

## WEAPONS COMPLEX

MORNING  
BRIEFING**■ Obama Dismisses Trump's Proposal for Nuclear Weapons in Asia**

President Barack Obama said Friday that Republican presidential front-runner Donald Trump's suggestion to allow Japan and South Korea to develop their own nuclear weapons demonstrates he “doesn't know much about foreign policy or nuclear policy or the Korean Peninsula, or the world generally.”

In a *New York Times* interview released late last month, and in televised appearances afterward, Trump expressed support toward the possibility of the two nations developing their own nuclear arsenals, a proposal that Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida publicly rejected. South Korean President Park Geun-hye has also reaffirmed her nation's commitment to denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in the wake of Trump's comments.

During a press conference at the end of the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, D.C., Obama hailed the United States' alliance with Japan and South Korea as “cornerstones of our presence in the Asia-Pacific region,” one that has “underwritten the peace and prosperity of that region.”

He said American influence – and presumably the U.S. nuclear umbrella in the region – has prevented the potential for nuclear escalation. “You don't mess with that,” Obama said.

**■ International Conferences to Offer Forum for Nuclear Security Summit Progress Reviews**

Nations participating in last week's Nuclear Security Summit, the last of four under the Obama administration, issued joint pledges – known as “gift baskets” – on various aspects of nuclear security, some of which are set to be discussed at international conferences well after the conclusion of the summit process.

While the White House announced a new contact group through which experts from over 30 countries will continue to meet to discuss nuclear security work – addressing concerns over maintaining progress on this work in years ahead – states appeared to address these concerns through several gift baskets that offered specific milestones and timelines to measure progress on certain initiatives. Other gift baskets reaffirmed ideologies such as a call for total elimination of nuclear weapons, or hailed progress on initiatives such as the low-enriched fuel bank being established in Kazakhstan and the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

A gift basket on the minimization of highly enriched uranium (HEU) use in civilian applications, signed by countries including Canada, Mexico, Poland, Sweden, and the U.S., called for the conversion or shutdown of HEU-fueled civilian reactors, the development of high-density low-enriched uranium fuels, and HEU fuel repatriation. Participating states expect to establish by the end of this year a voluntary reporting mechanism through the IAEA that will track states' progress on these activities. These states will also convene at an international conference in 2018 to review progress, the statement said.

A cybersecurity gift basket committed a number of states to participation in two international workshops on the topic sometime this year, the findings of which will be presented at the IAEA International Conference on Nuclear Security this December. A consolidated reporting gift basket, supported by countries such as Australia, Belgium, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, and the U.S., promoted voluntary information sharing on initiatives that do not feature explicit reporting requirements. The gift basket offered a consolidated national nuclear security report mechanism as a template for states to fulfill reporting requirements under agreements such as the Convention on the Physical Security of Nuclear Material.

One of the gift baskets, supported by countries including China, Japan, Canada, and South Korea, aims to help strengthen the IAEA's Nuclear Security Training and Support Centers network, which includes Centers of Excellence like the one recently opened in China. The gift basket offered the establishment of regional networks of such centers, and collaboration with educational institutions on the promotion of nuclear security culture throughout the network.

Over 30 nations joined a gift basket that involves designating a national team to bring together law

enforcement, intelligence, and technical experts to investigate nuclear trafficking. Another gift basket brought together 30 countries to incorporate nuclear forensics into their national nuclear security response frameworks. A maritime supply chain security gift basket committed states with radiation detection systems at their seaports to sharing technical information and best practices to enhance nuclear material detection. A nuclear terrorism preparedness and resilience gift basket encouraged interagency coordination and bilateral information sharing for the development of national-level preparedness and response capabilities.

### ■ **New Contact Group, Information Sharing to Sustain Nuclear Security Initiatives**

Plans produced and released at last week's Nuclear Security Summit highlight information sharing and the creation of a new contact group as means to address the threat of nuclear terrorism by building upon the progress made throughout the summit process. The summit, which brought together over 50 heads of state to discuss the risk of nuclear terrorism and offer country commitments to prevent such an incident, was the last of four held under the Obama administration. One of the summit's most welcomed milestones was ratification by a number of nations last week of an amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) that sets the amendment up for likely entry into force in the coming weeks. The amended treaty now covers nuclear material used for peaceful purposes in domestic storage, use, and transport.

The summit communiqué highlighted universalization of international agreements such as the CPPNM, hailing its "imminent entry into force." The statement also reaffirmed international nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation goals and emphasized the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as central to the global nuclear security architecture, encouraging the agency to regularly convene high-level international conferences "to maintain political momentum and continue to raise awareness of nuclear security among all stakeholders."

