to look to augment its own modest atomic arsenal. That could prompt new atomic power grabs in chronically unstable South Asia.

North Korea has carved a fault line right through the US administration, split between moderates led by Mr Powell in the State Department and hawks marshalled by Vice-President Dick Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

Mr Bush has given indications that the issue is personal, telling US journalist Bob Woodward in a recent book that he "loathes" Kim Jong-il.

The US president's outspokenness has damaged US relations with South Korea, which under former President Kim Dae-jung pioneered a "sunshine policy" of engaging the North.

New South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun is expected in Washington soon for talks which will set the tone for the next two years of US-South Korean ties.

But US officials say privately that neither side is yet ready for the meeting. They want to ensure that the encounter is tightly scripted, in contrast to a disastrous meeting between Mr Bush and Kim Dae-jung which took place in March 2001 when neither side was really ready.

Mr Bush's war plans could also push the meeting back into Spring.

More and more the equation seems to be coming down to a simple choice:

Either the US president will have to do a deal with what he sees as the devil and decide to approve talks with North Korea - or see the isolated Communist state acquire a doomsday arsenal of nuclear weapons.

Guardian

North Korean missile test renews tension

By Danny Penman and agencies - Monday March 10, 2003

Tensions have flared up again in the far east following a test firing of a North Korean cruise missile into the Sea of Japan earlier today.

Japan and South Korea immediately condemned the test. But both countries, as well as the US, attempted to play down its significance. The US is anxious to avoid becoming embroiled in a confrontation with North Korea while its attention is focused on Iraq.

A spokesman for the Pentagon said the US was "not overly concerned" about the launch. Hatsuhsa Takashima, a spokesman for the Japanese foreign ministry, said: "We understand this was not a ballistic missile and is therefore not considered a direct threat to Japan. But we do not think that this is very favourable in light of the rather unstable situation created by North Korea's nuclear development."

The missile test follows weeks of low level confrontations between the US and North Korea.

Last month a North Korean fighter violated South Korean airspace. On February 24 North Korea test fired a modified Chinese silkworm missile.

Tensions were raised further last week when four North Korean MiG fighters harried a US spy plane in international airspace. North Korea said the interception was a "justified self-defensive act".

The New York Times said that US defence officials had told the paper it was an attempt to take the crew hostage. The sources claimed that North Korean fighters illuminated the US plane with targeting radar, but there was no hostile fire. The American plane returned to its base unharmed.

Last week Japanese media reported that North Korea was close to restarting a nuclear reprocessing plant at Yongbyon, north of the capital Pyongyang. The plant has been in preparation for several months and is capable of producing weapons-grade plutonium.

America is more concerned about a possible North Korean test of a Taepodong-2 missile, which is capable of reaching the United States. As a veiled threat to North Korea, the US has started moving B-52 and B-1 bombers to the Pacific island of Guam last week. North Korea claims they are to be used as part of a pre-emptive strike on the country.

Analysts believe that the North Korean manoeuvres are part of a bid to pressure the US into providing economic aid and into signing a non-aggression pact with the country.

The state-run Korean Central News Agency said earlier today: "The nuclear issue is to be solved between the DPRK [North Korea] and the US.

"The only way of solving it is to conclude a non-aggression treaty with legal binding force through bilateral direct talks."

"Many countries are calling for the peaceful settlement of the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula through direct talks, and even American politicians share the same view," it added.

Colin Powell, the US Secretary of State, said yesterday that the United States would eventually engage in talks with North Korea. He said that other Asian nations should be involved in the talks.

Mr Powell said: "I think eventually we will be talking to North Korea. But we're not going to simply fall into what I believe is the bad practice of saying that the only way you can talk is to talk to us directly. It affects other nations in the region."

He told CNN that he believed the 1994 deal for North Korea to halt its nuclear programme had been the product of direct talks with the North.

"This time we want a better solution that involves all of the countries in the region. I hope North Korea understands that it is also in their interests to have all of the nations in the region to be a part of this dialogue. Within that broader dialogue we'll be talking to North Korea," said Powell

BBC News

North Korea angry at US deployment

12 March 2003

North Korea has criticised the United States' decision to deploy an aircraft carrier in waters around the Korean Peninsula.

Pyongyang said the presence of the carrier would make the situation in the region "so tense that a nuclear war may break out any moment", according to the state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

The carrier USS Carl Vinson is due to take part in an annual joint US-South Korean military drill codenamed Foal Eagle.

The North has already condemned the military exercise, saying it is actually a preparation for an American strike at Pyongyang's nuclear facilities.

Tension has been mounting in the region since North Korea's moves to restart its nuclear programme late last year.

North Korea wants face-to-face talks with the US to resolve the issue, but Washington maintains that multilateral talks involving other regional powers would be more productive.

In another move likely to add to North Korea's wrath, the US announced on Wednesday that it was sending up to six F-117A "stealth" warplanes to South Korea this week as part of the Foal Eagle exercises, Reuters news agency reports.

US military officials said the deployment was not connected to the current regional situation.

"These defensive exercises... are not meant to be aggressive or threatening," Air Force Staff Sergeant Aaron Cram told Reuters.

The US has also recently deployed 24 B-1 and B-52 bombers to the island of Guam in the Western Pacific.

Analysts say the presence of the bombers is an open warning to Pyongyang to curb its provocative behaviour.

Guam is well within striking range of North Korea.

Missile tests

But Pyongyang is still talking tough, and has recently launched a series of actions in an apparent attempt to gain US attention and bring the Americans to the negotiating table.

On Monday it test-fired a surface-to-ship missile for the second time in two weeks.

North Korean jets also intercepted a US reconnaissance plane early this month.

Despite Pyongyang's belligerent stance, Washington is keeping to its policy of pressing for multilateral talks, saying North Korea's nuclear standoff concerns the rest of the world, not just the US.

While South Korea supports a multilateral approach, Foreign Minister Yoon Young-kwan said on Wednesday that there should also be bilateral discussions between Pyongyang and Washington.

"Whatever the setting may be, our position is that we would like it if the United States showed more willingness to settle substantial issues with North Korea," Mr Yoon said.

The US reaffirmed on Wednesday that it remained committed to resolving the crisis peacefully and diplomatically.

But US Ambassador to South Korea Thomas Hubbard described the situation as "worrisome", and said that all options still remained open.

CNN

U.S.: Nuclear NK 'within months'

13 March 2003

WASHINGTON --The U.S. has announced spy flights near North Korea will resume amid warnings Pyongyang's nuclear program is much more advanced than previously thought.

Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly said North Korea could have enough weapons grade material within "months, not years" to produce nuclear weapons.

Though some members of the Bush administration -- as well as the CIA -- believe North Korea may already possess one or two nuclear weapons, experts had thought Pyongyang's nuclear program was still years away from creating a nuclear arsenal.

"The enriched uranium issue, which some have assumed is somewhere off in the fog of the distant future, is not," Kelly told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Wednesday.

"It is only probably a matter of months, not years, behind the plutonium [program]."

The U.S. says North Korea has restarted its main nuclear reactor at Yongbyon, which was mothballed after a 1994 deal with the Clinton administration.

Spent nuclear fuel from Yongbyon could be converted into weapons-grade plutonium before the year-end, U.S. officials estimate.

North Korea's nuclear program is at the core of a five-month standoff with Washington, that began when the U.S. said Pyongyang admitted to secretly pursuing nuclear weapons.

Meanwhile, as the crisis drags on, the Pentagon says spy flights in international airspace near North Korea will resume.

Reconnaissance flights were suspended after March 2 when four North Korean MiG fighter jets intercepted a U.S. Air Force RC-135 aircraft operating 150 miles off the Korean Peninsula over the Sea of Japan.

The MiGs apparently gestured for the pilot to land in North Korea, Pentagon officials said.

The Pentagon did not say when the flights would resume, or if they already had, but did rule out armed fighter escorts.

Destroyer dispatched

In other developments, Japan has deployed a high-tech Aegis destroyer to the Sea of Japan, also known as the East Sea.

While Japan's Defense Agency says the ship's deployment was for regular patrols, the dispatch comes as Japan's media reports North Korea is preparing to test launch its Rodong ballistic missile.

North Korea test fired a short-range missile on Monday, its second test in as many weeks and the first series of launches since it shocked the world in 1998 by sending a long range Taepodong over Japan's main island.

Japan has said it may launch preemptive military action against North Korea if there was evidence Pyongyang was preparing a missile strike.

Separately, the United States is sending up to six F-117A stealth warplanes to South Korea for joint military exercises.

The deployment is the first in a decade but is not connected to current tensions on the Korean Peninsula, U.S. officials say.

The United States has also bolstered its aerial prowess in the region by sending 24 bombers -- 12 B-1s and 12 B-52s -- to its base in Guam.

