



BEYOND NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION



NUMBER 08

A Monthly Newsletter for Strengthening Awareness of Nuclear Abolition

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On Nuke Disarmament, It's Still "You First"

Analysis by Haider Rizvi

UNITED NATIONS (IPS) - Is the ongoing controversy over Iran's nuclear programme helping to advance the United Nations' agenda on nuclear disarmament? To a number of diplomats and experts who have participated in past U.N. discussions on the spread of nuclear weapons, the answer is, yes – although not necessarily for the expected reasons.

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MIDEAST: 'France, U.S. Pushing Arabs Into Nuclear Race'

By Fareed Mahdy*

ISTANBUL (IPS) - The decision by the oil-rich United Arab Emirates to build nuclear reactors has unleashed frenetic, politically backed competition between giant corporations from France, the U.S., Japan and South Korea to win contracts estimated at more than 40 billion dollars. *MORE >> <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=48990>*

U.S.: Clinton Calls for Strengthened IAEA Powers

By Jim Lobe

WASHINGTON (IPS) - U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton Wednesday called for strengthening the authority of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to inspect suspected nuclear-related facilities and ruled out lifting sanctions against North Korea until it took "verifiable and irreversible" steps toward denuclearisation. *MORE >> <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=48952>*

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U.S.-JAPAN ACCORD: Seeking a Nuke Free World

BY ERNEST COREA IDN-InDepthNews Service WASHINGTON DC (IDN) - Japan, the only country to be the target of atom bombs, and the U.S., the only country to drop them, firmly committed themselves to working towards a nuclear weapons free world, when President Barack Obama visited Japan during his first presidential tour of Asia. *MORE >> <http://www.indepthnews.net/news/news.php?key1=2009-11-19%2010:19:41&key2=1>*

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U.S.-Japan Accord: Seeking a Nuke Free World

BY ERNEST COREA

WASHINGTON DC (IDN) - Japan, the only country to be the target of atom bombs, and the U.S., the only country to drop them, firmly committed themselves to working towards a nuclear weapons free world, when President Barack Obama visited Japan during his first presidential tour of Asia.

The combination of these two nations in this endeavour gives their commitment special relevance and strength. It also offers the lesson to others that reaching out to the future is more creative than wallowing in the past.

Nuclear disarmament was high up on the agenda during Obama's state visit, and a 'Joint Statement toward a world without nuclear weapons' embodied the views and hopes of both governments. Both governments also welcomed current international interest in nuclear disarmament and reaffirmed their "determination to realize such a world".

For Obama, the joint statement confirmed his belief that nuclear disarmament can serve as the foundation of global peace and security. His approach to nuclear disarmament was endorsed by the Nobel Committee whose official statement announcing the award of the Peace Prize to Obama said that the committee "attached special importance to Obama's vision of and work for a world without nuclear weapons".

For Japan, the emphasis on nuclear disarmament was a reminder of its unique experience, and reaffirmed its insistence that never again should such a human tragedy be visited on any country.

In this context, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama and Obama welcomed the support received for recent nuclear disarmament initiatives at the UN in which Japan and the U.S. played leading roles. They pledged to take practical steps that would create conditions in which the challenge of nuclear disarmament might be met. Some of the steps described in the joint statement are summarized below.

Nuclear Disarmament: The U.S. will continue to seek early conclusion of a START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) follow-on treaty through negotiations with the Russian Federation. The U.S. and Japan urge all states that hold nuclear weapons to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in their national security strategy. They also called on states that hold nuclear weapons to respect the principles of transparency, verifiability and irreversibility in the process of nuclear disarmament.

Nuclear Non-Proliferation: Both countries reaffirmed the importance of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). They will cooperate on matters connected with the 2010 NPT Review Conference so that the treaty may be strengthened, and its central role in international non-proliferation efforts renewed. They expect the review conference to recommend realistic and achievable goals to strengthen each of the NPT's three pillars -- nuclear non-proliferation, peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and nuclear disarmament.

Test Ban Treaty: Japan welcomed the Obama administration's intention to push for ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Japan and the U.S. will work together to achieve the early entry into force of the CTBT. They are also determined to pursue the immediate commencement of negotiations on, and early conclusion of, a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty.

North Korea: In the view of both countries, North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons remains a major threat to peace and stability in Northeast Asia and the entire international community. Japan and the U.S. remain committed to the irreversible and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. They stress that the Six Party Talks remain the most effective framework to achieve these goals and they urge North Korea to return to the Six Party Talks without preconditions. >>>



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Iran: Iran's nuclear activities, in particular the recent disclosure of Iran's construction of a new facility near Qom, have reinforced the international community's concern regarding the nature of its nuclear program. Japan and the U.S. will continue to seek a comprehensive, long-term resolution of these issues, based on UN Security Council resolutions.

Nuclear Security: Both countries will cooperate in efforts to ensure the success of the 2010 Nuclear Security Summit that will be hosted by the U.S., and will as well promote regional efforts to strengthen nuclear security. Japan will host a nuclear security conference for Asian countries in Tokyo in January 2010. The U.S. welcomes this initiative, as well as Japan's decision to host the next preparatory meeting in December for the Nuclear Security Summit.

