

Syria Nuclear Chronology

[2011-2004](#) | [2003-1963](#)

Last update: April 2011

This annotated chronology is based on the data sources that follow each entry. Public sources often provide conflicting information on classified military programs. In some cases we are unable to resolve these discrepancies, in others we have deliberately refrained from doing so to highlight the potential influence of false or misleading information as it appeared over time. In many cases, we are unable to independently verify claims. Hence in reviewing this chronology, readers should take into account the credibility of the sources employed here.

Inclusion in this chronology does not necessarily indicate that a particular development is of direct or indirect proliferation significance. Some entries provide international or domestic context for technological development and national policymaking. Moreover, some entries may refer to developments with positive consequences for nonproliferation.

2011-2004

25 February 2011

IAEA RELEASES LATEST SAFEGUARDS REPORT ON SYRIA

The IAEA releases its latest safeguards report on Syria, reiterating that Syria has not cooperated with the Agency sufficiently since June 2008, and stating that the IAEA has not been able to make progress towards resolving outstanding issues. Syria continues to refuse to grant the IAEA access to the Dair Alzour site and three other locations suspected of being functionally related to an undeclared Syrian nuclear program. Furthermore, Syria has not cooperated with the Agency in clarifying the source of uranium particles found at the MNSR research reactor in Damascus. However, the IAEA states that Syria's approval for an inspection of an acid purification plant close to the city of Homs might be a step in the right direction.

—"Implementation of the IAEA Safeguards Agreement in the Syrian Arab Republic," IAEA, 25 February 2011; Paul Brannan, "ISIS Analysis of Latest IAEA Safeguards Report on Syria: Agreement on Homs Site Not Enough to Avoid Special Inspection," Institute for Science and International Security, 25 February 2011, www.isis-online.org.

23 February 2011

GERMAN NEWSPAPER IDENTIFIES AN ALLEGED SECRET URANIUM CONVERSION FACILITY

The German newspaper Sueddeutsche Zeitung identifies the location of what it claims is a secret Syrian uranium conversion facility at the Marj as Sultan site, close to Damascus. The newspaper had obtained pictures believed to depict the interior of two buildings, showing processing equipment commonly found in a uranium conversion facility. An ISIS imagery analysis of commercial satellite pictures, taken in July 2008, shows construction activity at the site. These activities may have represented a Syrian attempt to disguise the purpose of the facility in response to possible IAEA interest in inspecting the site.

—P.A. Krueger, "Verdaechtige Gebaeude in Bester Wohnlage," *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, 23 February 2011,

Related content is available on the website for the Nuclear Threat Initiative, www.nti.org.



www.sueddeutsche.de; David Albright and Paul Brannan, "Satellite Image Shows Suspected Uranium Conversion Plant in Syria," Institute for Science and International Security, 23 February 2011, www.isis-online.org.

1 April 2011

IAEA INSPECTS SUSPECTED SYRIAN NUCLEAR FACILITY

The IAEA conducts an inspection of an acid purification plant located close to the city of Homs in Western Syria. The plant produces yellowcake uranium as a byproduct of the purification process. The Agency sought to determine if uranium particles found at other locations in Syria originated from the Homs plant.

—"Syria: A Nuclear Plant Is Inspected, and Another Site Remains Off Limits," Reuters, 1 April 2011; "IAEA Auditors to Examine Syrian Nuclear Site," Global Security Newswire, 1 April 2011.

1 December 2010

ISIS RELEASES SATELLITE IMAGES OF SITES RELATED TO DAIR ALZOUR

The Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS) releases satellite images of three sites reported by the Sueddeutsche Zeitung and IAEA member states to be functionally related to Dair Alzour. They are situated near the cities of Maysaf, Marj as-Sultan, and Iskandariyah, and all three are located in naturally secure locations or have security elements visible in satellite imagery. The specific contents of these sites are unknown.

—David Albright and Paul Brannan, "Satellite Image Shows Syrian Site Functionally Related to Al Kibar Reactor," ISIS Imagery Brief, Institute for Science and International Security, 1 December 2010.

18 February 2010

IAEA REPORTS ON SAFEGUARDS IN SYRIA

According to the IAEA's latest report on the implementation of safeguards in Syria, the agency continues its investigation of the anthropogenic uranium particles found at the Al-Kibar site. However, Syria is still refusing to grant IAEA inspectors unrestrained access to the Al-Kibar site and to any of its associated materials and documentation. Walid al-Moualem, Syrian Foreign Minister states, "We are committed to the nonproliferation agreement between the agency and Syria and we (only) allow inspectors to come according to this agreement [...] we will not allow anything beyond the agreement because Syria does not have a military nuclear program."

—"U.S. voices concern on Syria's nuclear activity," Xinhua (Edition in English), 20 February 2010; "IAEA suspects Syrian nuclear activity at bombed site," Reuters, 18 February 2010; "IAEA: Nuclear particles point to secret Syrian reactor," DPA (Deutsche Presse-Agentur), 18 February 2010; "Syria dismisses IAEA call for more inspectors access," Reuters, 20 February 2010; "Syria Pressed for Information on Suspected Nuclear Site," Global Security Newswire, 19 February 2010.

13 March 2010

SYRIAN NATIONAL ENERGY CONFERENCE BEGINS

Syria holds a two-day National Energy Conference in Damascus to present a set of recommendations for meeting the energy demands of its growing population. At the opening ceremony, Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs Abdullah al-Dardar says that "the energy sector must be dealt with as a growth motivator and not just a means to meet the needs of national economy." This conference comes after Syrian government officials

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announce interest in developing a peaceful nuclear program.

—"Syria's National Energy Conference starts in Damascus," Syrian News Station (SNS), 13 March 2010.

13 March 2010

CONFLICTING SYRIAN STATEMENTS ON NUCLEAR ENERGY ASPIRATIONS

Ibrahim Othman, Head of the Syrian Atomic Council asserts that Syria has "no intention to develop nuclear energy for peaceful use," and indicates that technical and financial obstacles would make such a program unfeasible. This is a move away from an earlier statement by Syrian Deputy Foreign Minister Feysal Mekdad, who announced the country's nuclear energy aspirations at an international conference in Paris.

—"Syria has no decision to develop peaceful nuclear energy: official," Xinhua General News Service, 13 March 2010; "Israel and Syria announce nuclear energy ambitions," BBC News, 9 March 2010.

6 April 2010

SYRIA PROVIDES IAEA ACCESS TO MNSR IN DAMASCUS

Syria grants the IAEA access to the MNSR in Damascus to investigate undeclared uranium particles discovered during an earlier inspection. However, Syria continues to deny the agency access to the Al-Kibar site bombed by Israel in September 2007.

—Veronika Oleksyn, "IAEA allowed access to Damascus research reactor," Associated Press, 7 April 2010.

3 May 2010

U.S. EXTENDS ECONOMIC SANCTIONS AGAINST SYRIA

The Obama administration announces the renewal of economic sanctions against Syria for another year. The White House cites Syrian support for terrorist organizations and its pursuit of WMD and missile programs among the reasons for the renewal. Leaders of the ruling Baath party in Damascus condemn the decision. The official Syrian daily newspaper Al-Baath reports that "the American administration made a mistake by sending such a message to Syria."

—Albert Aji, "Syria says U.S. sanctions on Damascus fuel hostility," Associated Press, 5 May 2010; "U.S. should favor dialogue over sanctions: Syria," Agence France-Presse, 5 May 2010; "U.S. Extends Syrian Sanctions for Another Year," Global Security Newswire, 4 May 2010.

11 May 2010

RUSSIA AND SYRIA DISCUSS NUCLEAR ENERGY COOPERATION

In Damascus, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and Russian President Dmitri Medvedev discuss the possibility of future nuclear energy cooperation. At a joint press conference, President Medvedev states that "cooperation on atomic energy could get a second wind." As the Russian president's remarks indicate, details and specific plans for such collaboration remain vague.

—Ian Black, "Syria lines up nuclear deal with Russia," The Guardian, 12 May 2010; Guy Faulconbridge, "Russia says eyes atomic energy cooperation with Syria," Reuters, 11 May 2010.

31 May 2010

NEW IAEA REPORT ON SYRIA RELEASED

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According to the updated report on the implementation of nuclear safeguards in Syria, despite the agency's offer to engage Syria, it has yet to receive access to the Al-Kibar site's technical documentation or to the locations of related debris, munitions, and equipment. This has rendered the IAEA investigation inconclusive. However, progress has been made regarding the MNSR, because Syria provided information on previously unreported activities involving the conversion of yellowcake to uranyl nitrate. Additionally, Syria submitted design information and other relevant documentation for the MNSR. The investigation is ongoing while the IAEA receives results of the physical inventory verification analysis.

—"Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Syrian Arab Republic," Report by the Director General to the Board of Governors, (GOV/2010/29), 31 May 2010.

6 September 2010

NEW IAEA REPORT ON SYRIA RELEASED

The most recent report on safeguards implementation in Syria by IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano states that the agency's investigation of the Al-Kibar site continues to be stymied by Syria's lack of cooperation. Amidst numerous offers of engagement, Damascus has refused inspectors access to key documentation and locations. Syria continues to assert that the site was a non-nuclear military installation.

—"Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Syrian Arab Republic," Report by the Director General to the Board of Governors, (GOV/2010/47), 6 September 2010.

17 September 2010

IAEA BOARD OF GOVERNORS PRESSURES SYRIA TO ALLOW INSPECTIONS

During an IAEA Board of Governors meeting, both the United States and the European Union call upon Syria to allow IAEA inspectors access to the Al-Kibar site. U.S. Ambassador to the IAEA Glen Davies urges the IAEA to "consider all available measures and authorities to pursue the verification assurances the international community seeks." This is a reference to the agency's right to conduct a special inspection under Article 18 of INFCIRC/153, which would provide unfettered access to key documentation, equipment, and locations.