North Korea says the bomber deployment and an increase of spy flights were preparations for pre-emptive strikes.

Pyongyang continues to call for direct dialogue with Washington to resolve the crisis, but the U.S. insists a resolution must be found within a multilateral framework.

Korea Times

Roh Warns War Will Turn Nation Into 'Bowl of Ashes'

By Oh Young-jin – 13 March 2003

President Roh Moo-hyun yesterday called for the prompt establishment of lasting peace on the Korean peninsula before another war turns the nation into a bowl of ashes.

In a speech he delivered at the 57th graduation ceremony of the Korea Naval Academy in Chinhae, South Kyongsang Province, President Roh said, "We stand at a crossroads between hope and anxiety.

"It is imperative that we establish a peaceful regime on the Korean peninsula for us to lead an age of Northeast Asia," he told the graduating class of the naval academy.

Roh, who emphasizes Seoul's crucial role in South-North Korea affairs, sees the establishment of a peaceful inter-Korean regime as one of his top goals during his presidency.

He placed the highest priority on the peaceful resolution of North Korea's nuclear challenge, saying, "Dialogue should be the only tool" for achieving this goal.

"If war breaks out again on the Korean peninsula, it will turn the prosperity we enjoy today into a bowl of ashes," the commander-in-chief warned.

For this, Roh stressed the need for a strong defense posture. "We should possess power to repeal whatever challenges we face.

"I intend to develop a collaborative framework with Japan, China and Russia as well as South Korea-U.S. combined defense posture," he said.

Roh is becoming increasingly friendly with the United States in order to repair the nation's relations with Washington, which has suffered a series of setbacks as his progressive line of foreign policy has clashed with the conservative U.S. administration led by George W. Bush.

Japan revises N. Korea threat

15 March 2003

Tokyo, Japan --In the face of a perceived threat from North Korea, Japan is considering bolstering its spy ship presence in the sea shared by the two countries. A Japanese defense spokesman said the country may boost the number of missile-detecting destroyers deployed near North Korea from one to three amid jitters over a possible ballistic missile launch by Pyongyang, Kyodo News Agency said.

As concerns mount over the threat North Korea poses to East Asia, Japan says it is considering upping its missile defense systems. "There is no point in having the Aegis ships, each costing more than 100 billion yen (\$850 million), if they are not brought to the Sea of Japan at a time when Japan's national security is being threatened by North Korea," the agency on Friday quoted a government official as saying.

Japan has four 7,250-tonne ships equipped with the state-of-the-art Aegis radar system, which is capable of detecting more than 2,000 aircraft or missiles several hundred km (miles) away. One ship was already deployed in the Sea of Japan (or East Sea as it is also known) between Japan and North Korea on what Tokyo has described as a regular patrol.

The agency said the latest moves would raise the state of alert against communist North Korea to one of its highest levels ever.

The Yomiuri Shimbun daily also reported that Tokyo plans to buy advanced U.S.-made Patriot anti-missile rockets to deploy from July. The report came as the U.S. Air Force prepared to resume spy flights off the coast of North Korea amid an escalating standoff with Pyongyang over its nuclear ambitions.

The deadlock began in October when the U.S. said Pyongyang admitted to secretly pursuing nuclear weapons and has worsened ever since, with North Korea reactivating nuclear facilities frozen under a 1994 pact with Washington, and kicking out inspectors.

Pyongyang test fired a short-range missile on Monday, its second test in as many weeks and the first series of launches since it shocked the world in 1998 by sending a long range Taepodong missile over Japan's main island.

Missile plan

In recent days, Japanese media reports have said Pyongyang could soon test-fire a missile that could reach Japan. But under the new missile defense plan being considered, if North Korea fired a mid-range Rodong missile at Japan, Tokyo would be able to intercept it with an enhanced version of the Patriot PAC2, the Yomiuri report said.

Those Patriots would be able to intercept ballistic missiles with a range of 1,000 kilometers (620 miles). At the moment Japan has less advanced Patriot anti-missile rockets in place at 27 locations around the country, but they have a shorter range.

To be able to respond to any missile, Tokyo is also considering revising the law to enable the military to launch a Patriot rocket before being given orders to do so by the prime minister, the Yomiuri added.

Japanese law keeps strict civilian control over its military, a product of the caution that remains following Japan's militarism that led to its crushing defeat in World War II.

Tokyo may also allow its military to mobilize immediately in the event a missile lands in Japanese territory, the Yomiuri said, but did not give further details.

Japan's defense chief said Tokyo is also focusing on being able to spot when a missile might be fired, before any actual launch.

Korea Times

NK Shows No Signs of Nuke Reprocessing

17 March 2003

North Korea has shown no signs of reactivating a nuclear reprocessing facility capable of producing nuclear weapons, a senior Foreign Affairs-Trade Ministry official said yesterday.

Nor has the North shown any moves to test-fire ballistic missiles that will escalate tensions on the Korean peninsula and in Northeast Asia, the official said, asking not be identified.

"The United States, on its part, has not conveyed any information regarding possible provocative acts to us," the official said.

There has been anxiety that the reclusive North might attempt to reprocess spent fuel rods at the nuclear processing facility to produce weapons-grade plutonium in a bid to press the United States into direct dialogue.

The North has been escalating the nuclear standoff with the U.S. by taking a series of provocative movements including test-firing of two anti-ship missiles and briefly interrupting an American military reconnaissance plane over high sea.

While Pyongyang has been insisting on bilateral talks with the U.S., the U.S. has been calling for multilateral dialogue.

Another official from the ministry renewed the government's stance that the North needs to accept the idea of multinational negotiation first as an initial step to entering into direct dialogue with the U.S.

"Within multinational dialogue channels, the North will be able to secure what it wants, like economic assistance and a guarantee of its survival," the official said.

He said Seoul has been working on specific devices to persuade both North Korea and the U.S. to come to the dialogue table in consideration of the stances of the two nations and other relevant parties.

North Korea yesterday continued to censure the U.S., raising the issue of annual South Korea-U.S. military exercises now underway, calling them steps to prepare for a war against the North.

Reuters

N.Korea Demands Talks as U.S. Seeks Broad Diplomacy

17 March 2003

SEOUL (Reuters) - America's envoy to South Korea said on Monday there was still time for multilateral diplomacy to solve the North Korean nuclear crisis, while the communist North repeated its demand for direct talks with the United States.

U.S. Ambassador Thomas Hubbard said that world efforts to disarm Iraq had been going on for more than a decade whereas multilateral attempts to tackle North Korea's suspected nuclear ambitions had only just begun.

"We are concerned, as I said, about North Korea's nuclear programs," Hubbard, a veteran Asia hand, told Seoul business leaders as the row with Pyongyang entered its sixth month.

"We have just begun talking about a multilateral approach and so we think we still have some time to work with North Korea and that by applying a multilateral approach we do have a possibility of resolving that problem peacefully," he said.

The ambassador was responding to a question about the U.S. administration's different approach to Pyongyang and Baghdad. Iraq faces imminent war with the United States.

Hours later, North Korean state media repeated Pyongyang's rejection of any formula other than direct one-to-one talks.

"It is not multilateral talks but direct talks between the DPRK (North Korea) and the U.S. that serve as a key to settling the nuclear issue," said the Rodong Sinmun daily.

REGIME SURVIVAL

North Korea has taken a series of provocative steps in its campaign for direct talks with Washington. Tensions have been building since October, when U.S. officials said Pyongyang had admitted to a secret program to reprocess uranium for weapons.

Over the last month, North Korea has intercepted a U.S. spy plane patrolling international airspace and test-fired two short-range missiles, while a Japanese report said the North may soon test-fire a longer-range missile that could reach Japan.

Hubbard said most academics and policymakers agreed that North Korea sought the survival of its communist system, security and a recovery for its near-moribund economy.

"I think North Korea, the North Korean leadership, is profoundly wrong if it believes that the road to security and prosperity lies through the development of nuclear weapons," he said. He said that would lead to further isolation for the North.

The experts were wrong, insisted the Rodong Sinmun.

"The system of the DPRK has strong ideological, political, economic and military capability," said the ruling party daily.

"That is why the DPRK does not seek to get favor from anyone by threatening him. Particularly, it never feels the need to get the security of its system guaranteed," it said.

IGNORANCE IS "GREATEST TRAGEDY"

South Korea President Roh Moo-hyun was quoted as telling defense officials over the weekend to prepare for a "demonstrative provocation" by North Korea during annual U.S.-South Korean military exercises this month and next.

The two allies are conducting two sets of war games: a computer-based command training drill called Reception, Staging, Onward Movement and Integration (RSOI), as well as Foal Eagle, field exercises involving mock battles and amphibious landings.