Nuclear Terrorism: Recognizing the continuing threat of nuclear terrorism, the two governments are committed to ensuring that civil nuclear materials and facilities receive the highest levels of physical protection. They also pledge their support for efforts to secure all vulnerable nuclear material around the world within four years.

IAEA: The two countries expressed support for the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and welcomed the election of the new director general, Ambassador Yukiya Amano, who is due to assume office shortly. They will continue to back all measures that will give the agency the resources, authority, and verification capabilities necessary to carry out its essential mandate.

Peaceful uses of nuclear power: Japan and the U.S. intend to work together and with other countries to explore ways to enhance a new framework for civil nuclear cooperation, including assurances of fuel supply, so that countries can access peaceful nuclear power without increasing the risks of proliferation.

LEADERSHIP

Some years ago, an Asian foreign minister said that if the international community was honest with itself, it would build a monument to the atom bomb outside UN headquarters in New York. This would be a reminder of the reality, he argued, that it is the existence of nuclear power in the world and its capability to wreak global destruction, that is the best guarantee of international peace.

Headlines are born of sentiments such as these, of course. In a violence prone world, however, where wars are fought on flimsy pretexts and countries are invaded without a semblance of rational justification, to depend on the potential of nuclear destruction as a guarantee of peace is, at the very least, a gamble.

The inevitability of nuclear power has been taken for granted over the years but, gradually, the case for nuclear disarmament has received a strong hearing. The agitation of civil society has contributed toward this trend; so has advocacy within international institutions. The recommitment of the U.S. and Japan to this objective is one more step forward.

Their joint leadership could be a lasting contribution to peace and security down the years. Obama and Hatoyama deserve to be commended for this new beginning. (IDN-InDepthNews/19.11.09)



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US-IRAN: Moving Again Toward Confrontation

Analysis by Jim Lobe*

WASHINGTON - Iran's announced intention to build 10 new nuclear enrichment plants has been deemed "unacceptable" by the administration of President Barack Obama, which warned Monday of increased pressure on Tehran if it does not soon accept Western proposals to curb its nuclear programme. <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=49482>

INDIA: Indo-U.S. Nuclear Deal on Track, But Kinks Remain

By Ranjit Devraj

NEW DELHI - As Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh wound down his state visit to the United States, Indian analysts say a major achievement has been ensuring that the civilian nuclear agreement between the two countries is on track.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=49428>

US-INDIA: State Visit by Singh Could Smooth Bumpy Relations

By Eli Clifton

WASHINGTON - The close of U.S. President Barack Obama's trip to Asia this week brought rampant speculation about what a new U.S.-China relationship will look like, but next week's state visit by Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh will broaden the focus on the rising powers which Obama must balance during his administration.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=49367>

U.S.: Obama Returns to Greater Middle East Mess

Analysis by Jim Lobe*

WASHINGTON - As Barack Obama arrives home from his weeklong tour of East Asia, he confronts a growing list of ever more urgent problems in the Greater Middle East that he inherited from George W. Bush's "global war on terror".

<http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=49352>

POLITICS: Big Breakthroughs May Elude Obama's Asia Trip

By Eli Clifton

WASHINGTON - U.S. President Barack Obama arrives in Tokyo Thursday for the first stop of his four-nation trip to Asia, but an ongoing disagreement over realignment of U.S. forces in Japan, new roadblocks to a free trade agreement (FTA) with South Korea, and continuing tussles over climate change, trade and currency issues with China have led the White House to downplay goals for the northeast Asian legs of the trip. <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=49212>

MIDEAST: Lessons from the Karine A -Déjà Vu All Over Again

Analysis by Marsha B. Cohen

WASHINGTON - As Israeli Defence Forces munitions experts sorted through 300 tonnes of weapons found on a German-owned, Cypriot-operated cargo ship flying the Antiguan flag, Israeli politicians were sifting through the various talking points that could be offloaded from the vessel. <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=49175>

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GERMAN PREVIOUS

GOLFSTAATEN: Atomstrom für die VAE – Wettstreit um die Aufträge

Von Fareed Mahdy

Istanbul (IPS/IDN*) – Mit der Entscheidung in Atomkraft zu investieren, haben die erdötreichen Vereinigten Arabischen Emirate (VAE) einen internationalen Wettstreit um die lukrativen Aufträge ausgelöst. Vor allem Frankreich, USA, Japan und Südkorea hoffen auf den Zuschlag für den Bau der Anlagen.

VAE-Präsident Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan hatte Anfang Oktober ein entsprechendes Gesetz für die Produktion und Entwicklung von Atomenergie in den insgesamt sieben Emiraten gegengezeichnet, das für den unerlaubten Besitz, Diebstahl, Transport oder Handel mit Nuklearmaterial drakonische Strafen vorsieht. Die VAE, nach Saudi-Arabien und Russland die größten Erdölproduzenten der Welt, sind Unterzeichner des Atomwaffensperrvertrags.