—"Syria Pressed to Allow Nuclear Inspections," Global Security Newswire, 17 September 2010.

23 November 2010

NEW IAEA REPORT ON SYRIA RELEASED

The latest IAEA report on Syria indicates that the IAEA sent letters to the Syrian government requesting clarification regarding the preparation of uranyl nitrate and inconsistencies in nuclear material inventories at Syria's Waste Management Department. Although Syria did not provide any clarification on the former issue, it promised to provide documentation related to the latter request. Additionally, the report assessed outstanding issues related to the MNSR. Since June 2008, Syria has not cooperated with the IAEA on issues related to the Dair Alzour site.

—"Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Syrian Arab Republic," Report by the Director General to the Board of Governors, (GOV/2010/63), 23 November 2010.

1 December 2010

ISIS RELEASES SATELLITE IMAGES OF SITES RELATED TO DAIR ALZOUR

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The Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS) releases satellite images of three sites reported by the Sueddeutsche Zeitung and IAEA member states to be functionally related to Dair Alzour. They are situated near the cities of Maysaf, Marj as-Sultan, and Iskandariyah, and all three are located in naturally secure locations or have security elements visible in satellite imagery. The specific contents of these sites are unknown.

—David Albright and Paul Brannan, "Satellite Image Shows Syrian Site Functionally Related to Al Kibar Reactor," ISIS Imagery Brief, Institute for Science and International Security, 1 December 2010.

5 June 2009

INSPECTORS FIND UNDECLARED URANIUM PARTICLES AT SYRIAN MNSR

The IAEA reports finding traces of anthropogenic natural uranium particles during a routine inspection at the Miniature Neutron Source Reactor in Damascus. This is the second Syrian site at which unexplained uranium particles have been discovered [See NTI Syria Nuclear Chronology 24 April 2008, 28 October 2008, and 19 February 2009.] Both the IAEA report and experts such as David Albright indicate that there may be a connection between the uranium particles discovered at the MNSR and those found at Al-Kibar, or at the very least, that Syria may have been conducting undeclared experiments. Albright and Brannan say: "These findings raise the question of whether Syria took natural uranium intended for a reactor at the Dair Alzour [Al-Kibar] site and used a portion of it to perform cold-testing of reprocessing on a small scale at the hot cell facility." Syria has yet to offer a credible explanation for the presence of the particles.

—Joby Warrick, "UN Inspectors Find Traces of Uranium at Second Site in Syria," The Washington Post, 6 June 2009; Bethany Bell, "Uranium found at second Syria site — IAEA," BBC News, 5 June 2009; Mark Heinrich, "IAEA finds undeclared uranium at second Syria site," Reuters, 5 June 2009, "Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Syrian Arab Republic," IAEA Director General, 5 June 2009; David Albright and Paul Brannan, "IAEA Report on Syria: Undeclared Uranium Particles Found in Hot Cell Facility in Damascus; Syria Not Answering IAEA's Questions," Institute for Science and International Security, 5 June 2009.

16 June 2009

SYRIA'S ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION REBUFFS IAEA REPORT

Ibrahim Othman, Director General of Syria's Atomic Energy Commission, downplays the recent IAEA discovery of undeclared uranium particles at the MNSR in Damascus, accusing the agency of unjust treatment. Othman says: "We have [a nuclear] inventory which we have declared," and asking, "Is it part of our obligation to declare contaminated areas which we don't know about?" He contends that only "one particle or two particles of natural uranium" were found at the site, adding that the reactor is not even capable of performing experiments using uranium. The IAEA Board of Governors is expected to discuss the findings in a closed session.

—"Syria Plays Down Report on Uranium Traces," Global Security Newswire, 17 June 2009; Mark Heinrich and Sylvia Westall, "Syria dismisses IAEA concern on uranium traces," Reuters, 16 June 2009.

28 August 2009

NEW IAEA REPORT ON SYRIA RELEASED

According to the latest report on the implementation of safeguards in Syria, the agency's efforts to investigate traces of natural uranium at the Al-Kibar site are being stymied by Syria's refusal to allow access to key sites and documentation. Syria maintains that the facility was not used for nuclear purposes and therefore asserts it is not

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obliged to cooperate with the IAEA. Furthermore, Syria claims that the uranium particles emanate from ordnance used in the Israeli attack on Al-Kibar. However, the IAEA report asserts that this explanation is unlikely. Director General El-Baradei urges Syria to grant the agency access to Al-Kibar and three other facilities.

—"Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Syrian Arab Republic," IAEA Director General, 28 August 2009; "Little progress in Syrian nuclear probe: UN official," AFP, 28 August 2009.

22 September 2009

SYRIA ACCUSES ISRAEL OF NUCLEAR WASTE BURIAL

Syria submits a report to the United Nations claiming that Israel is burying nuclear waste from its Dimona reactor in the Golan Heights. Damascus further alleges that Israel is hiding nuclear warheads, nuclear mines and radioactive bombs throughout the Israeli "occupied territory." Israeli military officials counter that they are simply digging anti-tank ditches in the region.

—"Israel hiding nukes in Golan, Syria claims," UPI, 22 September 2009; "Syria says Israel burying nuclear waste," UPI, 21 September 2009; Yoav Stern, "Israel dumps nuclear waste in occupied Golan," Syrian News Station, 21 September 2009.

16 November 2009

NEW IAEA REPORT ON SYRIA RELEASED

According to the IAEA's latest report, "no progress has been made since the last report to clarify any of the outstanding issues relevant to the implementation of safeguards." Syria is still not cooperating with the IAEA to determine the origin of anthropogenic uranium particles found at the Al-Kibar site. Likewise, the origin of the anthropogenic uranium particles at the MNSR in Damascus has not been determined, although Syria has identified domestically produced yellowcake and previously undeclared uranyl nitrate experiments as possible sources. In addition, allegations connecting procurements of graphite, barium sulphate, and water pumping equipment to the Al-Kibar site have not been verified.

—"Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Syrian Arab Republic," International Atomic Energy Agency, 16 November 2009; Paul Brannan, "ISIS Analysis of November 16, 2009 IAEA report on Syria," Institute for Science and International Security, 16 November 2009.

24 April 2008

The Bush administration organizes a series of meetings for lawmakers and the press in which intelligence officials discuss the Syrian site bombed by Israel last September. Based on photographic and other evidence, the officials assess with high confidence that the facility, known as Al Kibar, was a graphite moderated nuclear reactor under construction. They also assess with high confidence that Syria and North Korea were cooperating on nuclear activities, but can only state with medium confidence that North Korea was involved in the construction at Al Kibar. While officials believe the reactor was intended to create fuel for a nuclear weapons program, they admit the evidence so far only justifies a low level of confidence in this assessment. The CIA releases a video including photographs of the site and a meeting between Syrian and North Korean officials.

—"Background Briefing with Senior U.S. Officials on Syria's Covert Nuclear Reactor and North Korea's Involvement," Office of the Director of National Intelligence, 24 April 2007, <http://dni.gov>; Demetri Sevastopulo, "N Korea 'helped' Syria build nuclear plant," Financial Times, 24 April 2008.

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24 April 2008

The Syrian ambassador to the United States, Imad Moustapha, denies the American claim that Syria was building a nuclear reactor, calling it "ridiculous."

—"Syria denies N Korea nuclear link," Al Jazeera, 25 April 2007.

25 April 2008

IAEA Chief Mohamed ElBaradei criticizes the United States for withholding information on the Syrian facility at Al Kibar, but promises that his agency will treat the information "with the seriousness it deserves and will investigate the veracity of the information."

—George Jahn, "IAEA's ElBaradei criticizes US for holding back information, Associated Press, 25 April 2007.

22-24 June 2008

Damascus allows a team of IAEA officials to visit the suspected nuclear site Al-Kibar, though a request to visit other Syrian sites is denied. The IAEA releases no information on its findings, promising to report on the results of the inspection at the next regular board meeting in September.

—"UN nuclear team inspects Syrian site," Reuters, 24 June 2008; "IAEA inspectors have visited Al-Kibar: source," Agence France-Presse, 24 June 2008.

11 August 2008

Syria denies an IAEA request for a second visit to Al-Kibar. Confirming media reports, the Syrian Foreign Ministry releases a statement explaining that the agreement between Syria and the IAEA only provides for one visit. However, the ministry adds that Syria is ready to answer any follow-up questions the UN agency may have.

—"Syria rejects second visit by international nuclear agency," Al-Arabiya TV in BBC Worldwide Monitoring, 9 August 2008; "Syria says ready to answer IAEA questions," Tehran Times, 11 August 2008.

22 September 2008

The IAEA has thus far found no evidence of nuclear material at Al-Kibar according to a statement by Director General Mohamed El-Baradei. As the suspected graphite-moderated nuclear reactor was still under construction when it was destroyed, it was not expected that radioactive material would be found. However, diplomats say preliminary tests do not indicate the presence of graphite either—this could mean that U.S. sources were incorrect about the site's purpose, that graphite rods had not yet been installed or were buried too deeply inside the facility to be damaged, or that the Syrians have successfully removed most traces of the substance. Further tests are ongoing, and the IAEA is still awaiting Syrian permission to visit related sites.

—George Jahn, "Diplomats: Syria passes 1st test of nuclear probe," Associated Press, 20 September 2008; "UN watchdog probe of Syria inconclusive," Reuters, 22 September 2008; "No indication of nuclear material in Syria so far: ElBaradei," AFP, 22 September 2008.

25 September 2008

The IAEA probe into alleged Syrian nuclear activity has been delayed by the death of the agency's main contact in Syria, according to Mohamed El-Baradei. Diplomatic sources confirm El-Baradei was referring to Brigadier General Mohammad Suleiman, who was killed by a sniper near the Syrian port city of Tartus in August. Reports at the time

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alternatively described the general as a top aide to President Assad or as Syria's main liaison with Hezbollah.