In a plaintive tone in contrast to its normal bellicosity, the Rodong Sinmun said U.S. critics of North Korea failed to understand that Pyongyang's actions were "aimed at settling the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula and preventing a war."

"For the U.S., keen to stifle the DPRK, the greatest tragedy is that it knows too little about the DPRK," it said.

Hubbard said the dangers of misunderstanding cut both ways.

"There is always a danger that North Korea may misperceive the signals they are receiving from us. Of course it is also a danger that we misperceive what North Korea is seeking and meaning with their actions," the U.S. ambassador said.

But he said it was hard to view things any other way than with deep concern when North Korea buzzed the unarmed U.S. spy plane on March 2. Washington lodged a protest over the near miss.

ANP

VN-gezant waarschuwt Pyongyang voor atoomcrisis

18 maart 2003

PEKING (ANP) - Maurice Strong, een speciale VN-gezant, heeft dinsdag bij een bezoek aan Noord-Korea gewaarschuwd voor de gevaren van een atoomcrisis. Strong is in Pyongyang, het is zijn tweede bezoek aan de hoofdstad dit jaar.

Noord-Korea heeft onlangs een kerncentrale opgestart en wapeninspecteurs het land uit gezet, waardoor er internationale bezorgdheid ontstond. Ook zegde Noord-Korea het internationale verdrag tegen de verspreiding van kernwapens op. De Amerikaanse president Bush ziet de kwestie graag op een diplomatieke manier opgelost.

VN-gezant Strong zei dinsdag in Pyongyang dat een vreedzame oplossing alleen mogelijk is als alle partijen, dus ook Noord-Korea, om de tafel gaan zitten. Strong benadrukte daarbij dat de Verenigde Naties zowel het Amerikaanse belang als dat van Noord-Korea willen dienen.

New York Times

EU seeks talks on an escalating North Korean nuclear crisis

By Timothy L. O'Brien - Saturday, March 22, 2003

The European Council plans to convene a ministerial meeting to discuss the escalating nuclear standoff in North Korea, asking South Korean and Japanese diplomats to attend but not specifically calling for the United States to join the meeting.

The declaration Friday was issued at the end of a two-day European Union summit meeting and stated that the EU "stands ready to look into the possibility of enhancing cooperation with North Korea if the present crisis can be resolved in a satisfactory manner."

Council delegates called on Pyongyang to step back from recent saber-rattling involving its nuclear aspirations.

The nuclear crisis in North Korea surfaced last October, when the White House said North Korea was attempting to enrich uranium. After Washington imposed a fuel embargo, North Korea expelled UN weapons inspectors, withdrew from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, and made moves that indicated it was attempting to resurrect a shuttered nuclear reactor.

The declaration said North Korea's "non-compliance with its international obligations in the field of nuclear weapons was a serious concern for the whole of the international community and was detrimental to its own interests."

No date has been set for the proposed meeting.

Pyongyang has asked for direct meetings with Washington to resolve the crisis, but the White House has said it would prefer to see negotiations conducted through the UN Security Council. The EU's involvement may offer a third alternative, since North Korea sees it as a trustworthy mediator and the United States may welcome the Union's involvement as well despite recent diplomatic meltdowns over Iraq.

While the EU declaration did not mention involving the United States in the meeting, it did say that "the EU will remain in touch with all key players."

North Korea condemned the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq on Friday, which it described as the first stage of an attack that would also target Pyongyang.

"The unilateral demand for the disarmament of a sovereign state itself is a wanton encroachment upon this country's sovereignty," the North Korean government told a state news service. "This high-handed action of the U.S. against Iraq and the war preparations now being made by the U.S. and its followers in the Korean Peninsula compel" North Korea "to do all it can to defend itself."

South Korea has placed its armed forces on alert and U.S. troops have been conducting maneuvers off the South Korean coast amid speculation that North Korea may use the Iraq war as cover to jump-start its nuclear weapons program.

China, Japan, South Korea, and the United States have all warned North Korea not to use the Iraq invasion to force Washington into weapons negotiations.

The South Korean government said Friday that North Korea had ignored Seoul's stated desires that the war with Iraq not intrude upon diplomatic relations between the cohabitants of the Korean peninsula.

"We cannot but voice regret that North Korea is making assertions contrary to the facts and casting doubt on our conciliatory intentions," the South Korean government said.

Although other global flashpoints have receded from view as the Iraq war commands center stage, North Korea continues to pose a diplomatic challenge to the White House.

Pyongyang announced earlier this week that it may develop long-range missiles, adding to recent concerns that the country is rebuilding its nuclear arsenal.

Washington has warned North Korea against any missile tests and said that if Pyongyang reprocesses nuclear fuel it would undermine any possibility of a peaceful resolution of the crisis.

JoongAng Daily

Roh reassuring on North

By Choi Hoon - March 25, 2003

President Roh Moo-hyun yesterday dismissed as "groundless and inaccurate" fears that North Korea would be the next target of a U.S. military campaign, an idea being widely discussed by the press and political commentators in Korea and abroad.

"These discussions are not coming from responsible U.S. officials," Mr. Roh said in a meeting with senior secretaries and aides. "The U.S. officials in charge have repeatedly confirmed, to me, that North Korea is different from Iraq, and that the North Korean nuclear issue will be resolved peacefully."

The president said that the idea that North Korea will be attacked scants the Seoul government's role in North Korean affairs. "South Korea's role is important in the U.S. policy toward North Korea," he said. Mr. Roh's adviser for national security, Ra Jong-yil, also has stressed recently the difference between Iraq and North Korea. "The recent discussion forums sponsored by Korean and foreign media holding that it is North Korea's turn next are merely speculation," said Song Kyoung-hee, the Blue House spokeswoman.

"High-ranking U.S. officials have reiterated, over the phone and during their visits to Seoul, the principle of peaceful resolution," she said. "And as the two countries stand together on the principle of peaceful resolution, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade has requested to the U.S. State Department that comments such as 'We will leave if South Korea wants us to leave' not be made."

Ms. Song said that the president remains opposed to the repositioning of the U.S. forces stationed in the South. "In a meeting with the political party leadership last week, President Roh said that repositioning the U.S. forces in the South is undesirable until the North Korean nuclear issue is resolved," she said.

Both the president and senior Blue House officials have been at pains to emphasize that the war in Iraq will not have repercussions on the Korean Peninsula. Some pundits inferred that Seoul may have received promises of a peaceful resolution in North Korea from Washington in return for endorsement of the U.S. military action. Blue House officials mentioned economic engagement of the North as a form of "peaceful resolution."

“At the end of the day, doesn’t peaceful resolution mean economic cooperation?” said a senior official on condition of anonymity. “It all boils down to which country takes on the role of allocating among countries their share of aid to North Korea.”

Guardian

North Korea cuts link with armistice body

26 March 2003

North Korea today cut off the only regular military contact with the US-led UN command that monitors the Korean war armistice, accusing the US of trying to attack the communist state.

The move will further isolate the North amid heightened tension over its suspected nuclear weapons programmes.

The South Korean president, Roh Moo-hyun, today dismissed as "groundless" allegations by the North that US forces may attack and spark a "second Iraqi crisis" on the Korean peninsula. Pyongyang said yesterday it would boost its defences amid such fears.

"There will be no war on the Korean peninsula as long as we do not want a war," Mr Roh's office quoted him as saying, adding that Washington has repeatedly pledged to resolve the crisis peacefully.

Meanwhile, the UN envoy Maurice Strong said that North Korean officials told him in meetings in Pyongyang last week that they "reserved the right" to reprocess spent fuel rods that experts say could yield enough plutonium for several atomic bombs within months. Such a move would spike tension even further.

The North's Korea People's Army sent a telephone message to the UN command saying it will no longer send its delegates to the liaison-officers' meeting at the border village of Panmunjom.

"It is meaningless to sit together with the US forces' side to discuss any issue as long as it remains arrogant," the North's official news agency, KCNA, quoted the North Korean message as saying.

The UN command, which has monitored the armistice since the end of the 1950-53 war, had no immediate comment. Without a peace treaty, the Korean peninsula is still technically in a state of war.

US officials representing the UN command have met North Korean officers at Panmunjom almost weekly since the end of the war.

In Japan, space agency officials were preparing to launch their first spy satellites into orbit on Friday. North Korea has condemned the move, prompting fears it may retaliate and test fire a long-range missile.

Japan's satellite launch "is for the purpose of information gathering", said a Japanese foreign ministry spokesman, Hatsuhsa Takashima. "It is not offensive, or intended to interfere with any other nation's security whatsoever." Mr Takashima said that the satellites will play a role in Japan's national security, however.