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/documents/GERMAN_Are_France_U.S._Pushing_Arabs_Into_Nuclear_Race.pdf

Original Article: MIDEAST: 'France, U.S. Pushing Arabs Into Nuclear Race'

ABRÜSTUNG: Hiroshima-Opfer wollen atomwaffenfreie Welt noch erleben

Von Taro Ichikawa

Hiroshima (IPS/IDN*) – "Was wir hier sehen, ist tragisch, doch noch tragischer ist all das, was spurlos verloren ist", meinte Japans ehemalige Außenministerin Yoriko Kawaguchi nach einem Besuch des 'Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum'. Die Gedenkstätte erinnert an das grenzenlose Leid, dass der Abwurf der Atombombe 1945 auf die Stadt nach sich zog. Kawaguchi und der vormalige australische Außenminister Gareth Evans teilen sich den Vorsitz der Internationalen Kommission für atomare Nichtverbreitung und Abrüstung (ICNND), die in Hiroshima vom 18. bis 20. Oktober hinter verschlossenen Türen über den Inhalt ihres Abschlussberichts für die Konferenz zur Überprüfung des Atomwaffensperrvertrags (NPT) im Mai 2010 diskutierten.

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/documents/GERMAN_DISARMAMENT_Closer_To_Making_Utopia_Feasible.pdf

Original Article: DISARMAMENT: Closer To Making Utopia Feasible?

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وكالة الأنباء العلمية انتر بريس سرفيس (أي بي إس)

قائلة أن الوكالة الذرية عاجزت عن رصد مشروع المفاعل السوري: كلينتون: "التسرع إيران بتخصيب اليورانيوم في روسيا"

بقلم جيم لوب/وكالة انتر بريس سيرفيس

واشنطن، أكتوبر (IPS) - طالبت وزيرة الخارجية الأمريكية هيلاري كلينتون، إيران بالتعجيل بتنفيذ مقترح إرسال غاليية اليورانيوم المنخفض التخصيب لديها، إلى روسيا لمعالجته لاستخدامه في إنتاج نظائر (إيوسنوب) الأدوية في مفاعل بطهران، وناشدت بتعزيز صلاحيات الوكالة الدولية للطاقة الذرية للتفتيش علي منشآت نووية مشبوهة.

وفيما أعتبر خطابا أساسيا للسياسة الخارجية الأمريكية، تناولت كلينتون بهذا في تصريحاتها الخميس، ما تردد عن موافقة إيران مبدئيا علي هذا المقترح أثناء محادثاتها مع الولايات المتحدة والنول الكسري في فيينا يوم الأربعاء 21 أكتوبر.

وشددت كلينتون في خطابها في المعهد الأمريكي للسلام الذي تدعمه الإدارة الأمريكية، علي أن تخلي كوريا الشمالية وإيران عن طموحاتهما النووية، يعد خطوة أسلسية علي مسار عدم الإنتشار النووي.

وإستبعدت رفع العقوبات المفروضة علي كوريا الشمالية، حتي تتخذ خطوات "يمكن التحقق منها ونهائية" نحو التخلي عن برامجها النووية.

وأكدت وزيرة الخارجية الأمريكية عزم الرئيس براك أوباما عرض معاهدة حظر التجارب (النووية) علي مجلس النواب الأمريكي للمصادقة عليها، وكذلك التوصل مع روسيا إلي إتفاقية جديدة لخفض الأسلحة الإستراتيجية (ستارت)، لتقليص الترسانات النووية في البلدين إثر قفلا سريان الإتفاقية الحالية في ديسمبر المقبل.

ويذكر أن الولايات المتحدة وروسيا تحوزان 96 في المائة من إجمالي الأسلحة النووية الموجودة في العلم.

وأكدت كلينتون "ليس لدينا أوهاما بأن تؤدي هذه الإتفاقية (خفض الأسلحة الإستراتيجية) إلي إقناع إيران وكوريا الشمالية بإنهاء إنشئتهما النووية غير المشروعة... لكنها ستين هن علي إلتزام الولايات المتحدة بواجبها المنبثقة من معاهدة حظر الإنتشار النووي، في العمل نحو نزع الأسلحة النووية".

وقالت أن ذلك سوف يساعد علي إقناع بقية المجتمع الدولي بتعزيز آليات مراقبة عدم الإنتشار وإحكام الحلقة حول الدول التي تنتهك إلتزاماتها بهذا الشأن.

ويشار إلي أن إدارة الرئيس أوباما، منذ أن أعرب عن رؤيته لعالم دون أسلحة نووية في أبريل الماضي في براغ، قد شددت علي أن قضايا حظر الإنتشار ونزع الأسلحة النووية ترد ضمن أولويات سياستها الخارجية. وقرأس أوباما بنفسه في 24 سبتمبر الماضي، جلسة مجلس الأمن المخصصة لهاتين القضيتين.

كما أعلن أوباما أنه سيدعو إلي عقد قمة عالمية حول الأمن النووي، في واشنطن في أبريل المقبل، أي قبل شهر من إجتماع المؤتمر الدولي للتفاوض علي إستعراض معاهدة حظر الإنتشار النووي وسبل تعزيزها، والمقرر عقده في فيينا.