Diplomats now reveal that General Suleiman accompanied the IAEA team on its June visit to Al-Kibar.

—"Top Syria official 'assassinated'," *BBC News*, 4 August 2008; "Contact man's murder delays Syria nuclear probe: IAEA," *Agence France Presse*, 25 September 2008; Mark Heinrich and Sylvia Westal, "Assad aide killing hurts UN probe in Syria: diplomats," *Reuters*, 25 September 2008.

3 October 2008

Syria withdraws its bid for a seat on the IAEA Board of Governors, bowing to Middle East and South Asia (MESA) consensus candidate Afghanistan. The United States had opposed a Syrian seat on the board, pointing to suspicions that Syria violated the NPT and built a clandestine nuclear facility at Al-Kibar.

—"Syria gives way in IAEA contest," *BBC News*, 3 October 2008; "Afghanistan wins spot on IAEA board after Syria withdraws," *Agence France Presse*, 4 October 2008.

3 October 2008

IAEA inspectors will not be allowed to return to Al-Kibar, according to a signal from the head of Syria's Atomic Energy Commission, Ibrahim Othman. While maintaining that Damascus will cooperate with the IAEA, Othman added that such cooperation "will not in any way come at the expense of exposing our military sites or causing a threat to our national security."

—"Syria rebuffs nuclear inspectors," *BBC News*, 3 October 2008; Jay Solomon, "Syria Signals It Will Stop UN Nuclear Inspectors," *Wall Street Journal*, 4 October 2008.

28 October 2008

Environmental samples taken from Al-Kibar show enough evidence suggesting nuclear activity to warrant continued investigation, according to an IAEA leak. Two agency diplomats say the final soil and air sample evaluation is complete but will not be presented until the next board meeting which begins on 27 November 2008.

—George Jahn, "Diplomats: IAEA says Syrian nuke info needs probe," *AP*, 28 October 2008.

29 October 2008

Syrian deputy foreign minister Fayssal Mekdad refines Syria's position on future IAEA visits to Al-Kibar, telling reporters that if the agency requests a second inspection of the site the request would be considered. But he signals no flexibility on three other sites the IAEA has asked to visit, saying "There isn't a country in the world that allows inspections of its military sites."

—"Syria would consider another UN nuclear agency visit, foreign minister says," *AP*, 29 October 2008.

10-12 November 2008

Public discussion of a possible Syrian nuclear program intensifies as the anticipated release of an IAEA report on Al-Kibar approaches. Adding details to an earlier leak, IAEA diplomats say traces of processed uranium were found at the suspected nuclear site, warranting further investigation. Mohamed El-Baradei confirms that Al-Kibar is on the November agenda but warns that the facility's destruction has complicated IAEA efforts to uncover the truth. Syrian Foreign Minister Walid Al-Moualem claims the recent leaks are politically motivated and suggests any uranium found at Al-Kibar could have been left over from Israeli ordinance. Depleted uranium is used in some anti-

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tank shells but is not commonly employed in bombs or air-to-surface missiles.

—George Jahn, "Diplomats: Uranium found from suspect Syrian site," AP, 10 November 2008; Karel Janicek, "IAEA taking Syria nuclear allegations seriously," AP, 11 November 2008; Khaled Yacoub Oweis, "Nuclear disclosures politically motivated: Syria," Reuters, 12 November 2008; "Depleted Uranium," Federation of American Scientists, www.fas.org.

19 November 2008

The features of Al-Kibar are "similar to what may be found in connection with a reactor site," according to copies of an IAEA report made public ahead of the upcoming board meeting. While a non-nuclear purpose "cannot be excluded," the report lists the building size, dimension and layout of the containment structure, its available pumping capacity, and the presence of a significant number of chemically processed natural uranium particles as supportive of the reactor hypothesis. The report also notes that Syria has not yet supplied requested documentation nor allowed inspectors to visit three related sites, adding that the sites were re-landscaped and large containers were removed from them shortly after the agency's request to visit. Finally, the report says the IAEA will request information from Israel to explore Syrian claims on the origin of the uranium particles.

—"Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Syrian Arab Republic," IAEA Board of Governors Report, 19 November 2008.

19-21 November 2008

In response to the latest IAEA report, Syria stands by its claims that the destroyed facility was a conventional military building and any uranium traces must have come from Israeli munitions. Appearing to indicate a hardened position on further inspections, Syrian atomic agency head Ibrahim Othman says his country "will not allow another visit."

—Mark Heinrich, "Syria site hit by Israel resembled atom plant: IAEA," Reuters, 19 November 2008; George Jahn, "Syria all but rules out more UN nuclear inspection," AP, 21 November 2008.

24-26 November 2008

The IAEA approves a \$350,000 nuclear assistance package for Syria, pledging agency help in "conducting a technical and economic feasibility study and site selection for a nuclear power plant." The United States sharply criticizes the plan, calling it "wholly inappropriate... given the fact that Syria is under investigation by the IAEA for building a nuclear reactor outside the bounds of its international commitments." Despite their misgivings the U.S., Canada and Australia ultimately join the consensus in favor of the assistance package.

—"West Resists Syria Pleas For Nuclear Project Help - Diplomats," AFP, 24 November 2008; "U.S. blasts IAEA's Syria funding move," UPI, 25 November 2008; Mark Heinrich, "IAEA overrides U.S., clears Syria nuclear aid plan," Reuters, 26 November 2008.

28 November 2008

The IAEA has been unable to acquire commercial satellite imagery of Al-Kibar for the period immediately following the Israeli bombing. Mohamed El-Baradei calls the lack of available imagery "baffling." One scenario reportedly under consideration by agency officials is the possibility that Syria or another nation bought the photographs and

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all rights to them from commercial satellite companies for the purposes of a cover-up.

—George Jahn, "IAEA chief baffled over lack of Syria nuclear info," AP, 28 November 2008.

15 December 2008

According to U.S. nuclear expert Siegfried Hecker, none of North Korea's safeguarded fresh uranium fuel at Yongbyon was diverted to Al-Kibar. Both the U.S. and Israeli governments have accused North Korea of helping Syria fuel the alleged Al-Kibar reactor based on similarities of construction. Hecker acknowledges the possibility that fuel might have been "obtained from some unknown uranium inventory" in North Korea, but "all of the [declared] fresh fuel—for the 5-MW and 50-MW reactors—is still there" [as of Hecker's February 2008 visit to Yongbyon].

—Mark Hibbs, "U.S. Expert: North Korea Didn't Divert Safeguarded Fuel to Syrian Reactor," *Platts Nucleonics Week*, 18 December 2008; Mark Hibbs, "DPRK Has Not Shown Inclination to Provide Access on Syria," *Platts Nuclear Fuel*, 12 January 2009.

12 January 2007

Syrian officials highlight the nuclear energy option to meet increased energy consumption in the country. Officials have stated that nuclear energy could provide a feasible energy alternative in light of concerns of oil depletion and ten percent annual increase in electricity use. Syria has signed deals with Kuwait, Venezuela, and Iran to build refineries, as well as oil exploration deals with international companies to maintain its current level of production until 2025. However, official sources hint that the production decreases may occur before then. Lately, Syrian Electricity Minister Ahmed Khalid al-Ali has stated that the nuclear energy option was "not out of [Syria's] sight" to meet increasing energy demands, and Syrian Deputy Oil Minister Hasan Zaynab declared that nuclear energy was the only alternative to oil.

—Syria: Nuclear Energy Alternative Proposed Amidst Concerns of Oil Depletion, Increased Electrical Consumption," OSC Report, in Open Source Center Document GMP20070112388001, 12 January 2007.

12 September 2007

American officials confirm that Israeli warplanes launched airstrikes on a target inside Syria on September 6. However, the nature of the target and extent of damage still remain unclear. No public statements have been made by either Israel or the United States regarding the matter.

—Mark Mazzetti and Helene Cooper, "U.S. confirms Israeli strikes hit Syrian target last week," *New York Times*, 12 September 2007.

13 September 2007

U.S. intelligence indicates that North Korea and Syria might have been cooperating on some kind of nuclear facility in Syria. The evidence based primarily on Israeli satellite imagery has led U.S. officials to believe that the facility could have been used to produce material for nuclear weapons. Speculations are also rife that the bombed facility could have been manufacturing unconventional weapons, including the possibility of the facility being a missile installation.

—Glenn Kessler, "North Korea, Syria may be at work on nuclear facility," *Washington Post*, 13 September 2007; "North Korea, Syria possibly building nuclear installation," *Nuclear Threat Initiative*, 13 September 2007.

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20 September 2007

Israel confirms operation over Syria. Opposition leader and former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu says that he congratulated Prime Minister Olmert following an alleged air strike of a nuclear installation in northern Syria. During a live TV interview, Netanyahu said that he was "part of the matter from the beginning."

—Yaakov Katz. "Netanyahu: I congratulated Olmert on Syria operation. IDF holds large-scale exercise in Golan Heights," *Jerusalem Post*, 20 September 2007.

25 September 2007

North Korea dismisses reports that it was providing nuclear material to Syria as allegations "fabricated by lunatics." Speaking to reporters before the Six-Party talks, North Korean Vice-Foreign Minister Kim Kye-kwan says, "Lunatics have created these rumours about a nuclear deal between us and Syria."

—Mark Tran. "North Korea denies nuclear link," *Guardian Unlimited*, 25 September 2007; "Yonhap: DPRK envoy reiterates denial of Syrian nuclear ties, comments on 6-party talks," *Yonhap*, 25 September 2007, Open Source Document KPP 20070925971002.

