



CBRN South Asia

17

Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies

May 2009
Vol. 2, No. 5

CBRN South Asia is an online monthly bulletin of the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, providing a coverage of commentaries and news reports relating to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons material and substances in South Asia.

The bulletin also flags important reports that appear worldwide on the subject and features exclusive interviews

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The American President's speech in Prague on nuclear disarmament in April 2009 was significant. Obama identifies major issues in nuclear disarmament and presents what is likely to be his approach towards major disarmament efforts and treaties. With the NPT Review Conference scheduled shortly, Obama also has to address the issue of ratifying the CTBT by the US appearing.

Both - Obama's road map for nuclear disarmament and the US ratifying CTBT has important implications for South Asia. How serious is Obama on his nuclear disarmament approach? What will be India's position, once the US ratifies the CTBT?

Ambassador Arundhati Ghose and Prof Rajesh Rajagopalan address these important issues in two separate articles in this issue of *CBRN South Asia*. Besides, the IPCS is organizing two panel discussion on the above issues during May 2009.

In April 2009, the Institute organized a workshop on nuclear security in South Asia and Northeast Asia. Two scholars from South Korea discussed the security situation in Northeast Asia, while two scholars from India discussed the situation in South Asia. Report of this conference is published in this issue in page 06.

FORTHCOMING IPCS EVENTS

6 May 2009, *IPCS Colloquy*
Why China, not India? Australia's Uranium Policy

8 May, *FDG Panel Discussion*

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Obama's Prague Speech: A New Push for Nuclear Disarmament?

Rajesh Rajagopalan

Professor, CIPOD, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

US President Barack Obama's call for nuclear disarmament earlier this month in Prague may appear to be a radical message; however, a closer examination suggests that his soaring rhetoric hides somewhat baser – and narrow – national interest. Nevertheless, Obama's message is also a foretaste of what Indian diplomacy will have to deal with in the coming year.

Obama's speech itself is the culmination of an increasing emphasis in Washington on nuclear disarmament. What is notable about this new-found concern is that much of it piggybacks on concerns about nuclear proliferation and potential nuclear terrorism. All these recent arguments, are notable for their concern about the possibility that proliferation might make the US more vulnerable to a nuclear attack from terrorists or from rogue third world dictators. There is nothing necessarily wrong with security concerns driving nuclear disarmament. Rather it raises the suspicion that if American security concerns are addressed, through a rejuvenated NPT, then nuclear disarmament will once again be consigned to left-wing academic conferences.

Obama's speech was more along traditional American lines. The primary driver is still the concern with nuclear proliferation. It appears more as a public relations campaign aimed at rebuilding the non-proliferation regime and specifically aimed at burnishing American credentials in time for the NPT Review Conference next year. The RevCon is likely to be stormy, and Obama wants to improve the American image. The US President reiterated American commitment to ballistic missile defense (though with some caveats about technical feasibility), to the NATO, CTBT and FMCT. He has also promised a new push towards deeper cuts in the US and Russian nuclear weapons through a new START agreement. On CTBT, Obama promises to seek Senate ratification (a tall order considering that he needs nine Republican votes for the two-thirds majority needed), and on FMCT he has junked the Bush administration's 'no verification' approach

Moscow has been cautious in its response, as it faces both opportunities and difficulties. The opportunities lie in the promise of a new arms control treaty that might lead to significant reductions in both arsenals, something that Russia has been seeking because it cannot afford to keep the bloated 'legacy' arsenal. Russia is also hoping for a more traditional nuclear arms control treaty to replace the Moscow Treaty, which counted only warheads (not

delivery systems), left unaccounted huge numbers of 'reserve' warheads, and had no verification clauses. The Russians have already declared that they would seek to count delivery systems in any new treaty and seek control on nuclear weapons in space. The US and Russia have already begun preliminary discussions on a new nuclear arms control treaty that would reduce strategic nuclear weapons to much lower levels, possibly as low as one thousand each.

In terms of challenges, as Russian nuclear arms dwindled, Moscow has been placing greater emphasis on its nuclear deterrent because its conventional forces have deteriorated faster. Hence, a reduction in nuclear arsenals, though necessary, is still worrying because it highlights even more starkly its weakened conventional power. So Moscow has

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also been seeking conventional arms control to match the reductions taking place in the nuclear arena. However, the US is unlikely to satisfy Russian concerns on this issue because it intends to maintain a global role that would be impossible without its significant conventional military clout. Russia has a painful choice to make: it cannot afford its huge nuclear arsenal, but cannot afford to significantly reduce its nuclear arsenal without some agreements on conventional arms, either.

Where does this new nuclear arms control push leave New Delhi? India is likely to welcome any reduction in the US/Russia strategic arsenals, but the other parts of the Obama agenda do create some concerns. If Obama is able to convince the US Senate to ratify the CTBT, India will be under pressure to join the global momentum towards CTBT. The instinctive Indian reaction has been to link any Indian acceptance of the CTBT to progress in global nuclear disarmament. It might be wise for New Delhi to reconsider this stance. There is little indication that India needs to test again and the CTBT will have little impact on India's nuclear arsenal or its weapons status. Standing alone against the CTBT made sense in 1996; today it would suggest stasis. Besides, India has bigger battles ahead. If the FMCT negotiations begin, then India needs to find partners to work with to ensure that its existing fissile material stocks are not touched. India also needs to ensure that progress in US-Russian strategic arms control does not lead to demands that India also join the process soon. India also needs to resist the latest fad – linking regional nuclear issues with conventional military balances and regional conflicts, being promoted by Pakistan, China and some Middle Eastern states. Advancing India's arms control agenda on all of these issues will be easier without an unnecessary CTBT diversion.

A Prague Spring for Nuclear Disarmament?

Arundhati Ghose

Former Permanent Representative of India to the UN Conference on Disarmament

Within the first hundred days in office, US President Barack Obama has attempted to address a series of problems, both national and global. After trying to set in place a process to deal with the meltdown of the US economy, he announced his 'Af-Pak' policy, attempted to shore up US relations with Europe and Russia, and announced his administration's 'new' approach to the challenge of a world without nuclear weapons in the context of the forthcoming Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty to be held in 2010. On 5 April, speaking to a large crowd in Prague, Czech Republic, Obama stated, "clearly and with conviction America's commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons." While emphasizing this commitment, he added, "To put an end to Cold War thinking, we will reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy and urge others to do the same." These commitments are indeed new.