وفي هذا الصدد، شددت كلينتون علي ضرورة تمتين نظام حظر الإنتشار النووي، وخاصة قدرات الوكالة الدولية

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وكالة الذرية عجزت عن رصد مشروع المفاعل السوري: كلينتون: "التسرع إيران بتخصيب اليورانيوم في روسيا

للطاقة الذرية، باعتبارها قضية أساسية علي الأجندة الأمريكية.

وقالت أن الوكالة "ليست لديها الأدوات أو السلطات التي تمكنها من أداء مهمتها بصورة فعالة"، وشرحت "لقد رأينا ذلك في عجز الوكالة عن رصد محطة تخصيب اليورانيوم الإيرانية، ومشروع المفاعل السوري".

واستطردت كلينتون قائلة أنه إضافة إلي تمكين الوكالة من "تنفيذ صلاحيات التحقق بأكملها، بما فيها عمليات التفتيش الخاصة، لا بد من إعطائها صلاحيات جديدة تشمل القدرة علي التحري في أنشطة مشبوهة ذات صلة بأسلحة نووية، حتي في حالة عدم وجود مواد نووية".

وأكدت وزيرة الخارجية الأمريكية علي أن الولايات المتحدة "صادقة في سعيها نحو عالما آمن وسلمي وخالي من الأسلحة النووية".

وعلي الرغم من ذلك، فقد أكدت أيضا "اننا حتي نبلغ غاية إزالة آخر سلاح نووي (في العالم)، علينا أن نعزز الإتفاق الوطني بأن الولايات المتحدة سوف تحتفظ بالبنية التحتية النووية الضرورية للإبقاء علي الردع دون تجارب نووية".

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الشرق الأوسط: هل تدفع الدول الغربية العرب نحو سباق نووي؟

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وكالة الأنباء العلمية انتر بريس سرفيس (آي بي إس)

الشرق الأوسط:

هل تدفع الدول الغربية العرب نحو سباق نووي؟

بقلم فريد مهدي/وكالة انتر بريس سرفيس*

إسطنبول، أكتوبر (IPS) - أطلق قرار الإمارات العربية المتحدة ببناء مفاعلات نووية لإنتاج الطاقة، سباقاً محمومًا، تجارياً وسياسياً، بين فرنسا، الولايات المتحدة، اليابان، وكوريا الجنوبية وغيرها، للفوز بهذه الصفقة التي يتجاوز إجماليها 40 مليار دولاراً، إضافة إلى تكهنات قوية عن سباق نووي في المنطقة العربية.

فقد وقع رئيس دولة الإمارات الشيخ خليفة بن زايد النيهان في الرابع من أكتوبر، علي قانون جديد لتنظيم إنتاج وتطوير الطاقة النووية في الإتحاد. وسارعت سلطات الإمارات بالتأكيد علي أن هذا البرنامج النووي سيخصص لأغراض سلمية.

وصرح حمد الكعابي، ممثل الإمارات الخاص لدي الوكالة الدولية للطاقة الذرية، أن البرنامج هو مشروع سلمي، مبنثق من التزام الإمارات بعدم تخصيب اليورانيوم وقدرتها علي تحقيق مستوى الأمن المطلوب من خلال بنية تحتية قوية.

وأفاد أن الإمارات أسست هيئة إتحادية متخصصة لضمان أمن المنشآت وسلامتها والحماية من الإشعاعات، يديرها المستشار الفني السابق بالوكالة الدولية للطاقة الذرية وليام ترافيرز. لكنه رفض التعليق علي عدد المفاعلات التي تنوي الإمارات العربية المتحدة بناؤها.

ومن المفتر أن يبدأ العمل بإنتاج الطاقة النووية في الإمارات في عام 2017. ويذكر أن الإمارات وقعت علي معاهدة حظر الانتشار النووي.

هذا ولقد تحول ما كان يفترض أن يكون سباق تجارياً حامياً بين الشركات الكبرى للفوز بهذه الصفقة متعددة المليارات من الدولارات، إلي سباق سياسي أيضاً تكفي فرنسا في مقدمته.

فقد نشن الرئيس الفرنسي نيكولا ساركوزي في مايو الماضي، أول قاعدة عسكرية فرنسية في الإمارات، ما أعتبر خطوة هامة نحو مساعي إدماج الخليج الغني بالنفط الذي أعتبر "محمية" أمريكية حتي الآن، في إطار الإستراتيجيات الأمنية الفرنسية.

وروج ساركوزي لتولي شركات فرنسية تنفيذ مشروع بناء المفاعلات النووية الإماراتية، عبر كونسورتيوم فرنسي يضم شركات، «أريفا» للصناعات النووية، و«توتال»، و«سويس - غاز فرنسا».

ويتنافس علي نفس الصفقة أيضاً كونسورتيوم ياباني أميركي من «جنرال إلكتريك» و«هيتاشي»، وكوري جنوبي من «الكتريك هيوونداي سامسونغ»، وكذلك «وستنغهاوس» الأمريكية.

وفي الولايات المتحدة، سعي قطاع الأعمال لكسب دعم المحافظين الجدد للضغط لصالح فوز الشركات الأمريكية بالصفقة النووية. لكن عدداً من أعضاء الكونغرس الأميركي عارضوا الصفقة منذ عين بعدم وجود قواعد صارمة لمنع الانتشار النووي، وغياب ضمانات كافية لعدم وقوع معدات حساسة بيد إيران.