14 October 2007

Report alleges that Israeli airstrikes on Syria last month were directed against a site housing a partially constructed nuclear reactor. The reactor is believed to be modeled on a North Korean design used for stockpiling fuel for nuclear weapons.

—David E. Sanger and Mark Mazzetti. "Israel struck Syrian nuclear project, analysts say," *New York Times*, 14 October 2007.

15 October 2007

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) asks Damascus for information about the facility targeted by Israeli airstrikes.

—Mark Heinrich. "UN watchdog asks Syria about 'undeclared' atom plant," Reuters, 15 October 2007.

25 October 2007

U.S. security experts publish what they believe to be photographs of the secret Syrian nuclear facility bombed by Israel last month. Their analysis of satellite images in an area near the Euphrates river reveals what they say are buildings similar to a North Korean reactor capable of producing fuel for a nuclear bomb.

—Leonard Doyle. "US claims photos show Syrian nuclear reactor," *Independent*, 25 October 2007; David Albright and Paul Brannan. "Suspect reactor construction site in eastern Syria: The site of the September 6 Israeli raid?," *Institute for Science and International Security*, 23 October 2007.

27 October 2007

Syria removes all traces of the building targeted by Israeli airstrikes in September. This fuels speculations that the structure may have concealed a partially completed nuclear installation.

—Ian Black. "International: Syria nuclear cover-up suspected after Israeli raid," *Guardian*, 27 October 2007.

28 October 2007

The head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Mohamed ElBaradei, tells CNN that the IAEA has not received

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information about any clandestine nuclear activities in Syria. He adds that he was told by the Syrians that the site was a military facility with "nothing to do with nuclear."

—"IAEA chief criticizes Israel over Syria raid," Reuters, 28 October 2007.

5 November 2007

The Syrian facility bombed by Israel in September was several years old. Commercial satellite imagery from 2003 indicates the presence of a structure similar to the most recent imagery taken from just prior to the Israeli airstrikes in September.

—Mark Hosenball. "A New Intelligence Failure?," *Newsweek*, 5 November 2007.

8 November 2007

The Syrian deputy prime minister for economic affairs, Abdallah al-Dardari, denies that Syria has the capability to produce nuclear energy. Al-Dardari says that "the production of nuclear energy is costly, and it requires a very big infrastructure of material, technical, and human resources, which are not available in Syria."

—"Syrian official says Syria incapable of producing nuclear energy," *Syria News*, 8 November 2007, Open Source Document GMP 20071108637004.

4 January 2006

A 55-page intelligence assessment report formulated by British, French, German, and Belgian agencies states that Syria and Pakistan have been purchasing technology and chemicals which are used to enrich uranium and create their rocket programs.

—"Secret services say Iran is trying to assemble a nuclear missile: Documents seen by Guardian details web of front companies and middlemen," *The Guardian*, 4 January 2006.

13 May 2006

On 13 May 2006, a de-classified report to the U.S. Congress on the acquisition of technology relating to weapons of mass destruction and advanced conventional munitions for the period 1 January to 31 December 2004 indicates that the A.Q. Khan Network offered nuclear technology and hardware to Syria. The report further states that in 2004 Syria continued to develop civilian nuclear capabilities, including uranium extraction technology and hot cell facilities, all potentially applicable to a weapons program.

—Unclassified Report to Congress on the Acquisition of Technology relating to Weapons of Mass Destruction and Advanced Conventional Munitions, 1 January to 31 December 2004, Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

27 September 2006

Syrian Deputy Petroleum Minister, Dr. Hasan Zeinab, denied claims made in a report by Kuwaiti daily *Al-Siyasa* of an ongoing nuclear program supervised by Iranian and Iraqi scientists. Zeinab went on to assert that he was in favor of the commencement of such a program in the future to support growing Syrian energy concerns.

—"Syria Aspires to Go Nuclear, Denies Ongoing Program," The Media Line, 27 September 2006.

27 October 2006

In an interview with Tokyo-based *Asahi Shimbun*, Syria President Bashar al-Assad stresses that Syria is not seeking to become a nuclear power. He argues that Damascus' ultimate aim is a nuclear-free Middle East. Al-Assad pushes

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for greater application of international pressure on Israel to abandon its nuclear arsenal and voices support for Iran's international right to develop a nuclear program for "peaceful purposes." He also criticized the United States' reluctance to accept Syria's offer of entering into dialogue.

—Daiji Sadamori, "Assad: Syria Not Seeking to Be Nuclear State," *Asahi Shimbun*, 27 October 2006.

2 January 2005

Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhafi states in his interview with Al-Jazeera satellite TV, that "Syria has no nuclear programme or nuclear weapons, but that it has the right 'to liberate its land.'"

—"Al-Qadhafi says Libya 'Served World Peace' by Halting Nuclear Programme," *Global Security Newswire*, 2 January 2005.

17 January 2005

Officials from the Bush Administration state that their suspicion of WMD being transported out of Iraq by President Saddam Hussein has turned out to be untrue. Intelligence and congressional officials claim "they have not seen any information—never 'a piece,' said one—indicating that WMD or significant amounts of components and equipment were transferred from Iraq to neighboring Syria, Jordan, or elsewhere." The official report of the transfer of WMD to Syria, Jordan, or other countries will be reported in February.

—"U.S. intelligence found no evidence WMD moved from Iraq," *Associated Press*, 17 January 2005.

24 January 2005

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad arrived in Moscow today to begin negotiations with Russian president Vladimir Putin. Russia is interested in taking a bigger role in the Middle East. The two leaders will discuss resolving the conflict between Israel and Syria. They will also discuss Russia's "pledge" to control "Syria's military program in order to prevent the development of weapons of mass destruction."

—"Imperial optimism," *RusData Dialine*, 24, January 2005.

25 January 2005

Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov agrees with Syria's proposal of creating a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction. Mr. Lavrov states he would like to see U.S.-Syria relations improve through dialogue instead of threats. He states that Russia is "concerned by the situation that has been developing around Syria, recently. It is important to prevent the appearance of additional hotbeds of tension in that region that is filled with crises as it is."

—"Russian Minister Voices Concern over US Claims of Syria's Links to Extremism," *Global Security Newswire*, 25 January 2005.

25 January 2005

Israeli Mossad Chief Meir Dagan states that "there must always be an intelligence effort to check the recent information on the start of nuclear programs in Syria, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia." He adds that there maybe clues that Syria is starting a project utilizing nuclear materials.

—"Mossad chief, Iran will go nuclear this year," *The Jerusalem Post*, 25 January 2005.

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27 January 2005

A joint declaration signed by Russia and Syria states that Moscow will oversee Syria's defense program in order to halt the production of weapons of mass destruction.

—"Is Russia playing Soviet games," *The Jerusalem Post*, 27 January 2005.

29 January 2005

Syrian president Bashar al-Assad has finished four days of successful talks with Russian president Vladimir Putin in Moscow. In regards to their discussion about Iran, al-Assad states that both parties agreed that "in accordance with international law any country has the right to possess a peaceful nuclear reactor...we take the same approach as Russia on the question of stationing nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction."

—"President Al-Asad says Syrian forces will remain in Lebanon," BBC, 29 January 2005.

4 February 2005

In his State of the Union Address, President George Bush says, that in order "to promote peace in the broader Middle East, we must confront regimes that continue to harbour terrorists and pursue weapons of mass murder," singling out both Syria and Iran. He stated that the Syrian government needs to take action in preserving peace and freedom in the region.

—"Bush Warns Syria, Iran," Global Security Newswire, 4 February 2005.

7 April 2005

Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter states that the United States fails to acknowledge how Israel's nuclear program encourages countries such as Syria, Iran, and Egypt to pursue nuclear weapons.

—"Saving Non-Proliferation," *Windsor Star*, 7 April 2005.

14 April 2005

U.S. Representative of the House Committee on International Relations and House Armed Services Committee Edward R. Royce states that the United States should worry that the technology transfer acquired from China by A.Q. Khan could have been proliferated to Syria.

—"U.S. Representative Duncan Hunter (R-CA) holds a joint hearing with the House International Relations Committee on E.U. weapons sales to China," *FDCH Political Transcript*, 14 April 2005.

26 April 2005

The Iraq Survey Group that was in charge of the search for WMD in Iraq since the fall of Saddam Hussein releases a report declaring it has found no evidence supporting the claim that Iraqi arms are hidden in Syria. The findings of the report contradict the previous sentiment of U.S. officials who had believed some WMD from Iraq had been moved to Syria prior to 2003.

—"Inspectors Find No Proof Iraq Hid Weapons in Syria," Reuters, 26 April 2005.

27 April 2005

Charles Duelfer, the chief weapons inspector of the Iraqi Survey Group said that he cannot rule out that Iraqi weapons of mass destruction have been transferred to Syria, although all senior Iraqi detainees involved in Saddam's security and weapons programs "uniformly denied any knowledge of residual WMD that could have

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been secreted to Syria."

—Rowan Scarborough, "CIA can't rule out WMD move to Syria," *Washington Times*, 27 April 2005.

Early 2005

Western diplomats state that Pakistani nuclear Scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan gave lectures about "nuclear issues," between late 1997 to early 1998 in Damascus.

—"The Growing Syrian Missile Threat," *Middle East Quarterly*, Fall 2005.

29 September 2005

Cuba, Syria, and Belarus have become part of the International Atomic Energy Agency's 35-nation board.

—"Cuba, Syria, Belarus join IAEA board, strengthening anti-U.S. front," *Associated Press*, 29 September 2005.

12 December 2005

Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad states every country has an inalienable right to peaceful nuclear technology including Iran.

—"Nuclear-Iran-States," *ARABIA*, 12 December 2005.

12 December 2005

In an interview by Russian TV, Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad states that in order for the Middle East to be a nuclear weapons-free zone, Israel must give up its nuclear weapons.