However, almost in the same breath, he made a second commitment, "as long as these weapons exist we will maintain a safe, secure and effective arsenal to deter any adversary, and guarantee the defence of our allies."

This dual commitment could very well be an indicator of the difficulties ahead; rumblings have already been heard from that staunch supporter of nuclear disarmament, Japan, as it faces the uncertain prospect of a world without a nuclear security umbrella. On the other hand, more uncharitably, the dual commitments could very well be the window-dressing on the agreement already reached with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, to reduce bilaterally, the huge weapon arsenals which have begun to be a burden on the economies of both countries. This would dilute the strength of the first commitment, but would be a gesture towards the Review Conference on 2010. It will be recalled that the last Review Conference in 2005 collapsed on the issue of no movement by the NPT nuclear weapon powers towards disarmament. Yet President Obama also referred to "further cuts," in which process the US will seek to include other nuclear weapon States. It would appear that he is seeking to put a process of actual disarmament in place.

On the whole, however, Obama has been more specific on non-proliferation actions from the 'old' agenda: the CTBT, a verifiable ban on the production of fissile materials for weapons purposes and the NPT. Whether he would be able to rally enough support in the US Senate to pass the CTBT remains moot; there is disagreement on an unqualified ratification even within his own administration. The entry into force of the CTBT could, however, put a brake on countries

like Iran which might be contemplating weaponization, and might be sold as such to reluctant Republican Senators. Obama is clearly of the view that the NPT needs to be strengthened - by stronger inspections, by "punishment" for non-compliance and a "new framework for civil nuclear cooperation." Even on nuclear terrorism, which he called "the most immediate and extreme threat to global security," his concrete proposals relate to Bush-era initiatives, the PSI and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. As an indication of the priority his administration will give to non-proliferation issues, he has proposed a Global Summit on Nuclear Security to be held in the US "within the next year."

It has been reported that President Obama has set up a task force on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation which is to submit its report by the end of the year. His speech, therefore, only outlines the broad parameters of his administration's approach; details will only be available perhaps at the 2010 Conference. While the emphasis on nuclear disarmament would be welcomed, the reiteration of the earlier Democratic stands on non-proliferation could presage trouble ahead.

The approach is a punitive one, with the US-led Nuclear Weapon States and their followers insisting on action on specific countries which might, in their view, have the intention of developing a nuclear arsenal. Consultation and dialogue are not seen as options.

Whether this approach has been successful in the past, can be determined with the record so far, as the NPT itself crumbles. The important element in the speech was the careful balancing of the imperatives of disarmament with those of non-proliferation, and the emphasis on the responsibilities of countries with nuclear weapons, especially the US, to take concrete action to meet their obligations.

As a political stand, it is almost impeccable; it remains to be seen whether, given opposition in the US itself, actions will go further than the rhetoric.

“ The important element in the speech was the careful balancing of the imperatives of disarmament with those of non-proliferation, and the emphasis on the responsibilities of countries with nuclear weapons to take concrete action to meet their obligations. ”

North Korea's 'Satellite' Launch and International Responses

Vidisha Shukla

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India's latest successful test of a missile interceptor North Korea launched 'Kwangmyongsong-2,' an experimental communications satellite, by carrier rocket 'Unha-2' on 5 April. Despite, numerous reports that it was not a satellite but a rocket that could be used for long-range missiles, North Korea, however has been firm on its stand that it was a satellite launch. There are also suspicions, that North Korea has repeatedly broken its promises to shelve its nuclear program. Was it a satellite or missile launch? Is regional security under threat? What are the major international concerns?

The US, South Korea and Japan suspect that the launch, is a prelude to testing North Korea's long-range ballistic missile, Taepodong-2. Several countries have criticized North Korea, for threatening the security of the region and violating the UN resolutions, by developing a long-range missile.

At the international level, there is a majority consensus, that North Korea has launched a rocket for long-range missiles, which is in contravention of UN Security Council Resolution 1718. The UNSC has condemned North Korea, and called for full implementation of existing sanctions under the UNSCR 1718. Obama, the US President has made his point clear during a speech in Prague on nuclear disarmament and condemned North Korea for repeatedly breaking the rules. He has also called for strong action.

Where does India stand on this issue? New Delhi has not made any specific comment on this issue, except stating India could not comment on the nature of this event. Such events are under the realm of UNSC, if it was a missile launch; or under IAEA, if it was a part of North Korea's nuclear weapon programme. Clearly, India's position is ambiguous.

Why has India not taken any clear stand on the issue? Is it because it has not signed the NPT and CTBT that it does not want to comment on this important issue? If it is an experimental communications satellite launch, then India is right in considering that every country has a right to develop indigenous scientific and technological skills. But, what if, as a section amongst the international community fear – this was actually a rocket launch for long-range missiles?

India has reason to be worried, for the several reasons. It

has been proved beyond any doubt that North Korea's nuclear programme got illegal support and supply from Pakistan and AQ Khan. The linkages between North Korea and Pakistan form part of a global proliferation network. The fear of non-state actors, including terrorist groups tapping into this illegal network cannot be completely ruled out. More importantly, for the help it has received from AQ Khan in nuclear matters, North Korea has helped Pakistan build its missile programme. Clearly, India has much to worry, if the recent launch is a prelude to North Korea's unveiling its long-range missile.

From an Indian perspective, North Korea should be refrained from any further ballistic missile launches as it uses this tactic repeatedly in pushing for greater attention and concessions. Efforts should be made to make North Korea return to the Six-Party Talks, which are deadlocked over how to verify its past and current nuclear activities. Meanwhile, on the issue of this current launch, China and Russia have opposed any effort by the US and its allies to adopt any legally-binding resolution, siding with North Korea's claim that the 5 April rocket launch was part of a peaceful space program. As China and Russia hold veto power in the UNSC, they both have made clear that they would use their veto power to block any resolution imposing new sanctions on Pyongyang. So for the US and its allies, it would be a difficult task.