North Korea accuses Washington of inciting a dispute over North Korea's alleged programmes to develop nuclear weapons to create an excuse for invasion. The US president, George Bush, has branded the North part of an "axis of evil" with Iraq and Iran.

Washington says it seeks a diplomatic solution to the crisis, but Mr Bush has said that if diplomacy fails a military solution may be considered.

The South Korean foreign minister, Yoon Young-kwan, left today for Washington to discuss North Korea with the US secretary of state, Colin Powell. During his four-day visit, Mr Yoon also hopes to arrange a summit in the US between Mr Roh and Mr Bush, which he said would take place in late April at the earliest.

With the United States focused on Iraq, experts fear North Korea might use the opportunity to reprocess spent nuclear fuel to make atomic bombs. That would be viewed as an attempt to force Washington into direct negotiations. The US only wants talks with the North in a multilateral setting.

The stand off flared in October when US officials said Pyongyang admitted having a secret nuclear programme in violation of a 1994 pact.

Korean Central News Agency of DPRK

U.S. urged to respond to DPRK-U.S. direct talks

26 March 2003

Pyongyang, March 26 (KCNA) -- U.S. Secretary of State Powell was reported to have said recently the U.S. wants the international community to intervene in the nuclear issue as it is not simply a problem to North

Korea and the U.S. and believes that the multilateral talks are the best way of settling the issue. U.S. President Bush in a press conference at the White House said that the U.S. is not opposed to bilateral talks with the DPRK without reason, noting that the nuclear issue of North Korea is obviously a regional issue. In this regard Rodong Sinmun today in a signed commentary says that it was the U.S. that spawned and hyped the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula and brought it to an extreme phase. The U.S. is chiefly to blame for a new nuclear crisis on the Korean Peninsula and the international community has nothing to do with it, the commentary says, and goes on:

The U.S. much publicized multilateral talks are nothing but a sinister plot to leave the nuclear issue to the international community to settle it and flee from its direct responsibility for it.

Through the multilateral talks the U.S. seeks to convince the international community that the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula is an international issue and shift all the blames for the crisis onto the DPRK in a bid to charge it with "nuclear weapons development," garner the international community's support and create favorable conditions for its military attack on the DPRK.

The DPRK remains unchanged in its principled stand that the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula should be settled by way of concluding a non-aggression treaty through the direct dialogue between the DPRK and the U.S. on the principle of impartiality and equality.

The DPRK has no idea of begging the U.S. for a dialogue while compromising its principle.

The U.S. should respond to the DPRK-U.S. direct talks at an early date, well aware that neither international pressure nor military threat and blackmail can work on the DPRK.

The DPRK-U.S. direct talks are the only way of settling the nuclear issue.

International Herald Tribune

North Korea calls off border talks

By Don Kirk (International Herald Tribune) - March 27, 2003

PAJU, South Korea: North Korea mingled military, political and diplomatic moves Wednesday in a campaign that seemed carefully orchestrated to heighten tensions while U.S. attention was focused on Iraq. At the truce village of Panmunjom, according to Pyongyang's Korean Central News Agency, a North Korean officer telephoned across the line to say it would no longer send liaison officers for routine contacts with the United Nations Command, the U.S.-led structure with formal control over allied forces in South Korea. It would be "meaningless to sit together with the U.S. forces' side," the dispatch from Pyongyang said, "as long as it remains arrogant." General Ri Chan Bok, for years the chief delegate for North Korea at the truce talks, elaborated with a warning calculated to focus attention on the potential for war in Korea. North Korean forces would have "no option but to take a new important measure as regards the armistice agreement," the agency quoted Ri as saying, referring to the truce that was signed at Panmunjom nearly 50 years ago. The reason, Ri said, was the need "for self-defense," a vague term suggesting that the North might stage another incident similar to several in recent weeks in which it has test-fired two missiles off its east coast and sent MiG fighter planes in pursuit of a U.S. spy plane. Maurice Strong, a special United Nations envoy who visited Pyongyang last week, said that North Korea was still preparing to restart its nuclear processing plant at the complex at Yongbyon and would pursue the project until the United States agreed to bilateral negotiations. North Korean officials would "take steps that they need in their economic interests and in their security interests," Strong told Reuters television, "until such time as there are serious negotiations on those issues." North Korea coupled its withdrawal from participation in liaison talks with the opening of a session of its Supreme People's Assembly, a legislative body that meets only occasionally for the purpose of rubber-stamping policy edicts from the North Korean leader, Kim Jong Il. The session opened Wednesday in a ceremonial atmosphere in which, Radio Pyongyang said, members honored the statues of Kim Jong Il and his father, Kim Il Sung, who died in July 1994 after passing on power to his son. Kim Il Sung, who ruled the North for nearly half a century, holds the title of "eternal president," bequeathed him by the same assembly in 1998. Kim Jong Il's power rests in his post as chairman of the National Defense Commission. The assembly was expected to provide a forum for statements denouncing the United States as well as Japan, also the focal point of North Korean anger for its plans to launch a spy satellite on Friday. The Korean Central News Agency said Japan had timed the launching for the same time period in which the United States has designated North Korea "as the next target of its attack after the ongoing Iraqi war." That comment fueled speculation that North Korea may be planning to turn the launching into a rationale for the North to test-fire a ballistic missile in the direction of Japan.

Associated Press

South Korea asks U.S. to be more flexible on North Korea; Pyongyang rules out any compromise

29 March 2003

Seoul, South Korea - South Korea's foreign minister has asked Washington to be "more positive and flexible" in drawing communist North Korea into talks to end a standoff over its suspected nuclear weapons program, South Korean media said Saturday.

Meanwhile, North Korea said Saturday it "will not make any slightest concession and compromise," claiming that Iraq invited its "miserable fate" by opening its weapons facilities to U.N. inspectors.

"It is clear that the destiny of Iraq is at stake due to its concession and compromise," said North Korea's main state-run newspaper, Rodong Sinmun.

North Korea "would have already met the same miserable fate as Iraq's had it ... accepted the demand raised by the imperialists and its followers for 'nuclear inspection' and disarmament," it said.

In Washington, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell reportedly reassured South Korean Foreign Minister Yoon Young-kwan that Washington will take "a different approach to North Korea," dismissing the North's allegation that the United States will invade it after Iraq.

Yoon said he told Powell that the United States and its allies must try to prevent the nuclear crisis from worsening, South Korea's Yonhap news agency reported.

The nuclear dispute flared in October when U.S. officials said North Korea admitted having a secret nuclear program in violation of a 1994 pact.

Many fear that North Korea could test a long-range missile or reprocess spent nuclear fuel to build atomic bombs in an attempt to force the United States into bilateral talks, which Washington has ruled out.

The United States, South Korea, Japan and other countries are discussing a multilateral approach to ending the standoff.

"I said we needed to be more positive and flexible to induce North Korea to talks," Yonhap quoted Yoon as telling South Korean journalists in Washington. "We offered item-by-item steps we can take toward multilateral talks, and the U.S. side said they will study them."

Yoon did not elaborate. Powell said North Korea must end its nuclear proliferation activities and other aspects of its military buildup before Washington will consider friendly gestures such as aid programs.

Also Saturday, an unidentified North's Foreign Ministry spokesman assailed Washington's goal of "regime change" in Iraq. "The arrogant and outrageous behavior of the U.S. that adopted it as its national policy to kill the state leader of (another) country is typical state terrorism that can never be tolerated," he was quoted as saying by Pyongyang's official KCNA news agency.

In Seoul, Japan's defense chief, Shigeru Ishiba, and South Korean Defense Minister Cho Young-kil held annual talk on defense Saturday and vowed to maintain "close cooperation to bring a peaceful solution to the nuclear issue," Cho's ministry said in a statement.

Japan launched its first spy satellites Friday to monitor North Korea's missile development and suspected nuclear weapons programs. North Korea accused Tokyo of sparking a regional arms race and committing a hostile act with the satellite launch. North Korea earlier hinted it might test-fire a long-range missile in response, but Japanese and South Korean officials said there was no indication it was being prepared.

Washington Post

Citing Iraq, N. Korea Signals Hard Line on Weapons Issues

By Doug Struck - 29 March 2003

Tokyo -- North Korea signaled today it is learning a lesson from the war in Iraq -- though not the one the Bush administration had wanted. The government's official party newspaper said that Iraq's experience proves that North Korea must not submit to international nuclear inspectors or agree to disarm.

North Korea "would have already met the same miserable fate as Iraq's had it compromised . . . and accepted the demand raised by the imperialists and its followers for nuclear inspection and disarmament," said a commentary in the ruling Korean Workers' Party newspaper, Rodong Shinmun.