—"Syrian President Interviewed by Russian TV on Al-Hariri Probe, Iraq, other issues," *BBC*, 12 December 2005.

6 January 2004

The United States and Britain have stated bluntly that Syria must relinquish its weapons of mass destruction or "face ostracism—even if neighboring Israel keeps its nuclear arms." This is in response to an earlier announcement by President Bashar Assad that Syria would not dispose of its WMD until and unless Israel does the same. The two western countries have made clear to Syria that abandoning its chemical and biological weapons constitutes the price of better relations.

—Anton La Guardia, "Assad Given Weapons Ultimatum," *The Daily Telegraph (London)*, 7 January 2004.

9 January 2004

According to National Security Adviser Condoleeza Rice, the Bush administration is in the process of investigating a report that Iraq spirited its WMD across the border into Syria before the U.S. invasion in March 2003. Rice adds however that "I don't think we are at the point that we can make a judgment on the issue. There hasn't been any hard evidence that such a thing happened."

—Mike Allen, "Syria Role on Iraqi Arms Is Studied," *The Washington Post*, 10 January 2004.

16 January 2004

Commenting on Syria, Secretary of State Colin Powell told Britain's Sky News that the United States has not characterized it "as one of the members of the axis of evil but we are concerned about some of Syria's policies with respect to supporting terrorist activity, with respect of what they might be doing with weapons of mass

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destruction."

—"Powell Renews Call on Syria to End Support for Terrorism, WMD," Agence France Presse, 16 January 2004.

27 January 2004

Syrian ambassador Mikail Wehbe, speaking at a UN disarmament conference in Geneva, repeated the Syrian demand for a WMD-free Middle East "without exception".

—"Syria Reiterated Demand for Nuclear-Free Middle East," Agence France Presse, 27 January 2004.

April 2004

Middle East Newsline alleges that a report suggesting that WMD parts have been transported to Khartoum, Sudan from Syria since January of this year — has been verified by sources who also contest the assertion that Sudanese President al-Bashir is unaware of the shipments.

—Jason Fuchs, "Iran's Cleric Push in Iraq as Syria Moves its WMD," *Defense & Foreign Affairs' Strategic Policy*, April 2004, p.20.

1 April 2004

Following discussions with his Syrian counterpart and President al-Assad, Foreign Minister Bernard Bot of the Netherlands affirms that the European Union expects to find a compromise on the WMD issue that will satisfy all the parties to a pending association accord.

—"EU, Syria Ready to Compromise on Banned Weapons: Dutch FM," Agence France Presse, 1 April 2004.

8 April 2004

In addition to expressing concern over the possibility of Syria having been a customer of Pakistan's Dr. Khan, U.S. officials point to two IAEA programs that could prove helpful to determined scientists in Syria. The atomic agency has helped the Syrians procure hot cells to process for purposes of medical imaging; in addition, it assisted in efforts to produce high-purity phosphoric acid from phosphate by extracting uranium. According to David Albright, head of the Institute for Science and International Security, the Syrian hot cells are "larger than necessary" and any uranium extracted would not be subject to IAEA scrutiny. Albright adds: "It's a long shot...but it raises questions about the Syrians' intentions."

—Carla Anne Robbins, "Helping Syria Get Hot Cells," *Wall Street Journal*, 8 April 2004, p. A1.

9 April 2004

According to Ha'aretz, a former Syrian spy has revealed that Damascus is in possession of sensitive information regarding Israel's Dimona reactor, including photos from inside the reactor compound.

—"Ex-Spy: Syria Has Data on Israel's Reactor," United Press International, 9 April 2004.

30 April 2004

White House spokesman Scott McClellan, speaking with reporters, confirms that the United States will not balk at implementing the Syria Accountability Act, imposing sanctions on Syria, unless there is an effort to seriously address WMD concerns and support for terrorism.

—Olivier Knox, "US: Possible Syria Sanctions 'Very Soon'," Agence France Presse, 30 April 2004.

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7 May 2004

Citing an unidentified U.S. administration source, an Israeli TV correspondent alleges that Syria—though not yet nuclear-capable—evinced interest in acquiring nuclear parts via a "leak" in the A.Q. Khan proliferation ring.

—"Israeli TV Alleges Nuclear Parts Reaching Syria," BBC, 7 May 2004.

11 May 2004

President Bush enumerates the reasons the United States has approved sanctions against Syria, accusing it of "supporting terrorism, continuing its occupation of Lebanon, pursuing weapons of mass destruction and missile programs, and undermining United States and international efforts with respect to the stabilization and reconstruction of Iraq...."

—Krishnadev Calamur, "U.S. Slaps Sanctions on Syria," United Press International, 11 May 2004.

13 May 2004

EU foreign ministers are set to resume talks with Syria on their pending trade agreement next week.

—Ian Black, "Europe to Seek Syria Trade Deal," *The Guardian (London)*, 13 May 2004.

17 May 2004

The Syria-EU trade accord remains unsigned at a meeting for EU foreign ministers in Brussels. Britain, Germany and the Netherlands continue to hold out for tougher wording of the deal's WMD clause.

—Judy Dempsey, "Three Countries Demand Tougher WMD Clause in Syria Trade Deal," *The Financial Times*, 18 May 2004.

26 May 2004

European officials approve text regarding the WMD clause to be included in the trade accord with Syria. No date has been fixed for resuming negotiations however.

—"EU Agrees Syria Deal, Plans Renewed Talks with Damascus," Deutsche Presse Agentur, 26 May 2004.

15 June 2004

According to a report published in the London-based Al-Sharq al-Awsat newspaper, referencing "well informed European diplomatic sources," the signing of the EU-Syria agreement has been taken off the agenda of the EU foreign ministers' meeting in Luxembourg today, there being no new reason to discuss it. According to these same sources, the European Union is considering sending a team to Damascus within the next three weeks to "persuade them of the need to sign the partnership agreement that includes the disputed paragraph."

—"EU Partnership Agreement with Syria Dropped from Foreign Ministers' Agenda," BBC, 17 June 2004.

4 July 2004

According to a report published by the London-based Al-Hayat newspaper, EU High Representative for WMD affairs Javier Solana will be visiting Damascus 14 and 15 July to discuss the revisions to the trade accord agreed by EU representatives on 26 May.

—"Talks to Resume on EU Association Agreement with Syria," BBC, 5 July 2004.

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4 July 2004

Investigators tracking nuclear technology that proliferated via the A.Q. Khan network suggest that Syria may have procured centrifuges capable of enriching uranium to produce a bomb.

—Sarah Baxter, "CIA Fears Syria Could Go Nuclear," *Sunday Times (London)*, 4 July 2004.

9 July 2004

An unidentified senior diplomat says there is no evidence to warrant reporting Syria or Saudi Arabia to the IAEA board of governors, in connection with the A.Q. Khan nuclear technology proliferation network.

—George Jahn, "Head of UN Nuclear Agency Says More Than 20 International Companies Supplied Black Market," *The Associated Press*, 9 July 2004.

10 September 2004

A *Jerusalem Post* article stresses growing international concern regarding Syria's possible acquisition of nuclear weapons, "perhaps with the assistance of its Iranian ally." The writer refers to statements by U.S. Undersecretary of State John Bolton that "several other" [unspecified] customers had attempted to acquire nuclear technology from the Khan network besides North Korea, Libya, and Iran. The writer also points to Khan's alleged visits to Damascus in 1997 and 1998 to lecture on nuclear materials, suggesting that in 2001 Syria moved the meeting venue to Iran to avoid exposure of its contacts with the WMD black marketer. Recent reports allege that Syria may have acquired gas centrifuges, thereby potentially allowing it to produce enriched uranium.

—Douglas Davis, "A Syrian Bomb?" *The Jerusalem Post*, 10 September 2004.

26 September 2004

Western intelligence officials allege that President Bashir al-Asad is attempting to move 12 Iraqi nuclear technicians from Syria to Iran. They were allegedly sent to Damascus, provided with new identities, and hidden at an undisclosed military installation prior to the current war in Iraq. The deal Asad proposes purportedly includes transferring the Iraqi scientists to Teheran to assist their counterparts in developing atomic weapons; the results of the research would then be shared with Syria.

—Con Coughlin, "Syria Brokers Secret Deal to Send Atomic Weapons Scientists to Iran," *Sunday Telegraph (London)*, 26 September 2004.

30 September 2004

Asked if Syria was a client of A.Q. Khan's nuclear network, IAEA head El Baradei responds "we have seen no indications."

—Mohamed El Baradei, "Still Time for Diplomacy?" interview by Tim Sebastian, *HARDtalk*, BBC News, 30 September 2004.

21 October 2004

A year-long dispute between Syria and the European Union is apparently resolved with agreement on a WMD clause. The clause provides for cooperation in countering terrorism and WMD proliferation, including their means of delivery. The accord must now be approved by 25 EU foreign ministers scheduled to meet in December 2004.

—"EU Agreement Allows Syria to Keep WMD," *WorldTribune.com*, 21 October 2004.

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10 November 2004

An unidentified U.S. official reveals that the Bush administration is looking at imposing further sanctions on Syria, citing the latter's reluctance to cease support for terrorism and for its alleged WMD activities. A decision is expected within the next few weeks.

—"Bush Administration Considers New Syrian Sanctions," Global Security Newswire, 10 November 2004.

21 December 2004

Xinhua reports that Syrian President Bashar al-Assad will continue talks with the U. S. and Israel regarding sanctions and accusations of seeking weapons of mass destruction. Washington states that Damascus is harboring terrorists, trying to acquire weapons of mass destruction, and is not stopping border infiltration into Iraq.

—"Yearender: Syria seeks multi-channels to ease US, Israeli pressure," Xinhua, 21 December 2004.