At such junctures all nations must come together to build a stronger, global regime and must stand shoulder to shoulder to pressure the North Korea to change course. Rules must be binding. Violations must be punished. Words must mean something. The world must stand together to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. If North Korea has moved further towards nuclear weapons, now is the time for a strong international response and North Korea must know that the path to security and respect will never come through threats and illegal weapons.

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Is China's Space Militarization A Threat to India?

Radhakrishna Rao

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A recent fact-filled 78-page analysis of China's rapidly expanding military capabilities by the Pentagon with a focus on its developing "disruptive technologies," points to Chinese advances in acquiring the capability to attack satellites for refining its space war strategy. Accusing China for being less than transparent on reporting its military spending and security doctrines, this report to the US Congress, the first under the Obama administration, also refers to China's strides in cyber war and electromagnetic warfare capabilities. Incidentally, the report comes just weeks after Chinese naval vessels tangled with a US naval surveillance ship, which led China to accuse the US of spying.

Coming to Sino-Indian relations, the Pentagon report, "Military Power of the People's Republic of China," says that the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) is concerned with persisting disputes along China's shared border with India, and the strategic ramifications of India's emergence as an economic, military and political power. Even as China shows keenness to improve its ties with India, its military incursions in Sikkim and the line of actual control (LAC) in Arunachal Pradesh, deployment of nuclear submarines at an ultramodern facility at Hainan Island in the South China Sea, and its growing defense ties with Pakistan, remain matters of concern for New Delhi.

China's massive military modernization, vigorous efforts to develop a range of space weapons and heavy-lift space vehicles, and a sustained move towards increasing the range and lethality of missiles are not merely exercises to compete militarily with the US. Their purpose is to deter American intervention should Beijing decide to overrun Taiwan by force.

With defence analysts agreeing that India cannot remain unconcerned about Chinese advances in space warfare, Indian Defence Minister, AK Antony, has expressed concern over the possible threat to "Indian space assets" from developments in a neighbouring country. Antony left no one in doubt that he was referring to China, and chose to focus on the Chinese threat from space while addressing the United Commanders Conference in New Delhi held in June 2008. Antony did not mince his words while underscoring India's angst over the "emergence of anti satellite weaponry, a new class of heavy lift off boosters and improved array of military space devices in our neighbourhood." Antony was apparently highlighting the Chinese threat to Indian space assets in the context of a growing clamor to establish an

Indian aerospace command. Antony backed up his concern by announcing the formation of a tri-service space cell as a precursor to creation of the command. Antony also wondered how long India could "remain committed to the policy of the non weaponization of space even as counter space systems are emerging in our neighbourhood." Way back in 2007, following the Chinese anti-satellite test, the Indian Parliament held a debate on the ramification of the Chinese action with reference to India. Antony made it clear that India could safeguard its space assets from a threat emanating from across the border.

While China stunned the world in early 2007 by destroying an aging weather satellite positioned at an altitude of 537 miles above the earth by firing a ground based medium range ballistic missile, it would need a more refined, long range missile to attack spacecraft meant for communications and navigation that are normally placed in higher orbits. After this anti-satellite test, G Madhavan Nair, Chairman, Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), said that though it was within the capability of ISRO to deploy an anti-satellite weapon, India's concern was to keep outer space a zone of peace and tranquility.

Taking a cue from early Russian and American experiments, China is working on space-based laser weapons to knock down enemy spacecraft. "They let us see their satellites. It is as if they are trying to intimidate us," says Gary Payton, a senior Pentagon official dealing with space. The East Asian Strategic Review (2008) brought out by Japan's National Institute for Defence Studies states that "the organizations involved in China's space development program share strong ties with PLA and a large proportion of the satellites launched and operated by China are believed to be used for military purposes." Joining the chorus for discussions after the Chinese anti-satellite test, VK Aatre, a former chief of India's Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO), had strongly advocated the need to ensure that Indian "space assets" are not vulnerable to, "extraneous threat". He was clear that future wars would be fought in outer space.

Northeast Asia and South Asia: Comparative Security Dynamics

Vidisha Shukla and Urvashi J Kumar

Report of the IPCS Seminar held at the India International Centre on 1 April 2009

Salman Haidar

A shallow imagination presents no clear links between South Asia and Northeast Asia but a deeper look makes apparent just how much there is to compare and draw lessons from North Korea's flirtation with nuclear know-how, which has reverberated through the world. India and Pakistan have crossed that threshold and are dealing with a nuclear dimension in the South Asian security dynamic. In the nuclear domain, there are anxieties shared across Asia and a serious dialogue should take place between India and both South and North Korea for greater stability and peace across the two regions.

PR Chari

As far as South Asia and Northeast Asia are concerned, comparisons are not immediately apparent, but a deeper examination shows astonishing similarities. There is a conflict between North and South Korea that defines the security dynamic between them, like the Indo-Pak equation. Both India and Pakistan have nuclearized and a new nuclear dynamic is emerging between North and South Korea. China's role has not been benign in either region, and it offers the proliferation link between them.

It is frequently asked if the nuclearization of South Asia has added or detracted from its security. Interestingly, stability at the nuclear level can lead to instability at the conventional level. All future Indo-Pak crises, however, will have a nuclear dimension in the foreground or background and there will also, inevitably, be an American role. The use of nuclear weapons is improbable, but the Mumbai attacks prove that there is a shift to the non-conventional form of conflict, despite nuclear deterrence, making South Asia unstable. There is no clear answer, therefore, to the question whether South Asia is now more stable or unstable, which is a clear lesson for all present and future dyads.