The newspaper's editorials, though often blustery with propaganda, are watched closely by foreign officials as a sign of the thinking of officials in the North Korean capital, Pyongyang.

"It is clear that the destiny of Iraq is at stake due to its concession and compromise," the paper said. "No one should expect [North Korea] to make any slightest concession or compromise."

The editorial appeared to offer little hope for resolution of the impasse over North Korea's nuclear programs. U.S. officials have demanded that North Korea agree to dismantle the programs, which it charges are aimed at building nuclear weapons, to reduce some conventional military forces and agree to submit to tight verification procedures before any negotiations between the two governments begin.

In November 1994, under an agreement with the Clinton administration, North Korea began permitting limited oversight of a shuttered nuclear plant and stored nuclear energy rods by inspectors from the United Nations' International Atomic Energy Agency. They were expelled in December, two months after the Bush administration demanded an end to what it said was a separate program by Pyongyang to try to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons.

Today's commentary follows another warning that officials in Pyongyang believe North Korea is next on the Bush administration's list of preemptive wars.

"After the Sept. 11 incident, [the Bush administration] formulated the 'anti-terrorist' strategy as the military strategy . . . and opened its first act with the Afghanistan war, and its second with the Iraqi war," said a Rodong Shinmun commentary Friday, according to North Korea's Central News Agency. "There is no doubt that they will open its third act on the Korean Peninsula."

South Korean officials have been trying in recent days to calm what they see as acute fears in North Korea of an invasion by U.S. forces. South Korea's new foreign minister, Yoon Young Kwan, appealed in Washington Friday for a bold strategy from the Bush administration to reach out to North Korea with a dramatic act similar to President Richard M. Nixon's surprise visit to communist China in 1972.

Secretary of State Colin L. Powell quickly dismissed the idea. After meeting with Yoon Friday, he repeated the U.S. demand that North Korea first agree to dismantle its nuclear programs and enter multilateral negotiations, which North Korean officials have repeatedly rejected.

Washington Post

South Korea Sends Envoy to Russia, China on Nuclear Row

By Samuel Len – 29 March 2003

Seoul (Reuters) - South Korea said on Sunday it is sending a new high-level envoy to Russia and China to bolster support for its policy of peacefully resolving the crisis over North Korea's nuclear ambitions.

Word of the trip by national security advisor Ra Jong-yil came hours after North Korea vowed to resist all international demands on it to allow nuclear inspections or to disarm, saying Iraq had made this mistake and was now paying the price.

"The national security advisor plans to exchange opinions with both countries on the North Korean nuclear problem and political issues regarding the Korean peninsula and Northeast Asia," President Roh Moo-hyun's office said in a brief statement.

Ra would arrive in Moscow on Monday and fly to the Chinese capital on Wednesday, the statement said.

The crisis began in October, when U.S. officials said North Korea had admitted covertly working to develop nuclear arms. Pyongyang insists any nuclear program it may have would be purely defensive in face of what it perceives as an American military threat to its very existence.

The isolated Stalinist state has voiced deep distrust of U.S. intentions ever since President Bush bracketed it with Iraq and Iran in an "axis of evil," accused of seeking to acquire and spread weapons of mass destruction.

Watching the U.S.-led Iraqi invasion unfold, Pyongyang has openly speculated that it could be next on Bush's hit list.

North Korea's Foreign Ministry spokesman accused the United States late on Saturday of adopting a national policy to remove those heads of states it considered hostile. "The U.S. is openly asserting that the basic aim of its Iraqi war is to overthrow the Iraqi leadership," the North's official Korean Central News Agency quoted the spokesman as saying.

"The arrogant and outrageous behavior of the U.S. that adopted it as its national policy to kill the state leader of another country is typical state terrorism that can never be tolerated," the spokesman said.

Before Ra's trip, other high-level South Korean officials pressed Washington and Tokyo to accept the need for a peaceful resolution of the nuclear crisis.

Late last week, Foreign Minister Yoon Young-kwan met Secretary of State Colin Powell and suggested Washington take the initiative to improve ties with Pyongyang along the lines of the Nixon administration's overtures to communist China in the 1970s.

On Saturday, Seoul's defense minister met his Japanese counterpart in Seoul and reiterated South Korea's policy of dealing with North Korea through talks.

Diplomatic initiatives currently appear stalled. Pyongyang has insisted on direct bilateral negotiations with the United States with the aim of signing a non-aggression pact that would guarantee the North Korean state's survival.

U.S. policy is to have the crisis discussed in a multilateral forum to include North Korea's Asian neighbors, including South Korea, China, Russia and Japan.

LAATSTE ONTWIKKELINGEN ROND IRAN

US State Department

Iran's Secret Nuclear Development Belies "Peaceful Purposes" Claim

10 March 2003

Iran's secret development of a nuclear fuel processing facility "refutes the claim that it was all for peaceful purposes," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher told reporters at the department's noon briefing March 10.

Boucher pointed out that there is no economic justification for such a program for a state, such as Iran, that is so rich in oil and gas. "Iran flares off more gas every year than they would ever get from these reactors that they're talking about building", he said.

Pointing to Iran's announcement that it would soon begin operating a uranium conversion facility to provide more material for the enrichment facility, Boucher said, "Iran and Russia agreed that Russia would provide all the fuel for the life of the reactor that's under construction at Bushehr, and that Russia would take back any spent fuel. So again, that's one more reason why they don't need these other parts of the fuel cycle."

"States with peaceful nuclear energy programs have nothing to hide from the international community and the International Atomic Energy Agency. Iran has done its best to hide these other nuclear fuel cycle activities," Boucher said.

Iran was the only state that did not accept the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) call in 1992 for states to declare new nuclear facilities before construction. If Iran has now agreed to do so, Boucher said, "that would only be because of intense pressure."

Lebanese Daily Star

IAEA demands more inspections of Iranian nuclear sites

Compiled by Daily Star Staff – 12 March 2003

The International Atomic Energy Agency on Tuesday demanded that Iran, accused by the United States of seeking to build nuclear weapons, accept more inspections of its nuclear sites.

Also on Tuesday, Iranian officials said that Iran's first nuclear power plant was nearing completion and that Russia has installed all major components needed for the plant to operate. "Over 70 percent of the work has been accomplished," Assadollah Sabori, deputy head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran said in a press conference.

"The main thing left is shipping nuclear fuel from Russia, which is expected to take place in May," he said. Separately, IAEA head Mohammed al-Baradei told reporters, "I have impressed on the Iranian authorities the need to be fully transparent, the need to sign the additional protocol."

The protocol would oblige Iran to allow surprise visits and extensive monitoring of its nuclear installations. Baradei said the agency was pursuing talks with the Iranians, and that he would inform the IAEA's board of governors next week of their progress.

The United States has accused Iran of seeking to secretly develop nuclear weapons, a charge Iran denies, saying the plant is needed for the country's growing electricity needs.

Sabori addressed the press after more than 80 journalists and photographers were allowed to tour the under-construction nuclear plant in southern Iran for the first time Tuesday.

Steam generators, pressure vessels, pressurizers and reactor cooling plants have already been installed. The components, shipped to Iran in the past 18 months, form the core of a nuclear reactor. Sabori said 1,100 Russian experts and over 3,000 Iranians are working at the plant's first unit. He said Iran had the option of setting up three other reactors at Bushehr, 1,200 kilometers southwest of the capital Tehran. He said Iran has agreed to return the spent nuclear fuel back to Russia but that some formalities remained before the agreement is officially signed by Iran.

The 1,000 megawatt Bushehr plant is part of Iran's efforts to meet the growing electricity needs of its 66 million population. Iran has approved a plan to produce 6,000 megawatts of power through nuclear energy by 2020.

On Monday, the White House challenged Iran's claims that the plant is strictly for energy production.

“We completely reject Iran’s claim that it is doing so for peaceful purposes,” said White House spokesman Ari Fleischer, saying Iran sits on one of the world’s largest oil and gas reserves.

State Department spokesman Richard Boucher called Iran’s nuclear weapons program robust. But Naser Shariflou, head of Bushehr, said Tuesday that it is a light water plant. “Simply, it is impossible to make a bomb with a plant like this,” he said. Shariflou said the International Atomic Energy Organization has already installed preparatory equipment, including cameras to monitor the plant’s activity. “Everything will be under the direct supervision of the IAEA. Even the spent nuclear fuel will be watched closely by IAEA cameras here before it is shipped to Russia,” he said.

Rasul Sediqi, an Iranian nuclear scientist, said the plutonium obtained from the Bushehr plant will be of no use for nuclear weapons. “The plutonium obtained consists of plutonium 239 and 240. And it’s extremely difficult to separate them because Iran doesn’t have such an advanced technology to do so,” Sediqi told The Associated Press.