[Back to Top](#)

2003-1963

January 2003

Russia and Syria reportedly enter into negotiations for the construction of a \$2 billion nuclear facility in Syria, which would include a nuclear power plant and a nuclear seawater-desalination plant. While stating that no agreement has been reached, the head of Russia's Ministry of Atomic Energy (Minatom) initially confirms that the discussion over supplying Syria with a power plant and a desalination plant is taking place. A Minatom spokesman Nikolai Shingarev later states that Russia had provided Syria with consulting services in 2001 with regards to building a power plant and a water-desalination plant and the two countries came to a preliminary agreement on Russia's potential participation in the power plant construction, however, Shingarev added, Syria abandoned the project due to financial constraints. A spokesman for Russian Foreign Ministry denied that any discussion of the construction of a nuclear plant in Syria had even taken place.

—Andrew Jack, Stephen Fidler, and Roula Khalaf, "Russia in talks to build Syrian nuclear reactor," *Financial Times*, 16 January 2003; "Russia denies plans to build nuclear power plant in Syria," *RosBusinessConsulting*, January 16, 2003, via Lexis-Nexis, 17 January 2003; "Alexander Yakovenko, the Official Spokesman of Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Answers a Russian and Foreign Media Question Regarding Israeli Media Reports About Construction of Two Nuclear Power Plants in Syria," *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation*, 15 January 2003, www.in.mid.ru; "Russian Nuclear Assistance to Syria: Scam or Scandal?" *Middle East Intelligence Bulletin*, Vol. 5, No. 1, January 2003, www.meib.org.

5 December 2002

An Italian newspaper, citing an Iraqi Army officer who fled to Europe, alleges that Syria "has opened [its] research centers to Iraq's chemists and physicists and agreed to store the most compromising substances," referring to Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. The newspaper also describes the Scientific Research Institute in Damascus as Rihab Taha's "home from home." [Note: Dr. Rihab Taha, also know as "Dr. Germ," is the architect and former leader of Iraq's biological weapons program.] If allegations are true, the "compromising substances" most likely

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refer to chemical and biological weapons, not nuclear.

—Pino Buongiorno, "The People Arming Saddam," *Panorama* (Milan), 5 December 2002, in "Iraq Moving NBC Program to Syria; Yugoslav President Endorsed Embargo Breaking," FBIS, EUP20021129000145, 5 December 2002.

2001

Syria is in the process of constructing a radioactive waste processing facility, to manage the waste resulting from the production and application of radioisotopes. Atomic Energy Commission of Syria (AECS) has established a separate, Radioactive Waste Management Division to oversee the collection, treatment and storage of radioactive waste.

—Mohammad Ghafar, "Radioactive waste management facility in Syria," International Conference on Management of Radioactive Waste from Non-Power Applications, IAEA, Report No. IAEA-CN-87/79, 1 July 2001, via ETDEWEB, www.etde.org.

2001

During a meeting of the Standing Russian-Syrian Commission for Trade and Economic, Research and Technical Cooperation, Russian and Syrian officials discuss construction of a \$500 million tri-superphosphate factory near the city of Palmyra. This is part of a larger agreement to develop a plant to produce nitric fertilizers in Deyr ez-Zor and a phosphate fertilizer plant in Homs.

—"Russian, Syrian Officials to Discuss Economic Cooperation," *Pravda.ru*, 15 May 2001, <http://english.pravda.ru>.

May 2001

Bechtel Corp. and Makad International plan to construct a 500,000-ton/year triple superphosphate plant near Palmyra, but delay constructions due to financial constraints. The phosphates for the plant would come from Khunafis Mines.

—Thomas R. Yager, "The Mineral Industries of Jordan, Lebanon and Syria," U.S. Geological Survey, 2001, <http://minerals.usgs.gov>.

22 May 1999

As part of the 1997 cooperation agreement, Russia and Syria sign an agreement for cooperation in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, which stipulates that Russia will build Syria two nuclear reactors to be used for production of electricity. According to Ibrahim Osman, the Atomic Energy Commission of Syria (AECS) Director General, this cooperation will enable Syria to "build a competent nuclear facility that can monitor all kinds of atomic energy and its uses." It is unclear whether the agreement entails the construction of research or power reactors. While the Dubayy Al-Bayan source claims that the reactors will be used for electricity production, which suggests a power reactor, the *Middle East Intelligence Bulletin* source claims that the agreement entails the construction of a 25MW light water research reactor, which would be unsuitable for electricity production.

—Dubayy Al Bayan, 23 May 1999, in FBIS, "Syria Gets Nuclear Reactors from Russia," FTS19990530000096, 30 May 1999; Anna Bazhenova, "Russia, Syria Sign Agreement on Peaceful Atomic Energy," *ITAR-TASS*, 19 May 1999, in FBIS, FTS19990519000969; "Russian Nuclear Assistance to Syria: Scam or Scandal?" *Middle East Intelligence Bulletin*, Vol. 5, No. 1, January 2003, www.meib.org.

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6 July 1999

Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and Russian President Boris Yeltsin issue a joint statement urging the turning of the Middle East into a region free of weapons of mass destruction, most important of which are nuclear weapons. —"Al-Asad, Yeltsin Issue Final Statement at End of Talks," Syrian Arab Television Network, 6 July 1999, in FBIS, FTS19990706001538, 6 July 1999.

June-July 1998

The Atomic Energy Commission of Syria (AECS) and the Russian Ministry of Atomic Energy sign an agreement, according to which Russia's Atomstroiekспорт and Nikiet will construct a center for nuclear research to be located 140km from Damascus. The center will be equipped with a 25MW light water pool-type research reactor. The agreement also provides for Syrian students to train in Russia at the Engineering and Physics Institute. Construction of the center reportedly began some time in the late 1980s, but was suspended in 1992 due to lack of funds. [The official, 10-year agreement on cooperation in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, which included the construction of the nuclear research center, was signed in May 1999.] —"Nuclear Agreement between Syria and Russia," *Science*, 20 July 1998; "Novosti Minatoma" ("Minatom News"), Atom-Pressa, No. 25, 15 July 1998; Oleg Lebedev, "Russia, Syria Agree on Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy," *Moscow RIA*, 6 July 1998, in FBIS, FTS19980707000041, 7 July 1998; "Russia to Construct Syrian Nuclear Research Center," *Interfax*, 20 May 1999, in FBIS, FTS19990520001548, 20 May 1999.

1997

Syria approaches the IAEA and receives approval for the construction of an ion beam accelerator and the accelerator facility to improve Syria's research capabilities by introducing accelerator technology to analysis of materials and development of semiconductors and alloys through ion implantation. Syria finances the project with its own for \$1 million. —"SYR/8/008: Ion Beam Accelerator for Materials Development and Analysis," IAEA Technical Cooperation Projects, 1997, www-tc.iaea.org; "Technical Cooperation Report for 2001," GC(46)/INF/4, International Atomic Energy Agency, 2001, p. 48, www.iaea.or.at.

December 1997-February 1998

The intergovernmental Russian-Syrian Commission on Trade and Scientific and Technical Cooperation concludes a three-day meeting with a signing of a memorandum of cooperation between the Russian Ministry of Atomic Energy and Atomic Energy Commission of Syria (AECS), which will serve as a foundation for cooperation in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The Russian government approves the spirit of the memorandum in December 1997 by declaring that it "supports the [AECS]' proposal that cooperation with [Syria] in peaceful uses of atomic energy should be stepped up." —"Yadernoye Sotrudnichestvo Rossii i Sirii" ("Nuclear Cooperation of Russia and Syria"), *Kommersant-Daily*, 24 February 1998; "Syria, Russia Sign Agreements on Bilateral Cooperation," ITAR-TASS, 23 February 1998, in FBIS, FTS19980223001264; "Russia, Syria to Steop Up Cooperation in Nuclear Energy," *Interfax*, 23 December 1997, in FBIS, FTS19971223001269; "Russia Negotiating Sale of Nuclear Reactor to Syria," *Ha'aretz*, 31 December 1997, in FBIS, FTS19971231000151.

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October 1995-September 1996

The IAEA coordinates a series of advisory group meetings on the introduction of small- and medium-sized reactors in developing countries, held in Rabat, Morocco and Tunis, Tunisia. The Syrian delegation presents an analysis of Syrian energy demands and argues that there is a need to implement an average of 500MW of power annually until the year 2003. The presentation also stresses the need for nuclear power to Syria.

—I. Khamis and A. Hainoun, "Market potential of small and medium power reactors in Syria," Conference Report, Advisory Group Meetings on Introduction of Small and Medium Reactors in Developing Countries, IAEA-TECDOC-909, IAEA, 1 February 1998, via ETDEWEB, www.etde.org.

1995-1999

The IAEA supplies various items, including radiation monitoring equipment, for a neutron activation analytical laboratory in Syria. The Atomic Energy Commission of Syria (AECS) uses the laboratory for neutron activation analysis, production of short-lived radioisotopes, and training by utilizing its Miniature Neutron Source Reactor (MNSR).

—"SYR/4/006: Neutron Activation Analytical Laboratory," IAEA Technical Cooperation Projects, 1999, www-tc.iaea.org.

1996

The IAEA approves a project for the construction of a cyclotron facility for Atomic Energy Commission of Syria's (AECS) Nuclear Medicine Center in Damascus and initiates construction of the facility in 1997. The facility will be used for the production of radioisotopes for medical purposes. The Cyclon-30 cyclotron is provided by Belgium's Ion Beam Applications. The project timeframe involves cyclotron order and facility design in 1996-1997; building construction and hot cell equipment order and installation in 1997-1999; and cyclotron installation in 1998-1999. [Note: Ion Beam Applications also supplied a cyclotron of the same model to the Karaj center in Iran. Analysts suspect that Iran might be using the cyclotron to conduct enrichment research.]