Vjayanti Raghavan

In the case of South Asia and Northeast Asia, both sides suffered partition, and gained independence at roughly the same time, and got sucked into the Cold War. The motivations behind North Korea going nuclear while South Korea refraining from doing so are important. The quest for security led India, Pakistan and North Korea towards overt nuclearization. South Korea has adopted a non-nuclear posture because it has US protection. The presence of nuclear weapons in the Korean peninsula has neither stabilized nor destabilised the region; four of the six major countries in the region were already nuclear. North Korea's motivation to seek nuclear deterrence is to counter a possible US move to effect regime change. North

Korea has taken an aggressive stance and measures every time it has felt threatened, and this has inspired the persistent and increased US military presence in South Korea. Just as in South Asia, the US has played both a positive and a negative role in the region. It has helped diffuse the crisis arising out of North Korea's nuclear capability, but it has also been the reason for North Korea seeking it. Nuclear weapons may not affect stability in the region but they do play a major role in affecting the peace in the region.

Jong-Chun Baek

The arms race between the Korean neighbours began after South Korea surpassed North Korea in economic development and began to invest in its military build-up. War between the two nations, coupled with the presence of US nuclear weapons in South Korea heightened North Korean insecurity. Since then North Korea has continued its drive to acquire conventional and nuclear weapons while South Korea has concentrated on economic development. North Korea is highly sensitive to the inter-Korean balance of power shifting in favour of South Korea due to its economic prosperity, political and social democratization and conventional military capability.

North Korea recognizes that it cannot solve its security and economic issues without US help and is willing to negotiate directly with the US. The new Obama administration might bring a change into US-North Korea relations, which may lead to North Korea denuclearising if it is guaranteed its survival and offered a comprehensive deal like Iran. Economic aid and improving Japanese-North Korea relations, especially on the security and economic front, are key factors for North Korea and any strategy to deal with it will have to include these factors. If North Korea's nuclear weapons lead to more US nuclear weapons in South Korea, a heavily nuclearized Korean peninsula will create a deteriorating security situation for China and lead to a cascading effect. A nuclear North Korea also makes

South Korea extremely uncomfortable, given the fact that this will make reunification of the Korean peninsula very difficult.

Hak-Soon Paik

Both Koreas are essentially one nation, but "nation building" has placed the two against each other. North Korea is the weaker state and suffers from paranoia that they will be overwhelmed by South Korea and the West instigating it to adopt protectionist measures. North Korea's nuclear ambitions have many motives; by obtaining nuclear capability North Korea aims to construct a militarily strong

and prosperous state, add to its power status, give the public a reason to celebrate and nation-build and use these weapons for international posturing.

The US has a huge influence in South Korea and in an attempt to prevent an arms race between Northeast Asian nations from intensifying, has done everything to keep South Korea, which has enough motives to nuclearize, from going nuclear. We also have to understand the fundamentals behind the North Korean security dynamic. The Korean War has not ended yet; the US and North Korea are technically at war. As long as the US Army is present in South Korea, the confrontationist structure of war remains. Without further steps to pacify North Korea, the nuclear issues and inter-Korean issues will not resolve and this has an impact on Indo-Korean relations. For denuclearizing North Korea we need a comprehensive package between North Korea and the other states with a stake in the region. The former US President George Bush's policies and his Axis of Evil theory pushed North Korea into a corner and activated North Korea's survival instinct; hence it began strengthening its nuclear capability. The US posture roused a fear of entrapment in North Korea and gave it more than enough reason to believe that the US was working towards a regime change in North Korea. The heightened distrust since then will take a lot to reverse by the Obama administration.

DISCUSSION

- The US policy towards North Korea has varied considerably over the last three presidencies, but is crucial for the region; it has impacted inter-Korean, Northeast Asian and South Korea-US relations. North Korea's actions derive from insecurity. America's foreign policy towards North Korea has oscillated from one extreme to the other between the Clinton administration and the Bush administration. While a lot is expected from the new Obama administration, it is clear that America's stance on North Korea had an impact on North Korea's foreign policy and domestic decision making, but it also influenced relations between North and South Korea. The US was excessively intrusive during the Bush term, and projected an excess of ideology in all its postures. Countering China was on their hidden agenda. They wanted to use the North Korean missile programme as an excuse to build their nuclear presence and power in the region.
- South Korea is interested in the civilian use of nuclear energy. As on date it imports 90 per cent of its energy needs. South Korea has been building atomic energy reactors and the climate change issue is providing its civilian nuclear energy program great impetus. If South Korea goes nuclear, then the international community will vehemently oppose a nuclear and unified Korea. But North Korea needs to further democratize before unification can take place. Even though South Korea has a conservative government now, it is willing to address the reunification issue. A unified Korea will be strong and will play a significant role in Asian politics. The reunification of Germany strengthened South Korea's belief that economic development must be the prelude to reunification, which has not worked out, but has made South Korea more wary of the nuclear tag. While some believe that if North Korea acquires nuclear weapons and reunification eventually takes place, the unified Korea will gain in international power status. However, South Korea is capable of developing its own weapons, but has not done so and become a signatory to all nuclear treaties. But if Japan reacts to North Korea's nuclear status, South Korea will react to Japan, and this will lead to China increasing its nuclear arsenal. This will also have an impact on the South Asian nuclear scene. Its two nuclear protagonists are not NPT members. If reunification does proceed ahead the question arises whether South Korea can pursue its nuclear energy ambitions because it will then be in the indeterminate state of being a de facto, but not de jure, nuclear weapons state.
- North Korea has stated that it will go ahead with its satellite launch. Reactions so far have been negative. Japan has moved its ships aggressively forward and if the satellite is shot down it will lead to a very precarious situation. Is it legal to shoot down the satellite? The Outer Space Treaty of 1967 and the UN resolution 1718 speak of the peaceful use of outer space. Also, Japan has US support for developing its missile defence system with the US and South Korea being ostensibly in agreement on this issue. Keeping recent history in mind, Obama cannot afford any initial failures in his policy towards North Korea. If the satellite is shot down, it means that the new US government, even before finalizing its Korea policy, has committed an act of war against North Korea. This is unthinkable for Washington. Technically, too, this might not be possible. Obama's stance so far has been to use effective policies. Japan has been aggressive and indulged in verbal attacks, which has to do with its own propaganda machinery and domestic politics. The Japanese government is weak and

the administration seizes every opportunity to show that it has strong security policies despite knowing that what they claim might be physically, diplomatically and politically impossible.