كما أثار البرنامج النووي الإماراتي مخلوفاً غربية من وقوع مواد أو معدات نووية في أيدي تنظيمات إرهابية. لكن

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الشرق الأوسط: هل تدفع الدول الغربية العرب نحو سباق نووي؟

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البرنامج أثار فوق هذا وذلك، سلسلة من التكهينات حول إنطلاق سباق نووي واسع النطاق في الشرق الأوسط.

فقد رددت وسائل الإعلام الغربية أن التنافس قائم الآن بين الولايات المتحدة وفرنسا وروسيا وبريطانيا، للحصول على صفقات دسمة لإنتاج الطاقة النووية في الخليج العربي والشرق الأوسط وشمال أفريقيا. كذلك أن الحكومة الفرنسية قد تباحثت مع قطر والمغرب بشأن مساعدتهما في تنفيذ برامج نووية.

وأشير إلى أن مصر والأردن تعترزمان بناء محطات توليد طاقة نووية، وأن مصر وقعت إتفاقية تعاون مع روسيا في هذا المجال.

وعلق مهتب علام راضي، الباحث بمعهد دواسات الدفاع في نيودلهي، قائلا أنه "من الواضح أن برنامجا نوويا إيرانيا من شأنه أن يطلق سباق تسلح إقليمي، يشمل شراء أسلحة نووية من قبل قوي إقليمية أخرى كالمملكة السعودية والأمارات العربية المتحدة ومصر وتركيا".

وذكر بأن المملكة السعودية قد أعلنت عن مخططات للحصول على تقنيات نووية سلمية، وبأنها كعضو في مجلس التعاون الخليجي، قد أعلنت مع الدول الأخرى الأعضاء، عن خطة لتأسيس هيئة تتولي تزويد دول الشرق الأوسط باليورانيوم المخصب".

وخلص الباحث إلى أنه إذا نفذت دول الشرق لأوسط الأخرى التي أعربت عن إهتمامها بالطاقة النووية، مخططاتها في هذا الإتجاه، فإن احتمال وقوع حالة من عدم الإستقرار في المنطقة، سوف يأتي بتداعيات حاسمة علي أسعار النفط.

هذا وفيما شددت وسائل الإعلام الإماراتية علي أمن المنشآت النووية المقرر بنائها، قالت وكالة الأنباء الوطنية أن الإمارات تنور الطريق للأخرين، أبرزت وسائل إعلامية أخرى مدي أهمية عزم الإمارات علي عدم تخصيب اليورانيوم أو إعادة معالجته.

وحذرت "أخبار الخليج" من خطر إنتشار الأسلحة النووية، وقالت أنه من الجوهري الحيلولة دون وقوع مواد كفيلة بإنتاج أسلحة دمار شامل، في أيدي حكومة ما غير مسؤولة أو تنظيم إرهابي ما.

وأفادت الرابطة النووية العالمية، التي تروج للطاقة النووية وتساعد الشركات العاملة في قطاع الصناعات النووية في العالم، أن الإمارات العربية المتحدة تخطط لبناء ثلاثة مفاعلات لتشغيلها في 2020، وأنها وقعت إتفاقيات ومذكرات تفاهم مع شركات فرنسية وبريطانية وأمريكية لهذه الغاية.*بالإشتراك مع وكالة InDepthNews ومنظمة Soka Gakka International.

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Original article

U.S.-JAPAN ACCORD: Seeking a Nuke Free World

BY ERNEST COREA IDN-InDepthNews Service WASHINGTON DC (IDN) - Japan, the only country to be the target of atom bombs, and the U.S., the only country to drop them, firmly committed themselves to working towards a nuclear weapons free world, when President Barack Obama visited Japan during his first presidential tour of Asia.

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CIVIL SOCIETY'S PERSPECTIVE

Center Praises Obama for Not Rushing U.S.-India Nuclear Agreement

November 24, 2009

Washington, D.C. – The Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation praised the Obama administration today for outlining broad areas of cooperation with India and not rushing nuclear energy negotiations, which could further undermine nuclear weapons non-proliferation efforts.

The United States and India are still negotiating a subsequent arrangement that would lay out the details for whether and how the United States would give its consent to India for reprocessing U.S.-origin fuel. Reprocessing separates plutonium from nuclear waste. While India plans to use the plutonium to fuel power reactors, plutonium can also be used to make nuclear weapons. India used plutonium derived from U.S. and Canadian nuclear energy assistance intended for peaceful purposes to conduct its first nuclear weapons test in 1974.

Leonor Tomero, Director of Nuclear Non-Proliferation at the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, noted: “Despite pressure to reach agreement on this controversial issue in time for an Obama-Singh announcement, the Obama administration did not rush to finalize a deal that would undermine nuclear nonproliferation efforts, and instead emphasized cooperation on renewable energy, education, and science.”

“Unlike the previous administration, which made concession after concession on the U.S.-India nuclear deal at the expense of nuclear non-proliferation, the Obama administration is negotiating carefully to ensure that the U.S.-India deal does not further erode non-proliferation efforts and lead to legitimizing reprocessing as a fuel management option,” she added.