Plutonium 239 is the weapons-grade plutonium used in nuclear weapons. American analysts, however, said it is possible to make weapons out of material that contains 240, “as long as it is not too high a percentage,” said Joseph Cirincione, director of the Washington-based Non-Proliferation Project Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. “This provides Iran with a source of weapons material, if they have the facility to reprocess the fuel and separate the plutonium.”

David Albright, head of the Institute for Science and International Security in Washington, said Tuesday that Bushehr can be used to produce weapons-grade plutonium: “Plutonium with a high fraction of plutonium 240, commonly called reactor-grade plutonium, can be used to make a crude nuclear explosive,” Albright said.

Guardian

Iran puts nuclear reactor on show to counter weapons programme claims

Dan De Luce in Bushehr - Wednesday March 12, 2003

Iran said yesterday it had nothing to hide about its nuclear programme, allowing journalists an unprecedented visit to a nuclear reactor in the southern port of Bushehr.

But government officials would not allow cameras inside the reactor and have yet to permit reporters to see uranium enrichment plants elsewhere in Iran.

"We're showing our willingness to be transparent to the world," Assadollah Sabori, vice-president of Iran's atomic energy agency, told a news conference.

Built with the help of Russian engineers, the Bushehr reactor has been strictly off-limits to journalists until now but the government appeared eager to counter allegations from Washington that it is moving ahead with a nuclear weapons programme.

Mr Sabori complained that US lobbying was preventing Iran from obtaining technical assistance for a programme that he said is dedicated entirely to peaceful purposes.

He also denied a report in Time magazine that Tehran had violated the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty by introducing uranium gas into centrifuges at a uranium enrichment plant in the town of Natanz, 25 miles south-east of Kashan.

Since Iran announced last month that it had discovered uranium ore and intended to retain spent fuel, US officials have expressed growing concern that the country is making strides towards developing nuclear weapons.

"It's hard to get a view into exactly what their motivations are, but very clearly they are pursuing nuclear weapons," US national security spokesman Sean McCormack said on Monday.

Guarded by anti-aircraft guns and watchtowers, the nuclear power plant has been under construction for nearly 30 years and was bombed by Saddam Hussein's air force during the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s.

One German-designed reactor, which pre-dates the revolution that overthrew the US-backed monarchy in 1979, still sits half-finished. A second reactor with a Russian design is close to completion, one of several planned by the Iranian government.

Although Iran has vast oil and gas reserves, government officials say nuclear power is required in the long term to meet the country's growing energy needs.

The reactor site, on the Gulf coast, is humming with construction activity, with signs in Russian and Farsi guiding the 4,000 workers around the huge concrete dome.

Moscow agreed to help Iran build the Bushehr reactor but promised to return all spent fuel to Russia to allay US fears that it would be diverted to weapons production. The first shipment of enriched uranium from Russia is due to arrive in May, officials said yesterday.

Iran's surprise admission last month that it would manage the entire fuel cycle, including spent fuel, revived Western suspicions and appeared to undermine the Russian agreement.

Russian foreign minister Igor Ivanov, who visited Tehran yesterday, defended the Islamic republic's nuclear programme. "Iran has no plans to produce nuclear military projects. This is a fundamental truth," he said.

However, Russia's atomic energy minister, Alexander Rumyantsev, said yesterday that although Moscow was helping Iran develop nuclear power, it could not judge whether Iran was secretly developing nuclear weapons as the US alleges.

He appeared to be backtracking from a previous assertion that Iran was incapable of building nuclear weapons after Washington rejected on Monday Tehran's claims that its nuclear aims were peaceful and said Tehran was "clearly pursuing" atomic weapons.

"While Russia is helping Iran build its nuclear power plant, it's not being informed by Iran of all the other projects that are currently under way," Mr Rumyantsev told Reuters after yesterday's news conference.

Mr Sabori told reporters in Bushehr that cooperation between Iran and Russia on nuclear power would continue and that spent fuel would be handled responsibly.

Although a signatory to the non-proliferation treaty, Iran has so far refused to agree to an additional protocol to allow UN inspectors to visit declared and undeclared sites.

Inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) visited Iran last month and its head, Mohamed El Baradei, said Iran was cooperative but should sign up to the more intrusive inspection regime.

Washington Post

Envoy: Iran To Continue Its Nuclear Power Effort U.S. Claims of Weapons Program Called 'Untrue'

By Colum Lynch – 13 March 2003

United Nations -- Iran intends to continue expanding its civilian nuclear energy program despite U.S. allegations that it is a cover for a secret nuclear weapons program, a senior Iranian official said today.

Javad Zarif, Iran's ambassador to the United Nations, said his government has no intention of developing nuclear weapons but that it would seek to aggressively develop its nuclear power industry because of fears the United States may persuade foreign suppliers, including Russia, China and Ukraine, to stop shipments of nuclear components to Iran.

"You don't expect Iran to sit still," he said in an interview at the Iranian mission to the United Nations. "We don't have any confidence that two years down the road, three years down the road, the pressure by the United States may or may not work on our suppliers. We have to create a source of self-sufficiency, which will include a fuel cycle program."

The Bush administration has said it suspects Iran is enriching uranium for nuclear weapons at a facility near the town of Natanz in central Iran. The existence of the nuclear facility was made public in August by an Iranian opposition group, the National Council of Resistance of Iran. U.S. officials assert that when the project is completed in 2005, it will be capable of producing several nuclear bombs a year.

Zarif denied the charge. He said Tehran did not initially disclose its efforts to develop the Natanz nuclear "fuel cycle" plant because of concerns the United States would pressure foreign suppliers to withdraw from the project.

But he insisted that Iran's representative to the International Atomic Energy Agency informed the nuclear watchdog of the country's nuclear activities in June, more than a month before the facility's existence became public. A spokesman for the Vienna-based IAEA, reached by telephone tonight, said he could not immediately confirm the Iranian envoy's claim.

"We have nothing to hide; we played a very straightforward, transparent game with the IAEA," Zarif said. "If the United States did not follow this policy of simply trying to deny Iran access to nuclear technology for any purpose, I don't think you would have had all these scenarios that we are confronting. Unless the United States changes its behavior, we will see more of the same."

As a signatory to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, Iran is permitted to develop nuclear energy under the supervision of the IAEA. Under the terms of the agreement, Iran is allowed to enrich uranium. It is under no legal obligation to declare the facility until it began enriching uranium.

"The United States does not believe in the IAEA," Zarif said. "The United States wants Iran not to have nuclear power, period."

The IAEA's director general, Mohamed ElBaradei, visited Natanz on Feb. 21. He found a fully operational plant with 160 gas centrifuges for enriching uranium. When completed, the facility is expected to hold 5,000

centrifuges, enough to produce at least two nuclear bombs a year. The discovery has prompted the agency to renew pressure on Iran to sign a 1997 protocol that would allow international inspectors greater authority to conduct inspections on short notice and to take advanced environmental sampling. Iran has declined to ratify the protocol.

The IAEA board of governors is expected to review a report on the agency's investigation into the Iranian facility. "I believe once this report is out, it will be clear that all these fictions . . . will prove to be untrue," Zarif said.

Tehran Times

Iran, Russia Determined to Continue Nuke Cooperation

15 March 2003

MOSCOW -- Russian Energy Minister Alexander Romyantsov said Iran and Russia are well determined to continue their nuclear cooperation despite the U.S. pressure on Russia to stop nuke works in Iran.

In an interview with the Moscow-based 'Komersant' daily, Romyantsov referred to his talks with the U.S. Energy Minister Abraham Spencer in which the latter raised the Russian nuke cooperation with Iran and said the U.S. pressure had not made Russia change its previous position regarding the nuke cooperation with Iran.

In response to a question on what would be the attitude of Russia if Iran decides to produce atomic weaponry, he said Iran would remain committed to the rules and regulations of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

He said the discovery of the uranium in Iran was not something new but it has been put on the spotlight recently due to the wide media reports.

He said Iran and Russia are now undergoing process to provide the fuel for the Bushehr nuclear plants and the return of the used fuel to Russia, reported IRNA.

Technicians work full steam at a site near this southern port city to catch up with a tight schedule to bring Iran's first nuclear energy plant into operation -- most probably during the first half of 2004.

Main gadgets have been ferried from Russia to a barren coast, a stone's throw away from the Persian Gulf. They have been assembled and installed, but the system needs one key component to go into motion: nuclear fuel.

The construction of the Bushehr Plant started in 1975 by Germany's Siemens, but the company pulled out of the contract following the Islamic Revolution in 1979. Russia resumed building the plant in 1995 after clinching an 800-million-dollar deal with the Islamic republic.