- India is the largest country in South Asia, and wants to be a global player and become a member of the Security Council. South Korea, however, does not have such aspirations; at least not articulated thus far. Indo-Pak relations are different from those between the two Koreas. Nuclear weapons did not enter the equation till the mid 1980s but they have been a constant since then. The evidence on how strong the civil society in Pakistan is dubious. During Nawaz Sharif's project Long March from Lahore to Islamabad, the law and order agencies had refused to cooperate. This virtual mutiny in the official machinery is as important as the civil society movements, if not more. Civil society is not strong in North Korea. South Korean films and food are popular, but it stops at that.
- Nuclearization is a problem and not a solution for insecurity. There is a need to develop a regional security system. If North Korea's security, economic and energy needs are addressed the nuclear issue can be put to rest. North Korea cannot solve its own problems without US help, and is aware that it needs US cooperation for getting any assistance from the IMF or World Bank.

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Document

Barack Obama's Speech at Hradcany Square, Prague, 5 April 2009

I've learned over many years to appreciate the good company and the good humor of the Czech people in my hometown of Chicago. Behind me is a statue of a hero of the Czech people - Tomas Masaryk. In 1918, after America had pledged its support for Czech independence, Masaryk spoke to a crowd in Chicago that was estimated to be over 100,000. I don't think I can match his record - but I am honored to follow his footsteps from Chicago to Prague.

For over a thousand years, Prague has set itself apart from any other city in any other place. You've known war and peace. You've seen empires rise and fall. You've led revolutions in the arts and science, in politics and in poetry. Through it all, the people of Prague have insisted on pursuing their own path, and defining their own destiny. And this city - this Golden City which is both ancient and youthful - stands as a living monument to your unconquerable spirit.

When I was born, the world was divided, and our nations were faced with very different circumstances. Few people would have predicted that someone like me would one day become the President of the United States. Few people would have predicted that an American President would one day be permitted to speak to an audience like this in Prague. Few would have imagined that the Czech Republic would become a free nation, a member of NATO, a leader of a united Europe. Those ideas would have been dismissed as dreams.

We are here today because enough people ignored the voices who told them that the world could not change.

We're here today because of the courage of those who stood up and took risks to say that freedom is a right for all people, no matter what side of a wall they live on, and no matter what they look like.

We are here today because of the Prague Spring - because the simple and principled pursuit of liberty and opportunity shamed those who relied on the power of tanks and arms to put down the will of a people.

We are here today because 20 years ago, the people of this city took to the streets to claim the promise of a new day, and the fundamental human rights that had been denied them for far too long. *Sametová Revoluce* - the Velvet Revolution - taught us many things. It showed us that peaceful protest could shake the foundations of an empire, and expose the emptiness of an ideology. It showed us that small countries can play a pivotal role in world events, and that young people can lead the way in overcoming old conflicts. And it proved that moral leadership is more powerful than any weapon.

That's why I'm speaking to you in the center of a Europe that is peaceful, united and free - because ordinary people believed that divisions could be bridged, even when their

leaders did not. They believed that walls could come down; that peace could prevail.

We are here today because Americans and Czechs believed against all odds that today could be possible.

Now, we share this common history. But now this generation - our generation - cannot stand still. We, too, have a choice to make. As the world has become less divided, it has become more interconnected. And we've seen events move faster than our ability to control them - a global economy in crisis, a changing climate, the persistent dangers of old conflicts, new threats and the spread of catastrophic weapons.

None of these challenges can be solved quickly or easily. But all of them demand that we listen to one another and work together; that we focus on our common interests, not on occasional differences; and that we reaffirm our shared values, which are stronger than any force that could drive us apart. That is the work that we must carry on. That is the work that I have come to Europe to begin.

To renew our prosperity, we need action coordinated across borders. That means investments to create new jobs. That means resisting the walls of protectionism that stand in the way of growth. That means a change in our financial system, with new rules to prevent abuse and future crisis.

And we have an obligation to our common prosperity and our common humanity to extend a hand to those emerging markets and impoverished people who are suffering the most, even though they may have had very little to do with financial crises, which is why we set aside over a trillion dollars for the International Monetary Fund earlier this week, to make sure that everybody - everybody - receives some assistance.

Now, to protect our planet, now is the time to change the way that we use energy. Together, we must confront climate change by ending the world's dependence on fossil fuels, by tapping the power of new sources of energy like the wind and sun, and calling upon all nations to do their part. And I pledge to you that in this global effort, the United States is now ready to lead.

To provide for our common security, we must strengthen our alliance. NATO was founded 60 years ago, after Communism took over Czechoslovakia. That was when the free world learned too late that it could not afford division. So we came together to forge the strongest alliance that the world has ever known. And we stood shoulder to shoulder - year after year, decade after decade - until an Iron Curtain was lifted, and freedom spread like flowing water.

This marks the 10th year of NATO membership for the Czech Republic. And I know that many times in the 20th century, decisions were made without you at the table. Great powers let you down, or determined your destiny without

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your voice being heard. I am here to say that the United States will never turn its back on the people of this nation. We are bound by shared values, shared history, and the enduring promise of our alliance. NATO's Article V states it clearly: An attack on one is an attack on all. That is a promise for our time, and for all time.

The people of the Czech Republic kept that promise after America was attacked; thousands were killed on our soil, and NATO responded. NATO's mission in Afghanistan is fundamental to the safety of people on both sides of the Atlantic. We are targeting the same Al Qaeda terrorists who have struck from New York to London, and helping the Afghan people take responsibility for their future. We are demonstrating that free nations can make common cause on behalf of our common security. And I want you to know that we honor the sacrifices of the Czech people in this endeavor, and mourn the loss of those you've lost.

But no alliance can afford to stand still. We must work together as NATO members so that we have contingency plans in place to deal with new threats, wherever they may come from. We must strengthen our cooperation with one another, and with other nations and institutions around the world, to confront dangers that recognize no borders. And we must pursue constructive relations with Russia on issues of common concern.