—"SYR/4/007: Cyclotron Facility for Medical Radioisotopes," IAEA Technical Cooperation Projects, 1997, www-tc.iaea.org; "Customer References," IBA website, accessed on 25 May 2003, www.iba-ri.com; Kenneth R. Timmerman, "Iran's Nuclear Program: Myth and Reality," *The Middle East Data Project, Inc.*, 1995, www.uspid.dsi.unimi.it.

1996

Syria signs a contract with the IAEA and an unnamed county that will supply equipment to improve Syria's technical capabilities in removing uranium from triple super phosphate produced in the fertilizer plant at Homs. [The project is completed in 2001.]

—"Technical Cooperation Report for 2001," GC(46)/INF/4, International Atomic Energy Agency, 2001, p. 39, www.iaea.or.at.

1996

The Atomic Energy Commission of Syria (AECS) carries out a preliminary investigation to determine whether it is possible to apply the solvent extraction method to recover uranium from phosphoric acid produced at the Homs plant. Tri-superphosphates are produced at Homs at the rate of 165,000t per year. The investigation concludes

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that it is technically feasible to recover uranium by this method.

—Khorfan, S. Koudsi, Y. Dahdouh, and A. Shlweit, "Preliminary investigation on the extraction of uranium from Syrian phosphoric acid," International Conference on Uranium Extraction, Chinese Nuclear Society, 1996, via INIS.

4 March 1996

Syria's first research reactor SRR-1, the Chinese-supplied Miniature Neutron Source Reactor (MNSR), goes critical.
—"Syria," Research Reactors Database, International Atomic Energy Agency, updated 26 September 2002, www.iaea.org.

1993

The IAEA completes a four-year technical assistance project with Atomic Energy Commission of Syria (AECS) to establish a non-destructive testing (NDT) laboratory at AECS and to provide equipment, advice and training to AECS personnel in basic NDT techniques. The laboratory is being used for routine NDT training and provides NDT services to local industries and other agencies in Syria.

—"SYR/8/003: Non-Destructive Testing Laboratory," IAEA Technical Cooperation Projects, 1993, www-tc.iaea.org.

January 1992

According to undisclosed but "reliable" sources in Paris and Lebanon, Syrian and Iranian military representatives enter an agreement on strategic cooperation, including nuclear weapons production.

—"Syria, Iran Reportedly in Nuclear Weapons Pact," *Hamburg DPA*, 23 January 1992, in FBIS, FBIS-NES-92-016, 24 January 1992; "An Iranian Nuclear Chronology, 1987-1992," *Middle East Defense News*, Vol. 5, No. 17 and 18, 8 June 1992, in Lexis-Nexis.

24 March 1992

The Syrian parliament, the People's Assembly, endorses an agreement between Syria, China, and the IAEA allowing for the purchase of the 30KW MNSR from China, which the latter had begun building the previous year. During the same session, the Assembly approves the NPT comprehensive safeguards agreement between Syria and the IAEA.

—"Assembly Endorses Nonproliferation Safeguards," *Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network*, 24 March 1992, in FBIS, FBIS-NES-92-058, 25 March 1992.

3 August 1992

Middle East Defense News (Mednews) reports that Syria has established a procurement network operating in France and Spain to obtain clandestinely "thousand-ton quantities" of yellowcake. The Mednews source claims that a Damascus-based company called MIDTEC (Middle East Technical Bureau) is one of the fronts for these purchases. According to the source, the government of Namibia has recently agreed to sell yellowcake to a Syrian "procurement team."

—"Syria seeks uranium," *Mednews*, 3 August 1992, Vol. 5, No. 21, in Lexis-Nexis.

1991

China begins construction of Syria's first research reactor, the SRR-1, a 30KW miniature neutron source reactor (MNSR) modeled after the Canadian Slowpoke reactor. Its main purpose is Neutron Activation Analysis (NAA), training, and small-scale radioisotope production. The reactor is installed in the Der Al-Hadjar Nuclear Research

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Center with the help of the IAEA as part of Technical Cooperation Project SYR/4/004. According to some analysts, the Syrian MNSR is unsuitable for weapons production.

—"Syria," Research Reactors Database, International Atomic Energy Agency, updated 26 September 2002, www.iaea.org; George, A., "Syria Takes Delivery of Its Chinese Reactor," *Nuclear Engineering International*, v. 12/93, pp. 46-47, 1 December 1993; I. Khamis, "The Role of Small Research Reactors in Developing Countries: the Syrian Perspective," Small Research Reactor Workshop, International Center for Environmental and Nuclear Sciences, 13-17 January 2003, www.icens.org; "SYR/4/004: Miniature Neutron Source Reactor," IAEA Technical Cooperation Projects, 1998, www-tc.iaea.org; Anthony H. Cordesman, "Syria and Weapons of Mass Destruction," *Israel and Lebanon: The New Military and Strategic Realities*, Rough Draft, October 2000, Center for Strategic and International Studies, www.csis.org.

1991

India's Atomic Energy Commission offers to supply Syria with a 5MW research reactor, which Syria reportedly seriously considers. When pressured by the United States, India withdraws its offer.

—Neel Patri, "India's AEC offers to reprocess, under safeguards, foreign spent fuel," *Nuclear Fuel*, Vol. 16, No. 11, 27 May 1991, in Lexis-Nexis; Neel Patri, "Costs will keep India from making year 2000 nuclear building target," *Nucleonics Week*, Vol. 32, No. 35, 29 August 1991, in Lexis-Nexis; Mark Hibbs, "INVAP seeks Thai reactor sale; Syria expected to sue for supply," *Nucleonics Week*, Vol. 35, No. 43, 27 October 1994, in Lexis-Nexis.

Early 1990s

The Der Al-Hadjar Nuclear Research Center (also known as Dayr al Hajar or Der Al-Hadjar), is constructed. It houses Syria's only research reactor, the Chinese-supplied Miniature Neutron Source Reactor (MNSR). The location of the Der Al-Hadjar Center is unclear. Some sources state that the Center is 30km from Damascus, while other sources list a Syrian nuclear research center as being 140km from Damascus. This however might refer to the new nuclear research center that Syria is building with assistance from Russia. The National Imagery and Mapping Agency's Geographic Names Database (GND) lists a "Dahr el Hajar" at 34.43 N and 36.00 E, which is about 140km north of Damascus. Research at the center includes nuclear physics and chemistry; use of radiation and radioisotopes in medicine, agriculture, biology, and geology; exploration of radioactive ores; management and procedures for the use of radioactive resources; protection from radiation; and the effects from radiation on humans and the environment.

—"Syria," *Unclassified Report to Congress on the Acquisition of Technology Relating to Weapons of Mass Destruction and Advanced Conventional Munitions, 1 January Through 30 June 2002*, CIA, April 2003, www.cia.gov; A. George, "Syria Takes Delivery Of Its Chinese Reactor," *Nuclear Engineering International*, v. 12/93, pp. 46-47, 1 December 1993; "Geographic Names Database," *National Imagery and Mapping Agency*, Accessed on 18 June 2003, gnpswww.nima.mi; "Russian Nuclear Assistance to Syria: Scam or Scandal?" *Middle East Intelligence Bulletin*, Vol. 5, No. 1, January 2003, www.meib.org; M.E. Eads, *International Research Centers Directory*, 11 ed. (1999), p. 326.

1990-1995

In 1990, Syria concludes a deal with Argentina's National Institute of Applied Research (INVAP) and the Argentine National Nuclear Energy Commission (CNEA) for the purchase of a 10MW research reactor for isotope production

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along with uranium fuel enriched to 20% U-235. Under pressure from the United States, the Argentine government in turn pressures INVAP to pull out of the deal. Negotiations for export of the research reactor continue until July 1995, when Argentina announces that the reactor sale would be conditional on the Syrian-Israeli peace treaty.

[Some sources cite the capacity of the reactor as between 5MW and 20MW.]

—Mark Hibbs, "INVAP Seeks Thai Reactor Sale; Syria Expected to Sue for Supply," *Nucleonics Week*, Vol. 35, No. 43, 27 October 1994, in Lexis-Nexis; Mark Hibbs, "Peace Talks, Not Proliferation, Inhibit Argentina-Syria Deal," *Nucleonics Week*, 1 August 1995, in Lexis-Nexis; "News: Syrian nuclear accord signed," *Power in Latin America*, 1 October 1995, in Lexis-Nexis; "Argentina to sell Syria nuclear reactor for medical purposes only after peace..." *Mideast Mirror*, Vol. 9, No. 140, 24 July 1995, in Lexis-Nexis.

April 1990

Syria approaches the Soviet Union for the purchase of up to four VVER-1000 reactors as well as uranium fuel. Syria reportedly cancels plans to buy the VVER-1000 reactors because of financial and "technical" reasons.

—P. Rubina, "The Soviet Union is Considering a Syrian Request to Purchase a Nuclear Power Plant," (Hebrew), *Davar*, 25 November 1991, as cited in Michael Eisenstadt, "Syria's Strategic Weapons," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (1 April 1993).

February 1989

Syria becomes one of the founding members of the Arab Atomic Energy Agency. The other founding members are Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, the Palestinian Authority, and Saudi Arabia. The agency's activities include basic research in sciences related to nuclear energy; exploration for and extraction of radioactive ores; acquisition of technical and scientific capability for establishing all stages of the fuel cycle; production and uses of radioisotopes in agriculture, medicine, and industry; and electricity production, desalination of water and other industrial activities involving atomic energy.

—Vienna Kappell et al., "Syria," *Handbook of Nuclear Countries 1996/97* (Berlin: Lexikographisches Institut, 1997), p. 247; "Arab Atomic Energy Agency: Organization of the Agency," *Nuclear Law Bulletin*, v. 54, p. 64 (Nuclear Energy Agency, 1994/04).