The U.S.-India agreement for nuclear cooperation reached last year included a provision allowing India to reprocess as long as India reprocessed the waste in a new declared facility under safeguards. A subsequent arrangement is necessary to outline a detailed accord. U.S. State Department and Indian officials conducted a final round of talks over the weekend in an attempt to finalize the deal. Disagreements reportedly remain on the number of reprocessing facilities as well as inspection and safety provisions.

The Obama administration canceled Bush administration plans for near-term deployment of reprocessing facilities in the United States. As Tomero explained, “Rushing to give India consent to reprocessing U.S.-origin nuclear fuel would complicate U.S. efforts to convince other countries, such as South Korea, not to reprocess.” South Korea is currently seeking reprocessing rights from the United States in the context of a new U.S.-South Korea nuclear cooperation agreement to succeed the current agreement which expires in 2014. ■

CIVIL SOCIETY'S PERSPECTIVE

Iraq Inquiry must identify criminal liability, says CND legal team

Lawyers acting on behalf of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and Peacerights last night wrote to Sir John Chilcot reiterating their demand for assurances over the scope of the Inquiry. They also raised fresh concerns about Government departments being allowed to define what information is to be kept secret [see note 3 for letter text]. Public Interest Lawyers have reiterated demands made in writing last month and as yet unresponded to regarding the Inquiry's investigation into the legality of the war, the commission of war crimes and the democratic deficit in the lead up to the invasion. In late 2002 the same legal team, acting for CND, took the Government to court to challenge the legality of the planned war and has previously considered a legal challenge to force greater openness on the current Inquiry.

The latest letter to Sir John notes that the disclosure protocol issued by the Inquiry gives Government departments the final say regarding publication of any information they deem sensitive or injurious to the public interest. The legal team question whether Sir John will be prepared to revisit this protocol in the event that unjustifiably broad redactions and/or non disclosure is sought by the Government and whether he is prepared to give an assurance that all such instances of non disclosure will be noted in his final report.

Kate Hudson, Chair of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, said: "The opening of the Inquiry today presents a real opportunity for us to finally gain an understanding of how the disastrous and illegal decision to go to war was taken. But CND also has serious concerns over the ability of government departments to adequately police their own disclosure of sensitive documents - vital to allowing the public a comprehensive insight into the process. The Inquiry must not be jeopardised by Government reticence to publicly identify and allocate responsibility and criminal liability. The war and occupation of Iraq have been hugely divisive in British public life and only a full and open investigation can finally lay these issues to rest and help restore public confidence in the morality and judgement of our politicians. The tragic loss of life in Iraq, as a result of Government action, is a permanent stain on the reputation of our country."

"We will continue to push for full openness in the Inquiry, pursuing this through all means possible. The British public, the families of those who have lost their lives - here and in Iraq - and those who have been injured in this illegal war, deserve no less."

CND has a strong record in this area. Prior to the invasion, CND took extensive legal steps to challenge the government's excuse for attacking Iraq. In December 2002, it took the government to court to ask for an advisory opinion on the legality of using UNSC Resolution 1441 as a pretext for war. This was argued by Rabinder Singh QC and Charlotte Kilroy acting for CND [note 4]. Three judges ruled that they could not give an opinion as they had no jurisdiction on this aspect of international law and that it may be 'damaging to the public interest in the field of international relations, national security or defence'.

The same CND legal team also produced an opinion on the Attorney General's use of Resolutions 678, 687 and 1441 to authorise the war, both on the eve of the war and after it became clear that weapons of mass destruction were not being found in Iraq [note 5]. Consistent government refusal to agree to a Public Inquiry and Jack Straw's veto of the release of the crucial Cabinet meetings of March 13th and 17th 2003, suggest that the government knew it was breaking international law in attacking Iraq and went ahead anyway. ■

CIVIL SOCIETY'S PERSPECTIVE

Dirty, dangerous and expensive nuclear plants must be stopped, says CND

09 November 2009

The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament strongly criticised the Government's imminent announcement of a 'national policy statement' on nuclear power together with a list of potential sites. CND described as "totally unacceptable" Ed Miliband's characterisation of the safety record of the industry as being "relatively good", pointing to the widespread consequences of any major accident. Campaigners are greatly concerned that the new planning process will push through decisions with little reference to local communities or design-specific safety concerns.

Kate Hudson, Chair of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, said, "Nuclear power is dirty, dangerous and expensive. It is not the answer to climate change or concerns over energy security. Steamrolling planning decisions through an unelected and unaccountable quango is no way for a democracy to make such significant national decisions. Local concerns look set to be marginalised, with the ability for local communities to question important safety aspects of reactors swept away. It is totally unacceptable for Ed Miliband to see a 'relatively good' safety record as sufficient - nuclear disasters have the potential to make any other kind of industrial accident look harmless in comparison, potentially affecting millions of people."