Now, one of those issues that I'll focus on today is fundamental to the security of our nations and to the peace of the world - that's the future of nuclear weapons in the 21st century.

The existence of thousands of nuclear weapons is the most dangerous legacy of the Cold War. No nuclear war was fought between the United States and the Soviet Union, but generations lived with the knowledge that their world could be erased in a single flash of light. Cities like Prague that existed for centuries, that embodied the beauty and the talent of so much of humanity, would have ceased to exist.

Today, the Cold War has disappeared but thousands of those weapons have not. In a strange turn of history, the threat of global nuclear war has gone down, but the risk of a nuclear attack has gone up. More nations have acquired these weapons. Testing has continued. Black markets trade in nuclear secrets and nuclear materials. The technology to build a bomb has spread. Terrorists are determined to buy, build or steal one. Our efforts to contain these dangers are centered on a global non-proliferation regime, but as more people and nations break the rules, we could reach the point where the center cannot hold.

Now, understand, this matters to people everywhere. One nuclear weapon exploded in one city - be it New York or Moscow, Islamabad or Mumbai, Tokyo or Tel Aviv, Paris or Prague - could kill hundreds of thousands of people. And no matter where it happens, there is no end to what the consequences might be - for our global safety, our

security, our society, our economy, to our ultimate survival.

Some argue that the spread of these weapons cannot be stopped, cannot be checked - that we are destined to live in a world where more nations and more people possess the ultimate tools of destruction. Such fatalism is a deadly adversary, for if we believe that the spread of nuclear weapons is inevitable, then in some way we are admitting to ourselves that the use of nuclear weapons is inevitable.

Just as we stood for freedom in the 20th century, we must stand together for the right of people everywhere to live free from fear in the 21st century. And as a nuclear power - as the only nuclear power to have used a nuclear weapon - the United States has a moral responsibility to act. We cannot succeed in this endeavor alone, but we can lead it, we can start it.

So today, I state clearly and with conviction America's commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons. I'm not naive. This goal will not be reached quickly - perhaps not in my lifetime. It will take patience and persistence. But now we, too, must ignore the voices who tell us that the world cannot change. We have to insist, "Yes, we can."

Now, let me describe to you the trajectory we need to be on. First, the United States will take concrete steps towards a world without nuclear weapons. To put an end to Cold War thinking, we will reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy, and urge others to do the same. Make no mistake: As long as these weapons exist, the United States will maintain a safe, secure and effective arsenal to deter any adversary, and guarantee that defense to our allies - including the Czech Republic. But we will begin the work of reducing our arsenal.

To reduce our warheads and stockpiles, we will negotiate a new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty with the Russians this year. President Medvedev and I began this process in London, and will seek a new agreement by the end of this year that is legally binding and sufficiently bold. And this will set the stage for further cuts, and we will seek to include all nuclear weapons states in this endeavor.

To achieve a global ban on nuclear testing, my administration will immediately and aggressively pursue U.S. ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. After more than five decades of talks, it is time for the testing of nuclear weapons to finally be banned.

And to cut off the building blocks needed for a bomb, the United States will seek a new treaty that verifiably ends the production of fissile materials intended for use in state nuclear weapons. If we are serious about stopping the spread of these weapons, then we should put an end to the dedicated production of weapons-grade materials that create them. That's the first step.

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Second, together we will strengthen the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as a basis for cooperation.

The basic bargain is sound: Countries with nuclear weapons will move towards disarmament, countries without nuclear weapons will not acquire them, and all countries can access peaceful nuclear energy. To strengthen the treaty, we should embrace several principles. We need more resources and authority to strengthen international inspections. We need real and immediate consequences for countries caught breaking the rules or trying to leave the treaty without cause.

And we should build a new framework for civil nuclear cooperation, including an international fuel bank, so that countries can access peaceful power without increasing the risks of proliferation. That must be the right of every nation that renounces nuclear weapons, especially developing countries embarking on peaceful programs. And no approach will succeed if it's based on the denial of rights to nations that play by the rules. We must harness the power of nuclear energy on behalf of our efforts to combat climate change, and to advance opportunity for all people.

But we go forward with no illusions. Some countries will break the rules. That's why we need a structure in place that ensures when any nation does, they will face consequences.

Just this morning, we were reminded again of why we need a new and more rigorous approach to address this threat. North Korea broke the rules once again by testing a rocket that could be used for long range missiles. This provocation underscores the need for action - not just this afternoon at the U.N. Security Council, but in our determination to prevent the spread of these weapons.

Rules must be binding. Violations must be punished. Words must mean something. The world must stand together to prevent the spread of these weapons. Now is the time for a strong international response, and North Korea must know that the path to security and respect will never come through threats and illegal weapons. All nations must come together to build a stronger, global regime. And that's why we must stand shoulder to shoulder to pressure the North Koreans to change course.

Iran has yet to build a nuclear weapon. My administration will seek engagement with Iran based on mutual interests and mutual respect. We believe in dialogue. But in that dialogue we will present a clear choice. We want Iran to take its rightful place in the community of nations, politically and economically. We will support Iran's right to peaceful nuclear energy with rigorous inspections. That's a path that the Islamic Republic can take. Or the government can choose increased isolation, international pressure, and a potential nuclear arms race in the region that will increase insecurity for all.

So let me be clear: Iran's nuclear and ballistic missile activity poses a real threat, not just to the United States, but to Iran's neighbors and our allies. The Czech Republic and Poland have been courageous in agreeing to host a defense against these missiles. As long as the threat from Iran persists, we will go forward with a missile defense system that is cost-effective and proven. If the Iranian threat is eliminated, we will have a stronger basis for security, and the driving force for missile defense construction in Europe will be removed.

So, finally, we must ensure that terrorists never acquire a nuclear weapon. This is the most immediate and extreme threat to global security. One terrorist with one nuclear weapon could unleash massive destruction. Al Qaeda has said it seeks a bomb and that it would have no problem with using it. And we know that there is unsecured nuclear material across the globe. To protect our people, we must act with a sense of purpose without delay.

So today I am announcing a new international effort to secure all vulnerable nuclear material around the world within four years. We will set new standards, expand our cooperation with Russia, pursue new partnerships to lock down these sensitive materials.