1988

According to Israeli sources, the Atomic Energy Commission of Syria (AECS) establishes a \$3.6 billion plan for the construction of six nuclear power reactors, with a projected total output of 6,000MW. The reactors would begin operation in the late 1990s. Syria reportedly approaches the Soviet Union, Belgium, and Switzerland to realize this effort, but backs away from these plans later due to financial and technical reasons.

—Michael Eisenstadt, "Syria's Strategic Weapons," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (1 April 1993); "Syria gets new missiles, aide," *Middle East Defense News*, Vol. 2, No. 24, October 16, 1989, in Lexis-Nexis; "Syrian plans for a nuclear reactor," *The Times* (London), Issue 63501, 16 September 1989, in Lexis-Nexis.

1986-1992

With assistance from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Atomic Energy Commission of Syria (AECS) acquires a micro-plant facility, spare parts and chemicals to enable the recovery of yellowcake uranium on an experimental basis from the phosphoric acid produced at the commercial Syrian General Fertilizer Company

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Plant at Homs. The Homs plant produces phosphoric acid from phosphatic rock mined in the Charkia and Knifes deposits which contain about 60 to 100 parts per million of uranium.

The AECS plans for this project to be the first step in Syria's nuclear program; subsequent steps are to include a pilot plant, an industrial scale plant and then possibly operations such as refining, conversion, enrichment, and fuel fabrication. The IAEA technical cooperation project includes staff training in the operation of the micro-plant and uranium recovery process.

The AECS also requests assistance from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) to construct an industrial-scale pilot plant to recover uranium. Canada's Kilborn Inc. carries out a pre-feasibility study to determine whether the basic technology for extracting uranium from phosphoric acid produced at the Homs plant is feasible for an industrial-scale plant. The study concludes that the industrialization of the process is not advisable due to financial considerations.

—"MEAB-Turnkey: SAEC plant in Homs, Syria," Metallextraktion AB, www.meab-mx.se; "Uranium Recovery From Phosphoric Acid: SYR/3/003," International Atomic Energy Agency, www-tc.iaea.org, completed 30/12/1992; "SYR/3/003 — Report on Pre-feasibility Study on the Recovery of Uranium from Phosphoric Acid," International Atomic Energy Agency, Technical Cooperation Report, 12 November 1992; "Technical Cooperation Report for 2001," GC(46)/INF/4, International Atomic Energy Agency, 2001, p. 39, www.iaea.or.at.

1986-1996

The IAEA assists the Atomic Energy Commission of Syria (AECS) in upgrading its nuclear electronics laboratory by providing spare parts and components for indigenous design and construction of necessary instruments to improve the AECS capability for maintenance and repair of nuclear instruments. As a part of the project, AECS personnel is trained in subjects such as the repair, maintenance, and servicing of nuclear instruments and in the design and construction of modular electronic units for research activities, as well as in the development of end-user oriented nuclear instruments and associated interfaces for advanced data processing and presentation.

—"SYR/4/003: Nuclear Electronics," and "SYR/4/005: Nuclear Electronics (Phase II)," IAEA Technical Cooperation Projects, 1986-1996, www-tc.iaea.org.

June 1985

The Soviet Union's Atomenergoexport submits a proposal to the Atomic Energy Commission of Syria (AECS) for the provision of a turn-key nuclear research center with a 10MW research reactor. The research center would be similar to the one supplied by the Soviet Union to Libya. The negotiations break down soon after they begin, most likely due to financial reasons.

—"The Syrian Atomic Energy Commission is Currently Examining...," *Nucleonics Week*, Vol. 26, No. 25, June 20, 1985, in Lexis-Nexis; "SYR/4/002: Research Reactor," IAEA Technical Cooperation Projects, 1991, www-tc.iaea.org.

12 October 1985

Quoting an ambassador from an Arab Gulf country, the Lebanese magazine *Al-Nahar Al-Arabi Wa Al-Dawli* reports that the Syrian Defense Minister Lt. Gen. Mustafa Tlas has stated that "the USSR is moving toward supplying Syria with nuclear weapons." A Soviet spokesman denies that the USSR provided any such guarantees; however, other

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Soviet officials reportedly confirm the agreement in principle.

—"Syrians Reportedly to Receive Nuclear Weapons," *Kuwait KUNA*, 12 October 1985, in FBIS, FBIS-SOV-85-199, 15 October 1985; Leonard S. Spector and Jacqueline R. Smith, *Nuclear Ambitions: The Spread of Nuclear Weapons 1989-1990* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), p. 353, *op. cit* 8.

1984-1987

The Atomic Energy Commission of Syria (AECS) and the IAEA jointly establish and equip a nuclear training laboratory for use by the AECS and the Arab Center for the Study of Arab Zones and Dry Lands in Damascus. The laboratory equipment includes oscilloscopes, electronic tools and components, a scintillation detector, X-ray and GM counters, neutron sources and chemicals and is used to train technicians in the applications of nuclear techniques.

—"SYR/0/004: Nuclear Training Laboratory," IAEA Technical Cooperation Projects, 1987, www-tc.iaea.org.

September 1984

Syrian Defense Minister Mustafa Tlas declares in an interview that the USSR has guaranteed Syria that if Israel "employs" nuclear weapons against it, "[the USSR] would make nuclear weapons available to [Syria]." The Soviet Union does not endorse this claim.

—"War of Liberation: A Talk with the Syrian Defense Minister," *New York Review of Books*, 22 November 1984, p. 40; "Syrian-Soviet Relations," *1UpInfo Country Study and Country Guide*, April 1987, www.1upinfo.com.

1982-1990

The IAEA assists the Syria's Atomic Energy Commission (AECS) in establishing an analytical laboratory, equipped with systems for atomic absorption spectrometry, X-ray fluorescence analysis, gas and liquid chromatography, fluorimetry and low-level alpha, beta, and gamma counting. The laboratory provides a range of nuclear analytical services. According to the original IAEA technical cooperation project goal, the laboratory will provide analysis of geological samples for uranium content, among other services. As part of the project, five Syrian scientists receive training in Hungary, the United States, Yugoslavia, and the IAEA laboratory at Seibersdorf, Austria.

—"SYR/1/002: Nuclear Analytical Laboratory," IAEA Technical Cooperation Projects, 1990, www-tc.iaea.org.

February 1983

Syria and the Soviet Union sign an agreement for nuclear cooperation and exchange for peaceful purposes. This agreement appears to be the only nuclear agreement signed by two countries until December 1997.

—"Syrian-Soviet Relations," *1UpInfo Country Study and Country Guide*, April 1987, www.1upinfo.com.

May 1983

Syria and the Soviet Union carry out a joint study on the construction of a nuclear power reactor in Syria. The provision of a power reactor is part of an economic protocol signed by the two countries signed earlier in the year (April 1983). The feasibility reactor study concludes in early 1986, and it determines that such a reactor should be located in Northern Syria.

—"Syria and the Soviet Union are Conducting a Joint Study on the Construction....," *Nucleonics Week*, Vol. 24, No.

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21, 26 May 1983, in Lexis-Nexis; "Israel: Syria to Be Interested in Soviet Reactor," *Nucleonics Week*, Vol. 27, No. 22, 29 May 1986, in Lexis-Nexis.

1982

According to indictment papers filed in an Italian court on 5 June 1984, an Italian arms smuggling ring had intended to sell Syria "three complete nuclear weapons." Mr. Glauco Partel, a key intermediary in the transaction, denied the existence of any weapons and stated that the deal was a set-up by U.S. intelligence to establish which Middle Eastern countries were interested in acquiring nuclear weapons. Partel claimed in his 1983 interrogation that he made contact with representatives in Syria, who allegedly expressed interest in obtaining the weapons.

—Leonard S. Spector, *The New Nuclear Nations* (New York: Vintage Books, 1985), pp. 44-48.

1979-1986

In cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Syrian Atomic Energy Commission and the Ministry of Electricity carry out a feasibility study on introduction of nuclear power to Syria and receive advice from the IAEA on planning a nuclear power program.

—"SYR/0/003: Nuclear Energy Planning," International Atomic Energy Agency, www-tc.iaea.org, completed 10 June 1986.

1979

Syria establishes the Atomic Energy Commission (AECS).

—Vienna Kappell, et al., "Syria," *Handbook of Nuclear Countries 1996/97* (Berlin: Lexikographisches Institut, 1997), p. 247.

24 September 1969

Syria ratifies the NPT. This paves the way for Syria to take part in the IAEA's technical cooperation projects in nuclear research.

—"Multilateral Arms Regulation and Disarmament Agreements: NPT, Syria," *UN Department for Disarmament Affairs*, Accessed on 8 June 2003, <http://disarmament.un.org>.

1 July 1968

Possibly motivated by its losses in the Six Day War, Syria signs the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT).

—"Multilateral Arms Regulation and Disarmament Agreements: NPT, Syria," *UN Department for Disarmament Affairs*, Accessed on 8 June 2003, <http://disarmament.un.org>.

5-10 June 1967

Following months of escalating tensions with Syria and other Arab neighbors, culminating in the withdrawal of the UN Emergency Force, Israel launches a pre-emptive strike against Egyptian air forces, thus initiating what became known as the Six Day War against Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. Syria consequently loses the control of the Golan Heights.

—"Timeline: Syria," *BBC News*, 7 May 2003, news.bbc.co.uk; "Timeline: Egypt," *BBC News*, 3 March 2003, news.bbc.co.uk.

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6 June 1963

Syria becomes a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

—"IAEA Membership, Safeguards Agreement, Physical Protection and Nuclear Safety," *Inventory of International Nonproliferation Organizations and Regime*, 2002 Edition, James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, cns.miis.edu.

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