"Nuclear build on the scale envisaged is a drop in the ocean compared to the climate change measures needed. The Government's own advisers say that even with a doubling of nuclear capacity carbon emissions would only drop by 8% - that's compared with the 60% target set by Government. [see note 3] As uranium fuel becomes scarcer more energy is put into extracting it, so by 2050 nuclear is expected to generate as much CO₂ per kilowatt as a gas-fired power station. [see note 4] Investing in nuclear will divert skills and resources away from areas that can have a much more significant impact on cutting carbon emissions, such as large-scale renewable, distributed power generation and carbon capture and storage technologies.

She continued "This decision is incredibly short sighted. In the 50 years Britain has been experimenting with nuclear power successive governments have yet to come up with a long-term strategy for coping with the waste that will remain hazardous for millennia. To build-up our stockpile of material that we have no safe way to store is madness, especially as any underground dump would take decades to prepare."

"Embarking on the creation of a new generation of nuclear plants also sends the wrong message internationally, where building a nuclear reactor is a necessary step in the creation of a nuclear weapon. If we want any credibility in discouraging the proliferation of nuclear weapons, we cannot discourage others from building reactors whilst we construct many more of our own." ■



WHAT OTHERS SAY

Nuclear power is not the answer to climate change

The UK Government's approval of ten sites for new nuclear power stations does nothing to change the fact that nuclear power remains dirty, dangerous and expensive. CND Council member and Leader of the Green Party Caroline Lucas MEP explains the arguments:

We need nuclear power to stop climate change don't we?

No, nuclear power is not the answer to climate change. We need a rapid and substantial decrease in our carbon emissions to deal with climate change. Nuclear power cannot deliver that. Our existing nuclear power stations provide just 20% of the electricity that we use. And that is only 8% of our overall energy needs (a lot of the rest of our demand for energy comes from transport and industry). Currently, there is an unrealistic focus on nuclear power as a magical solution to climate change. But the reality is that even if we doubled the UK's nuclear power production, our carbon emissions would only be reduced by 8%. In reality, nuclear power production is dirty, expensive and a uniquely risky business with the potential for catastrophic consequences.

But isn't climate change such a serious issue that we need nuclear power in the mix, along with renewable energy sources?

The fact is, even if we were prepared to overlook all the dangers associated with nuclear power, it would just be too little too late to solve the problem. Climate change is happening now. New nuclear power stations are planned for the UK but each one will take more than a decade to be up and running. Most of the new power stations would not even be additional facilities, but replacements for the existing aging stock, so there is little chance for any real increase in the amount of nuclear power produced. And they won't be built in time to make the difference we need to make now. Renewable energy sources and energy efficiency measures are already making a difference and, despite significantly poorer financing compared to nuclear power, their technologies are rapidly advancing. For instance, in Germany plans for 24 new offshore wind farms would replace the output of all 17 of their nuclear power plants. In the UK, by fitting all homes with the insulation they need (a simple energy efficiency measure) carbon emissions could be reduced by around the same amount as another 10 nuclear power stations.

Isn't nuclear power a form of low carbon electricity supply, though?

Nuclear power stations produce lower carbon emissions than coal or gas-fired power stations. But, when the whole nuclear power cycle is taken into account (including uranium mining, processing, transportation, power station construction and decommissioning), renewable sources of energy and energy efficiency measures and technologies produce far less carbon emissions. Moreover, the world only has a limited amount of high quality uranium ore – maybe not more than 50 years' worth and less if there is a big global increase in nuclear power. Mining lower quality ore will increase carbon emissions because it is more difficult to extract and thus requires more energy.

What are the dangers of nuclear power?

Nuclear power has uniquely serious risks associated with it:

1. proliferation of nuclear weapons
2. contamination by toxic radioactive nuclear waste
3. nuclear accidents

So more nuclear power stations in the world means more transportation of nuclear materials and more nuclear waste, leading to a higher risk of accident, theft of radioactive materials by terrorists, increase of nuclear targets and risk of nuclear weapons proliferation.

A combination of effective alternative measures can tackle climate change. These include alternative energy sources such as solar, wind, geothermal and tidal power and energy efficiency technologies and measures to reduce energy demand. None of these measures involve the dangers associated with nuclear power.

By pursuing nuclear power the government risks replacing the disastrous scenario of climate change with a potential nuclear catastrophe.

I've heard about the terrible Chernobyl nuclear power accident. Are new nuclear power stations going to be more safely designed?

It is not just disasters like Chernobyl that we need to be concerned about. Research has shown that there are increased rates of cancer around nuclear power stations. New nuclear power stations are designed to be safer but however small the probability, there is always the chance of accidents releasing toxic radioactive substances into the atmosphere.

WHAT OTHERS SAY

Human error and mechanical failure can never be ruled out.

Won't government legislation protect us?

Not necessarily. New planning laws are being pushed forward to allow new nuclear power stations to be more quickly agreed with less chance for local involvement and opposition. Two designs being put forward for the UK haven't been built anywhere yet and so we don't know how safe they will be in practice. With France and the UK agreeing to collaborate on nuclear power a third design, the French European Pressurised Reactor (EPR) may be chosen. An EPR being built in Finland is millions of pounds over budget, is two years over schedule and 1,500 safety and quality problems have been identified. The building of a new EPR in France has also seen a series of problems resulting in construction being temporarily halted.