We must also build on our efforts to break up black markets, detect and intercept materials in transit, and use financial tools to disrupt this dangerous trade. Because this threat will be lasting, we should come together to turn efforts such as the Proliferation Security Initiative and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism into durable international institutions. And we should start by having a Global Summit on Nuclear Security that the United States will host within the next year.

Now, I know that there are some who will question whether we can act on such a broad agenda. There are those who doubt whether true international cooperation is possible, given inevitable differences among nations. And there are those who hear talk of a world without nuclear weapons and doubt whether it's worth setting a goal that seems impossible to achieve.

But make no mistake: We know where that road leads. When nations and peoples allow themselves to be defined by their differences, the gulf between them widens. When we fail to pursue peace, then it stays forever beyond our grasp. We know the path when we choose fear over hope. To denounce or shrug off a call for cooperation is an easy but also a cowardly thing to do. That's how wars begin. That's where human progress ends.

There is violence and injustice in our world that must be confronted. We must confront it not by splitting apart but by standing together as free nations, as free people. I know that a call to arms can stir the souls of men and women more than a call to lay them down. But that is why the voices for peace and progress must be raised together.

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Those are the voices that still echo through the streets of Prague. Those are the ghosts of 1968. Those were the joyful sounds of the Velvet Revolution. Those were the Czechs who helped bring down a nuclear-armed empire without firing a shot.

Human destiny will be what we make of it. And here in Prague, let us honor our past by reaching for a better future. Let us bridge our divisions, build upon our hopes, accept our responsibility to leave this world more prosperous and more peaceful than we found it. Together we can do it.

Thank you very much. Thank you, Prague.

(Source: The Acronym Institute)

Major Events in April 2009

Nuclear Disarmament/Proliferation/ Security

Pakistan

5 April 2009

World should recognize Pak as nuclear power: Qureshi

Urging the world to accept Pakistan's status as a nuclear power and to recognize it as had been done with India, Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi said. He said, "We are a responsible nuclear power and it will be appropriate that the world should recognize it." Pakistan also wants the resumption of the composite dialogue process with India and it is good if friends of the two countries extend help to make this happen. (Press Trust of India, 5 April 2009)

5 April 2009

Indo-US chill setting in, talk of even nuclear deal for Pak

Washington's Afghanistan-Pakistan envoy Richard Holbrooke has called for a "dialogue" with Islamabad to "acknowledge its nuclear weapon status." What will ring alarm bells here is that the New York-based Asia Society's Task Force report, released on a new strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan, was the brainchild of Holbrooke. (The Indian Express, 5 April 2009)

11 April 2009

Russia considers Pakistan its principal nuclear threat: Expert

Describing Pakistan as the "principal" nuclear threat to Russia, an eminent foreign policy and security expert has claimed that Moscow would support any US endeavour to take away Islamabad's atomic weapons in case of any destabilisation in the Islamic nation. "Russian authorities for many years have been indicating that Pakistan was a much more serious problem, both for nuclear proliferation and for nuclear terrorism, than Iran," Alexei Arbatov, Chairman of the Non-Proliferation Programme of Carnegie Moscow Centre, said. (Press Trust of India, 11 April 2009)

17 April 2009

Pakistan calls for equitable approach to accomplish nuclear disarmament

The objective of nuclear disarmament should be achieved through an equitable approach and genuine empathy for the security concerns of all countries, Pakistan told a United Nation (UN) panel. "At the same time, we have to avoid discriminatory application of non-proliferation norms and the resort to military and coercive means to counter proliferation," said Ambassador Farukh Amil, acting permanent representative of Pakistan to the UN. Amil said the cherished goal of "equal security for all", as advocated by the 1978 Special Session of the General Assembly, had been eclipsed by unilateralism, narrow geographical groupings and inadequate attention to the developing countries' security concerns. (Daily Times, 17 April 2009)

18 April 2009

'Pak was ready to launch air assault on India in 1998'

Pakistan was ready to launch a full-fledged air assault on "pre-selected targets" in India in 1998 and New Delhi tried to disrupt its nuclear tests, former foreign minister Gohar Ayub Khan reveals in a new book. In his book titled 'Testing Times as Foreign Minister', Khan reveals that in the event of an attack on the test site at Chagai by India, attack by the Pakistan Air Force would have been launched on pre-selected targets in India. "Pakistan had information and blueprints of the Indian nuclear projects given gratis after the 1984 attack on the Golden Temple," Once the decision that Pakistan would test, Five Punjab Sherdil left for Quetta to secure the Chagai test site. (Press Trust of India, 18 April 2009)

19 April 2009

Pakistan had alerted US to its nuclear tests: Gohar Ayub Khan

Pakistan had with a "heavy heart" informed the US of its May 1998 nuclear tests that it had conducted in retaliation to India's tests the same month, former foreign minister Gohar Ayub Khan says in his new book. "Having exhausted all options and left with no choice, we have in our supreme national interest decided to exercise the nuclear option. This decision, which I have taken with a heavy heart, was necessitated by the imperatives of self-defence and to deter aggression against sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of our country," then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said in his letter to then US President Bill Clinton. The letter is reproduced in Khan's book. (Hindustan Times, 19 April 2009)

23 April 2009

AQ Khan world's greatest proliferator: US

The United States has branded disgraced Pakistani nuclear scientist as "probably the world's greatest proliferator" but appears reluctant to link aid to Islamabad with getting information from him about his activities. "We do think that there need to be the right kind of conditions," Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said in an appearance before the House Foreign Affairs Committee responding to a question from Republican Michael McCaul. "You know, it's a little bit like the Goldilocks story. I mean, if they're too weak, we don't get changes. If they're too strong, we get a backlash. So we're trying to figure out sort of what is the area that will influence behaviour and produce results," she said. (Hindustan Times, 23 April 2009)