At present, more than 1,100 Russian experts and 3,000 Iranians work on the Bushehr Plant, some 750 Iranian experts will operate it once it comes on stream.

Iran has also plans for a nuclear fuel cycle, which was announced by President Mohammad Khatami last month for the first time as he revealed that the country had started excavating uranium ore from a mine, 200km from the central city of Yazd, to produce fuel for its nuclear plants.

The announcement came shortly after U.S. officials were cited late last year as alleging that American satellites had spotted two sites in Arak and Natanz which suggested they could be used for making nuclear weapons.

Tehran Times

Bush Renews Sanctions on Iran

15 March 2003

WASHINGTON -- President George W. Bush on Thursday renewed sanctions barring U.S. firms and citizens from oil dealings with Iran, citing the "unusual and extraordinary threat" posed by Tehran, the White House announced. In a decree, Bush accused Iran of "support for international terrorism, efforts to undermine the Middle East peace process, and acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them."

The U.S. leader's action -- which extends by one year sanctions initially imposed by then-president Bill Clinton on March 15, 1995 -- comes amid fresh tensions between Washington and Tehran over Iran's nuclear program.

Testifying before a congressional panel on Thursday, Secretary of State Colin Powell repeated U.S. concerns that Iran is masking a covert nuclear weapons program under the guise of civilian atomic energy projects.

"We are deeply concerned about Iran's efforts to not only have nuclear power but to use that nuclear power infrastructure to develop the capability to produce nuclear weapons," Powell told a House Budget Subcommittee.

He said the United States had not given any kind of ultimatum to Iran to halt its activities but said Tehran was well aware of the concerns.

"We've made it clear to the Iranians and to those who support Iranian nuclear efforts and missile developments that we find this to be irresponsible action in their part," he said.

Powell appeared to refer to Russia which is assisting Iran with its Bushehr nuclear reactor and has been a frequent target of U.S. criticism for that help.

The White House and State Department said earlier this week that longstanding U.S. concerns about Iran's program were made even graver by recent information that its efforts were far more advanced than previously thought. "Iran now openly says that it is pursuing a complete nuclear fuel cycle," White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said on Monday. "We completely reject Iran's claim that it is doing so for peaceful purposes."

State Department Spokesman Richard Boucher said Iran's claim that its nuclear interests were based solely on energy purposes made no sense given the tremendous natural gas and oil deposits to which it has access.

On Tuesday, Washington joined a call from the International Atomic Energy Agency for Iran to sign a new protocol with the IAEA that would oblige it to allow more inspections and extensive monitoring of its nuclear sites.

The Bushehr nuclear facility in southern Iran is under constant supervision of the IAEA.

Guardian

UN alarm at Iran's nuclear programme

Ian Traynor - Tuesday March 18, 2003

The UN's nuclear watchdog demanded greater access to Iran's nuclear programme yesterday, amid growing anxiety in the west that Tehran is much closer to building a nuclear bomb than previously feared.

Mohamed ElBaradei, the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna, said Iran had nearly completed the uranium enrichment plant which is at the centre of US accusations that Tehran wants to develop nuclear weapons, and was working on another plant that is even bigger.

Dr ElBaradei called on Iran to agree on a more intrusive monitoring regime at its nuclear sites to help dispel fears that it was intent on producing weapons-grade uranium.

Along with Iraq and North Korea, Iran is one of President George Bush's "axis of evil" rogue states with ambitions to build nuclear weapons.

It was only six months ago that the IAEA discovered Iran was building centrifuge plants for processing nuclear fuel at a secret site 200 miles south of Tehran. When operational in a couple of years, the centrifuges could generate enough weapons-grade uranium for several nuclear warheads.

The discovery of the centrifuge project at Natanz, in western Iran, alarmed US officials who had long argued that Tehran was trying to build a bomb, but who had focused their concerns on the power station being built by Russians at Bushehr in the far south of the country.

The Natanz revelations showed that "Iran is much further along, with a far more robust nuclear weapons development programme than anyone said it had", the US secretary of state, Colin Powell, told CNN last week.

Although Iran is dependent on Russian supplies of nuclear fuel for the 1,000-megawatt reactor being built at Bushehr, Tehran also recently announced it is to mine its own uranium and process it for nuclear fuel, raising the possibility of generating plutonium for a bomb.

The Russian nuclear fuel is expected to start arriving within weeks for the power station which is expected to come on line later this year.

Russia has resisted intense US pressure to halt its nuclear cooperation with Iran, maintaining that Iran has neither the capacity nor the expertise to build the bomb. But Moscow appears to be backtracking.

"While Russia is helping Iran build its nuclear power plant, it's not being informed of all the other projects that are currently under way," the Russian atomic energy minister, Alexander Rumyantsev, said last week in Vienna.

Dr ElBaradei became the first international official to be shown the Natanz site just under a month ago. He reported yesterday that a pilot uranium enrichment plant at Natanz "is nearly ready for operation, and a much larger enrichment facility [is] still under construction at the same site".

He demanded that Iran, which is a signatory to the nuclear non-proliferation treaty, agree to an "additional protocol" under the IAEA's nuclear inspection rights, which would enable more intrusive monitoring.

This inspection regime was devised specifically to tackle Saddam Hussein's nuclear effort, discovered by the IAEA after the first Gulf war.

"The nuclear arms control regime is being challenged and is clearly under stress," Dr ElBaradei warned yesterday.

President Bush last week extended US economic sanctions on Iran for another year, prompting calls yesterday in Tehran for a policy of North Korean-style non-cooperation with the IAEA.

But Dr ElBaradei said that the Iranian government had agreed to supply early information on all new nuclear facilities and that his experts were discussing with Tehran "a number of safeguard issues that need to be clarified and actions that need to be taken".

LAATSTE ONTWIKKELINGEN ROND INDIA EN PAKISTAN

Washington Post

Pakistan, India Test Short-Range Missiles

By Rama Lakshmi – 27 March 2003

NEW DELHI, March 26 -- India and Pakistan test-fired short-range missiles today, a day after each side blamed the other for rising violence in the disputed region of Kashmir.

Although it was unclear which country launched first, the tit-for-tat tests came in the wake of renewed tension between the South Asian rivals after a massacre on Monday of 24 Hindus by suspected Islamic militants in Kashmir, which is claimed by both countries.

India said it test-fired a Prithvi surface-to-surface missile, capable of carrying a one-ton nuclear warhead, from its seaside testing site in the eastern state of Orissa. A spokesman for India's Defense Research and Development Organization said the missile has a range of 95 miles. Testing of the missile, abandoned twice in December because of technical problems, was a "routine exercise to improve the country's missile defense system," the spokesman said.

India has conducted 16 trials of the army version of the missile since 1988.

Pakistan tested its short-range, nuclear-capable Abdali missile, which is capable of carrying nuclear or conventional warheads. It has a range of about 132 miles and could hit parts of India.

"Pakistan also test-fired a missile today, but we informed India about it," said Aziz Ahmed Khan, a spokesman for the Foreign Ministry.

Khan said India had not informed Pakistani officials about the Prithvi test. He declined to say whether the Pakistani test occurred before or after the Indian test.

The tests occurred after a new round of violent attacks in Kashmir, which has been the focus of two wars and countless skirmishes between the nuclear-armed rivals. India accuses Pakistan of stoking the 13-year-old armed revolt there, which officials say has killed more than 35,000 people.

Last year, the two countries' armies faced off along their border for 10 months after India blamed Pakistan for sheltering militants who staged an attack on the grounds of India's Parliament building. Tensions eased after mediation conducted by the United States.

"We have reason to believe that all these terrorist activities are being masterminded from across the border by our neighbor Pakistan," India's minister of external affairs, Yashwant Sinha, told reporters Tuesday.

COMMENTAAR EN VRAGEN

Irak

Ons laatste nummer van F&R (nr 22) handelde over de laatste stappen naar de oorlog tegen Irak. Zoals uit het in de artikelen geschetste verloop van de gebeurtenissen blijkt, waren slechts een paar landen overtuigd van de noodzaak om op dat ogenblik oorlog te voeren. De Britse en Amerikaanse regeringen besloten desalniettemin om deze op gang te brengen.

Het is nu van belang of de Brits/Amerikaanse strijdkrachten er in slagen om het bewijs van massavernietigingswapens te vinden, aangezien dit een van de aangevoerde redenen was om de oorlog door te zetten. De Nederlandse regering stuurde op 11 maart een brief naar de Tweede Kamer waarin ze concludeerde dat de Iraakse regering tegenwerkte bij het inspectieproces. Uit een latere verklaring van de minister president op 17 maart en een brief aan de Kamer op 18 maart bleek dat de demissionaire regering had besloten om de oorlog in politieke maar niet militaire (geen 'actieve militaire bijdrage') zin te ondersteunen (zie voor alle drie de documenten F&R 22).