What about the economic benefits of nuclear power?

Nuclear power stations have only ever been built with huge subsidies of taxpayers' money. Our nuclear power industry has cost us tens of billions of pounds over the last 50 years. Decommissioning old nuclear power stations is costing us over £70 billion and rising fast. This means that economic benefits may only ever be gained by the shareholders of the nuclear power companies. There is not a big pot of money to pay for nuclear power and renewable energy and efficiency technologies, so having nuclear power in the mix means that money cannot be spent elsewhere.

Government promises that new nuclear power stations will not be subsidised are hollow. The taxpayer will pay for insurance in case of accidents and security measures such as armed nuclear police to secure the sites from terrorist attacks. The taxpayer will also probably have to pay for increased coastal defences because new nuclear power stations are likely to be built on old coastal sites identified as being at increased risk of flooding – especially as the effects of climate change take hold.

Who will pay for decommissioning and nuclear waste storage?

For new nuclear power stations the government plans to cap nuclear waste charges to the companies, yet the costs are almost certain to go up, and then who pays? The main problem is that despite over 50 years of nuclear power in the world there is still no safe storage solution for the enormous amount of nuclear waste that has already been produced. And some of this waste will be highly radioactive – and lethally toxic – for hundreds of thousands of years. Having even more new nuclear power stations will mean leaving an even greater legacy of this poisonous waste for future generations to deal with.

Trying to predict a realistic cost for nuclear waste storage is extremely difficult. Plans in the UK for an underground site are still just on paper – no location has yet been found. There is no knowing if an underground store would retain its structural integrity over the extremely long timescale that is needed – hundreds of thousands of years – especially when you take into account any future geological events like earthquakes.

The government has said that 'in extreme circumstances' it will come in to cover nuclear decommissioning costs (decommissioning involves the reactor being dismantled and the site decontaminated and usually happens at the end of the reactor's lifespan). There are no details given of what those 'extreme circumstances' might be but serious accidents are likely to be covered. Human and environmental costs aside, this could prove extremely expensive.

What is the link between nuclear weapons and nuclear power?

Nuclear weapons and nuclear power share a common technological basis. Skilled workers and continuing research are beneficial for both industries. The process of enriching uranium to make it into fuel for nuclear power stations can be a step towards further enriching it to make nuclear weapons. Used fuel (spent nuclear fuel) from nuclear power stations can be separated out to recover any usable elements such as uranium and plutonium through a method called reprocessing. Plutonium is a by-product of the nuclear fuel cycle and can also be used to make nuclear weapons.

In the UK our first nuclear power stations were a front for the production of nuclear weapons. Today we have large enough military and civil stockpiles of uranium and plutonium that new nuclear power stations are not directly necessary to make new nuclear weapons. In fact, we could make around 13,500 nuclear bombs just from our civil stockpile of over 100 tonnes of separated plutonium alone.

Will more nuclear power stations in the world mean more nuclear weapons?

That's the danger. Because countries like the UK are promoting the expansion of nuclear power, other countries are beginning to plan for their own nuclear power programmes too. But there is always the danger that countries acquiring nuclear power technology may subvert its use – as we did in the past – to develop a nuclear weapons programme.

WHAT OTHERS SAY

Nuclear materials may also get into the wrong hands and be used to make a crude nuclear device or 'dirty bomb'.

What is the solution?

The logical solution is to encourage countries to adopt safer and cheaper renewable energy sources and energy efficiency measures to meet their energy needs and not have nuclear power at all. Instead nuclear power is being encouraged and to combat the risk of nuclear weapons proliferation, proposals have been made to limit the spread of nuclear technology to other countries, particularly the enrichment process. A multinational nuclear fuel bank would provide already enriched nuclear fuel to those countries that want it to prevent them from developing the technology themselves.

Our government and many others have already joined in one such proposal, the US's Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP). This plans for a handful of 'supplier' countries to keep the enrichment and reprocessing technologies and supply enriched nuclear fuel to the other countries. Spent nuclear fuel would be shipped back to be reprocessed by the 'suppliers' and separated plutonium could be used to make new fuel. But plans for more nuclear reprocessing are worrying – it has already proved to be a very expensive and dirty process and increases separated plutonium stockpiles which could be diverted or stolen for use in nuclear weapons. Sellafield's reprocessing plants in Cumbria are one of the chief sources of radioactive emissions in the UK.

But wouldn't a nuclear fuel bank scheme like the GNEP help reduce global tensions?

A scheme like the GNEP will actually increase tensions in the world. The right to have civil nuclear power technology is enshrined in the nuclear Non- Proliferation Treaty (NPT) signed by nearly all states in the world. The GNEP however would mean that some of the technology would be confined to a small number of states, and the majority of countries would be expected to give up their rights to nuclear power technology. Ironically, some of the countries that wish to control the enrichment process are those that already have nuclear weapons and seem determined to keep them, despite being required by the nuclear Non- Proliferation Treaty to give them up. So these states will get to keep their own nuclear weapons whilst also controlling enrichment and reprocessing technologies necessary for civil nuclear power, thus increasing the division between nuclear 'haves' and 'have-nots'. ■