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**Report Cites Dangerous Gap in Efforts to Thwart Nuclear Terrorism;
Calls for Urgent Global Campaign to Reduce the Risk**

WASHINGTON – New steps are urgently needed to broaden and accelerate work to keep nuclear weapons and the materials needed to make them out of terrorist hands, according to *Securing the Bomb, 2007*, a report released today.

“With al-Qaeda’s central command reconstituting in the mountains of Pakistan, we urgently need a stepped-up global campaign to secure every nuclear weapon and every significant cache of potential nuclear bomb material worldwide to stringent standards,” said Dr. Matthew Bunn of Harvard University’s Managing the Atom Project, the report’s author. “We need to make sure these stocks are locked down before thieves and terrorists can get to them – and that they stay that way for the long haul.”

The new report, commissioned by the Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI), provides a comprehensive assessment of efforts to secure and remove vulnerable nuclear stockpiles around the world, and a detailed action plan for reducing the risk of nuclear terrorism.

Even with increasing strains in U.S.-Russia relations, the two countries have made important progress in securing nuclear weapons and materials, the report concludes.

“Thanks to the good and sometimes heroic efforts of men and women around the world who are working every day to keep nuclear weapons and materials secure, we have made significant progress,” said former Senator Sam Nunn, NTI’s Co-Chairman. “But we are still not moving as quickly as we can or we must. Those in the field doing the hard work in security and safety – whether from Russia or America or other countries – need and deserve for their leaders to knock down all the obstacles that impede their progress. Preventing nuclear terrorism must be a front-burner issue for leaders at the highest level of governments around the world every day. And so far it is not.”

The Threats

The new study describes troubling indications that the threat of nuclear theft and terrorism remains high in many parts of the world. In Russia in 2006, a senior general

who was the deputy chairman of the group charged with law and order in Russia's closed nuclear cities was fired – for organizing smuggling in and out of those cities. In Pakistan, serving military officers cooperated with al Qaeda in two plots to assassinate President Musharraf – raising questions about the reliability of the military officers who guard Pakistan's nuclear stockpile. Some 140 research reactors around the world still use highly enriched uranium (HEU) as their fuel -- some with no more security than a night watchman and a chain-link fence. The seizure of nearly 80 grams of stolen 89-percent HEU in Georgia in early 2006 adds to the growing list of cases of theft of potential nuclear bomb materials.

Progress and Gaps

Most of the US government's work to secure nuclear weapons and material has been focused in Russia and the former Soviet Union, though these efforts are now expanding worldwide.

- Comprehensive U.S.-funded security and accounting upgrades had been completed for approximately 55-percent of all the buildings with nuclear weapons material in the former Soviet Union by the end of fiscal 2006. (If only the buildings where the two sides have agreed on cooperative upgrades are counted, 63-percent of the work was completed.)
- Roughly half of the nuclear warhead sites in Russia have completed US-funded security and accounting upgrades by the end of fiscal year 2006. (If only those sites on the agreed upgrade list are counted, 64-percent of the work was completed.)
- The U.S. government is expanding its nuclear security cooperation with other countries, but much remains to be done. U.S. officials have worked with counterparts in Pakistan, but the scope and progress of this work remains secret. Security at one nuclear site in China has been upgraded with U.S. cooperation, and US-China nuclear security discussions and training activities are continuing, but these talks have not yet led to major nuclear security upgrades. And in India, despite the signing of a new U.S.-India nuclear cooperation agreement, nuclear security cooperation between the two countries has not begun.
- For HEU-fueled research reactors around the world, security upgrades designed to meet basic International Atomic Energy Agency security recommendations have been completed for four-fifths of the facilities that needed them – but only a small percentage have security upgrades adequate to protect against demonstrated terrorist and criminal capabilities.
- The Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration's Global Threat Reduction Initiative has expanded and accelerated efforts to remove potential bomb material from vulnerable sites and convert HEU-fueled reactors to use fuel that cannot be used in a nuclear bomb, but only about a quarter of the world's HEU-fueled research reactors have had all their HEU removed, leaving a major gap yet to be closed.

The Recommendations

Closing the nuclear security gap will require sustained global leadership to overcome the obstacles to securing, removing, and reducing nuclear stockpiles. The report outlines key steps to convince world leaders and nuclear managers of the urgency of the threat and the need for action. Specific recommendations include:

- An urgent global campaign to reduce the risk of nuclear terrorism. Participants should commit to locking down nuclear weapons and weapons material worldwide as rapidly as possible using a system of tough security standards.
- The President should appoint a full-time senior official, based at the White House, charged with preparing an integrated plan to comprehensively address the threat of nuclear terrorism and keeping the issue on the front burner at the White House every day.
- The United States should play a leading role in convincing world leaders of the danger nuclear terrorism poses to their countries. Activities should include exercises with international participation that would present in compelling terms nuclear terrorism scenarios tailored to various parts of the world. Summit meetings of world leaders should include threat briefings on the reality of the nuclear terrorist threat. States with nuclear weapons and weapons materials should establish review teams to test and rate levels of security at their nuclear facilities and share databases of nuclear security incidents and lessons learned from them.
- The international community should establish and achieve the goal of removing all nuclear material from the world's most vulnerable sites in four years.
- Beginning with Russia, countries upgrading their security measures for nuclear weapons and weapons material should make presidential-level commitments to putting in place the money, trained staff, and effective security rules needed to sustain security and accounting of nuclear materials.

Sustained leadership from Washington, the report concludes, could reduce the threat dramatically by the end of the next presidential term. "Every presidential candidate," writes Bunn, "should be asked a central question: What is your plan to prevent terrorists from incinerating the heart of a U.S. city with a nuclear bomb?"

The report and its online companion at www.nti.org/securingthebomb is the only available source for "one-stop shopping" on all aspects of these critical U.S. security programs. Since NTI first commissioned this annual report from the Managing the Atom Project in 2002, the report and its recommendations have increased public awareness of the nuclear terrorism threat and helped spur increased government action to reduce nuclear dangers.

The Managing the Atom Project, based at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government, is Harvard's principal research group focusing on nuclear weapons and nuclear energy policies. NTI is a Washington-based non-profit organization, focused on reducing the threats from nuclear, biological and chemical weapons and materials.

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