Andere ontwikkelingen

Naast de oorlog tegen Irak zijn er ook gevaarlijke ontwikkelingen aangaande massavernietigingswapens en andere technologie geweest in andere regio's. Het SORT verdrag voor de vermindering van Amerikaanse en Russische strategische kernwapens werd eerder in F&R besproken. Na de ondertekening vorig jaar mei moest het verdrag ook geratificeerd worden. Dat is wel het geval in het Amerikaanse senaat, maar niet in Rusland. Helaas stelt het verdrag weinig voor, omdat het slechts voorziet in het opslaan van kernkoppen, en niet hun vernietiging. Van een verificatie procedure is geen sprake. Desalniettemin beschouwt de Amerikaanse regering dit als een succesvolle stap in nucleaire ontwapening, zoals blijkt uit het interview met dhr Rademaker, onderminister voor wapenbeheersing. Er is een duidelijke kloof tussen de beweringen die in dat interview worden gemaakt aangaande de Amerikaanse steun voor multilaterale processen en de aaneenschakeling van unilaterale stappen die door de regering van president Bush de afgelopen jaren genomen zijn. Het al bekende nucleaire aanvalsbeleid (behandeld in eerdere f&r's) is de afgelopen maand aangevuld met verzoeken aan het congres om mini-kernwapens te ontwikkelen, plus een besluit om een antiraket systeem te plaatsen dat niet aan de minimale test eisen voldoet. Daar wordt \$9.1 mld aan uitgegeven in het komende begrotingsjaar. De NAVO bondgenoten worden daar op bilaterale basis bij betrokken: de Britse minister Hoon en zijn Deense collega hebben beide in principe goedkeuring gegeven aan het Amerikaanse verzoek om de radarsystemen te Flyingdales (Engeland) en Thule (Groenland) te mogen opwaarderen om ze geschikt te maken voor het systeem. De Groenlandse regering heeft haar bezwaren hiertegen al kenbaar gemaakt.

Deze negatieve ontwikkelingen kwamen helder aan de orde in de vergadering van de Conference on Disarmament (CD) in Genève in januari, waar zowel de Iraanse als Koreaanse nucleaire ontwikkelingen aan de orde kwamen zonder zicht op een oplossing. Noord Korea zou op weg zijn naar het bouwen van een aantal kernwapens en een raket die ze naar de westkust van de VS kon brengen, volgens de CIA. Deze vermelde ook dat die raket nog niet getest was, terwijl onduidelijk bleef of Noord Korea daadwerkelijk al kernwapens bezit. In de CD ontstond ook een woordenwisseling over de precieze status van het Noord-Koreaanse lidmaatschap van het Non-Proliferatie Verdrag. Een Zweedse diplomaat meende dat Noord Korea nog niet het verdrag had verlaten, Noord Korea zei van wel. Dit had te maken met de 'geldigheid' van een eerder ingezet uittredingsproces in 1994, dat destijds was stopgezet voordat het de in het verdrag vastgelegde 90 dagen grens bereikte. Ook rondom Iran ontstond controverse, het land zou met behulp van Rusland bezig zijn de basis elementen voor de productie van kernwapens op gang te brengen.

Beide landen maken samen met Irak deel uit van de door Bush begin 2002 gedefinieerd 'as van het kwaad'. Te vrezen valt dat de behandeling van Irak ook op Iran en Noord Korea zal worden toegepast. Intussen werden in India en Pakistan ook raketten getest die mogelijkwijs geschikt zijn als draagsysteem voor kernwapens.

Vragen

Aangezien veel van de hier beschreven ontwikkelingen te maken hebben met het Amerikaanse unilateralisme, is het van belang dat de komende Nederlandse regering hierover een positie ontwikkelt. Het gaat om de volgende zaken:

- De mogelijk confrontatie tussen de VS en Iran
- De confrontatie tussen de VS en Noord Korea
- de voortgezette ontwikkeling van een anti-raketschild door de VS samen met Denemarken en het Verenigd Koninkrijk: heeft dit gevolgen voor Nederland?
- De ontmanteling van multilaterale afspraken door de VS

KRONIEK 2003

20 januari-28 maart	Conference on Disarmament, Geneve
21-23 januari	EU Commissie buitenlandse zaken, mensenrechten, gemeenschappelijke veiligheid en defensiebeleid, Brussel
22 januari	Tweede Kamerverkiezingen in Nederland
27-28 januari	EU Commissie buitenlandse zaken, mensenrechten, gemeenschappelijke veiligheid en defensiebeleid, Brussel
28 januari	Laatste dag verkiezingsreces
6-7 februari	Jaarlijkse Munich Security Conference
18-19 februari	EU Commissie buitenlandse zaken, mensenrechten, gemeenschappelijke veiligheid en defensiebeleid, Brussel
20-21 februari	OVSE Parlementaire Assemblee winterbijeenkomst in Wenen
28 februari-9 maart	NPT PrepCom, Geneve
11 maart	Provinciale Statenverkiezingen in Nederland
17-19 maart	EU Commissie buitenlandse zaken, mensenrechten, gemeenschappelijke veiligheid en defensiebeleid, Brussel
24-25 maart	EU Commissie buitenlandse zaken, mensenrechten, gemeenschappelijke veiligheid en defensiebeleid, Brussel
28-30 april	EU Commissie buitenlandse zaken, mensenrechten, gemeenschappelijke veiligheid en defensiebeleid, Brussel
12-16 mei	8 ^e Sessie van de OPCW Conference of the States Parties, Den Haag
20-22 mei	EU Commissie buitenlandse zaken, mensenrechten, gemeenschappelijke veiligheid en defensiebeleid, Brussel
24-28 mei	NAVO Parlementaire Assemblee in Praag
30 mei	Gezamenlijke EU-G8 bijeenkomst, Sint Petersburg
1-2 juni	G8-bijeenkomst in Evain-les-Bains (ovb)
2-4 juni	WEU Assemblee, Parijs
10-11 juni	EU Commissie buitenlandse zaken, mensenrechten, gemeenschappelijke veiligheid en defensiebeleid, Brussel
12-27 juni	Conference on Disarmament, Geneve
16-17 juni	EU Commissie buitenlandse zaken, mensenrechten, gemeenschappelijke veiligheid en defensiebeleid, Brussel
5-9 juli	12 ^e OVSE Parlementaire Assemblee in Rotterdam
7-8 juli	EU Commissie buitenlandse zaken, mensenrechten, gemeenschappelijke veiligheid en defensiebeleid, Brussel
11 juli-24 augustus	Reces Europees Parlement
15-19 september	IAEA General Conference in Wenen
28 augustus-10 sept	Conference on Disarmament, Geneve
7-11 november	NAVO Parlementaire Assemblee in Orlando
10-14 november	BWC States Parties bijeenkomst, Geneve
1-3 december	WEU Assemblee, Parijs

FACTS AND REPORTS

Eerder verschenen in de reeks PENN – NL Facts and Reports:

1. US unilateralism – official foreign comments
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Relevante delen van de partijprogramma's van de Nederlandse politieke partijen, plus citaten van politici op het terrein van oorlog en vrede.
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Overzicht van recente ontwikkelingen in de transatlantische betrekkingen, met name binnen de NAVO, mede naar aanleiding van uitspraken in de State of the Union.
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Periodiek overzicht van ontwikkelingen rond kernwapens in de internationale en nationale politiek, met uitgebreide hoeveelheid bijlagen.
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Overzicht april 2001 – april 2002
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Documenten en artikelen over het ontslag van directeur-generaal Bustani van het OPCW
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11. Massavernietigingswapens in het Midden-Oosten (1) – Egypte, Israël, Syrië
Basisinformatie over de proliferatie van nucleaire, biologische en chemische wapens in Egypte, Israël en Syrië en verklaringen van de Nederlandse regering hierover
12. Amerikaans unilateralisme II – officiële reacties
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13. Aanval op Irak – de kwestie van de massavernietigingswapens; feiten, documenten en overwegingen
14. Aanval op Irak (2) – recente ontwikkelingen
15. Documenten First Committee Verenigde Naties 2002 – resoluties, verklaringen, rapporten
16. De NAVO-top in Praag – documenten
17. Aanval op Irak (3) – het inspectieregime
18. Internationaal veiligheidsbeleid Verenigde Staten – officiële documenten en reacties van de Nederlandse regering
19. Veiligheidsvraagstukken en de verkiezingen (2) – standpunten van de politieke partijen
Een update voor de verkiezingen van 22 januari 2003
20. Korea, de tweede crisis
21. Aanval op Irak (4) – de aanloop
22. Aanval op Irak (5) – Vooravond van de aanval

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