"Today we agreed to maintain a strong [nuclear security] architecture . . . to carry out this work," President Obama said at a press briefing at the close of the summit. He announced the creation of a new Nuclear Security Contact Group made up of senior-level experts from more than 30 countries "who will meet regularly to preserve the networks of cooperation we've built, to institutionalize this work, and to keep driving progress for years to come."

According to the White House, the Nuclear Security Contact Group that will convene annually at the IAEA General Conference and discuss the implementation of summit commitments and maintain nuclear security cooperation. A few dozen nations and two international organizations committed themselves to participate in the group, including Belgium, China, Japan, Kazakhstan, South Korea, Ukraine, the U.K., the U.S., and the United Nations.

Summit participants released five action plans for international institutions and initiatives meant to advance this work. An action plan in support of the United Nations called for increased efforts by 2021 to implement security obligations under the U.N. Security Council Resolution 1540, which requires member states to take measures against weapons of mass destruction proliferation, and to submit voluntary reports on the resolution's implementation. The plan said that "for those in a position to do so, support the provision of adequate assistance" to states that request it, through means such as technical expertise, technology transfers, and funding.

The action plan in support of the IAEA called on the agency to continue coordinating international security activities and conduct information exchange meetings with international institutions like the U.N., and encouraged states to work with the agency on highly enriched uranium minimization and the development of guidance documents on nuclear incident response. The action plan supporting the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) highlighted transnational information exchanges between law enforcement agencies worldwide and called for greater cooperation between Interpol and the IAEA in countering nuclear and radiological trafficking.

An action plan for the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, a partnership of over 80 countries and five organizations, called for greater technical capacity among the initiative's participating nations. The plan encouraged more workshops for member state capacity building, particularly for nuclear detection, forensics, and response and mitigation, as well as information sharing on multilateral activities. An action plan for the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction called for the implementation and funding of expanded cooperation on projects involving nuclear and radiological security. It encouraged member states to assist with programs on insider threat reduction, transportation security, the disposition and conversion of nuclear materials, and best practices information exchanges.

### ■ **Technical Resources Group Gets DOE Contract**

Technical Resources Group, of Idaho Falls, Idaho, has won a contract worth up to \$2.6 million over three years,

including options, to help federal, state, tribal, and local authorities prepare for possible future transportation incidents or accidents involving Department of Energy shipments of radiological material, DOE said Thursday.

The company's support services contract, part of the DOE Office of Packaging and Transportation's Transportation Emergency Preparedness Program, has a one-year base and a pair of one-year options, according to a DOE press release.

Under the pact, Technical Resources Group will conduct "reviews of state and federal regulations and standards to identify current requirements and changes in regulations that may impact the program, as well as providing support services in developing and providing training," DOE said.

### ■ **Gov. Walker Approves Lifting Wisconsin Nuclear Ban**

Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker on Friday signed legislation lifting the state's 33-year ban on building new nuclear power plants.

The state Senate, in a 23-9 vote, approved Rep. Kevin Petersen's (R-Waupaca) legislation in December. Wisconsin previously prohibited construction of new plants on the basis that the federal government has not established a capable national nuclear waste storage facility. In addition to lifting the ban, the bill realigns Wisconsin's energy priorities, moving nuclear ahead of nonrenewable energy sources but behind renewables.

"Nuclear energy is an affordable, environmentally safe, and sustainable alternative to fossil fuel," Walker said in a statement Friday. "The legislation we're signing into law here today at the Wisconsin Energy Institute provides the Wisconsin Public Service Commission with increased flexibility for Wisconsin's energy portfolio with the potential addition of nuclear facilities."

### ■ **NDA Formally Takes Over at Sellafield**

Sellafield Ltd., the firm leading decommissioning of England's Sellafield nuclear site, became a wholly owned subsidiary of the U.K.'s Nuclear Decommissioning Authority on Friday.

As the U.K. nuclear regulator, NDA owns 17 sites across England, Wales, and Scotland. Sellafield Ltd. was previously owned by private consortium Nuclear Management Partners. The U.K. government announced the move in January 2015, resulting in NMP losing its \$13.6 billion contract as the site's "parent body organization." Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change Ed Davey said then that Sellafield's "complexity and technical uncertainties presented significantly greater challenges than other NDA sites," and Sellafield wasn't suited for the existing private-sector model.

"This is a new chapter for Sellafield," NDA CEO John Clarke said in a statement Friday. "Without a commercially driven contract, the NDA and Sellafield Ltd will be working to exactly the same goal, safely delivering the mission as quickly and efficiently as possible."

With the change of management, energy industry veteran Tony Fountain becomes the new chairman of the Sellafield Ltd. Board. Fountain's resume includes executive roles with NDA, BP, and India-based conglomerate Reliance Industries.

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