26 April 2009

US worried about Pakistan's nukes

The Taliban situation in Pakistan is particularly concerning because Pakistan is a nuclear-armed state. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the UN nuclear watchdog, it said, believes that Pakistan has 30-40 nuclear warheads. These, however, are unassembled and scattered about Pakistan. US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton warned that Pakistan was in danger of falling into terrorist hands. Pakistan's ambassador to the United States, Husain Haqqani, however told CNN the situation was not so dire. "Yes, we have a challenge," he said. "But, no, we do not have a situation in which the government or the country of Pakistan is about to fall to the Taliban." (Daily Times, 26 April 2009)

27 April 2009

Taliban finger on Pak N-switch has US worried

US secretary of state Hillary Clinton raised the ultimate scare this weekend saying the "unthinkable" could actually happen in Pakistan — that the Taliban and Al Qaeda could topple the government, giving them "the keys to the nuclear arsenal". In an interview in Baghdad, she said the US would not "let this go on any further, which is why we're pushing so hard for the Pakistanis to come together around a strategy to take their country back". Clinton's statement raised eyebrows in India, because it came just a few days after Prime Minister Manmohan Singh declared, at an election rally, that he had been "assured" that Pakistan's nuclear weapons were safe. Singh's announcement came as a response to BJP's concerns on the issue. (The Times of India, 27 April 2009)

27 April 2009

Zardari says Pakistan's nuclear weapons are safe

Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari ruled out the possibility of his country's nuclear weapons falling into the hands of the Taliban. "I want to assure the world that the nuclear capability of Pakistan is under safe hands," he told a panel interview with Reuters and other international media. The Taliban's creeping advances towards the Pakistani capital of Islamabad heightened fears in the United States about the stability of its nuclear-armed ally. Western allies that need Pakistan's support to defeat al Qaeda and succeed in stabilising Afghanistan, dread the idea of any threat to the security of Pakistan's nuclear weapons. (Reuters, 27 April 2009)

India

6 April 2009

"India will not sign NPT in present format"

"Our position is very clear. We are totally in agreement that those who are signatories to the NPT, they must fulfill their treaty obligations. Because of this discriminatory nature, we are not signatories, but with the objectives of non-proliferation, we are with the rest of the world," External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee has told. (The Hindu, 6 April 2009)

7 April 2009

India calls for restraint over N Korean 'missile test

India's ambivalence over the alleged ballistic missile test by North Korea was further exemplified by its reaction, when the foreign ministry called upon the international community to exercise restraint. This was even as it expressed concern over the possible destabilising effect of the development. In response to a question, the official spokesperson said, "We have seen reports that variously describe the missile launch by DPR Korea as a satellite launch or a ballistic missile test. The issue is presently under consideration in the UN Security Council. We are concerned at the possible destabilising effect of these events in a volatile region." (The Times of India, 7 April 2009)

12 April 2009

N-deal: India is becoming sanctions-proof (Swaminathan Aiyar)

The manifestos of the BJP and Communist Party (Marxist) accuse the Congress of bartering away India's security in the nuclear deal with the US. They worry that India will be dragooned into signing other treaties that limit its nuclear options, and open it to nuclear sanctions if it ever tests a bomb again. (The Times of India, 12 April 2009)

15 April 2009

BJP changes tack on nuclear deal

Changing tack on the India-United States nuclear deal, the Bharatiya Janata Party now says that, if voted to power, a BJP-led government will try and change it "to accommodate our concerns." senior BJP leader Jaswant Singh suggested, that given that the nuclear deal was a done thing, the party was aware of India's international commitments. The party admitted that this was a far cry from the initial stand, taken by senior leaders Yashwant Sinha and Arun Shourie, that the BJP would rescind the deal when it came to power. That was before the deal was signed and sealed. (The Hindu, 15 April 2009)

20 April 2009

Pak's nukes in safe hands for now, says PM

Even as concern mounts around the world about the growing anarchy in nuclear armed-Pakistan, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said India has been assured that Pakistan's nuclear weapons are in safe hands "as of now". The PM did not specify where the assurance had come from. But his comment clearly signified that India has been worried enough to seek reassurance on that count. (The Times of India, 20 April 2009)

21 April 2009

If voted to power, BJP will honour nuke deal with US: Advani

In a major shift of stand, BJP's Prime Minister Candidate L K Advani has said for the first time that his party will not abrogate the civilian nuclear deal with the US if it is voted to power. He said, "We realise it's not easy to do so. After all it's an international agreement, and one signed between two countries and their governments. We will have to look into all aspects." He conceded that his party had vowed to turn the clock on the deal during the heat of the controversy in July last year when the Manmohan government was in trouble in Parliament after the Left withdrew support. Senior BJP leaders including Yashwant Sinha and Arun Shourie had called for cancellation of the deal. (Hindustan Times, 21 April 2009)

NDA to provide "constructive solution" to nuclear deal: Shourie

Senior BJP leader Arun Shourie, who has been consistently vocal about the nuclear deal inked by the UPA government with US, said that NDA will provide

"constructive solution" to the issue. When asked about whether and how the NDA government, if voted to power, would go about renegotiating the nuclear deal, he said that their government would examine certain clauses which they are apprehensive about. "We will examine the clauses which are apprehensive and can have impact on our national security," he said, adding that the government would find ways to get around renegotiating those clauses. (Press Trust of India, 24 April 2009)

Nuclear Energy / Environment

13 April 2009

Sweden wants in on India's nuclear

Sweden, a leader in providing nuclear risk-management services and has shown interest in cooperating with India on nuclear power. Swedish companies like Sandvik, Sweco, SKB International AB and Relcon Scandpower AB will join France's Areva and U.S.-based Westinghouse and General Electric Co. on the list of international companies interested in investing in India's nuclear-power industry. Areva and GE Hitachi will supply nuclear reactors to India, and now the Swedish companies will offer engineering and construction services as well as risk management, nuclear-waste disposal management, and research and development. (United Press International, 13 April 2009)

13 April 2009

Pak to construct two nuclear power plants with Chinese help

Pakistan has given a go ahead for construction of two more nuclear power plants of 340 MW each with the Chinese help at the Chashma complex at a cost of USD 2.37 billion. (Press Trust of India, 13 April 2009)

22 April 2009

Delay in developing nuclear power dangerous: India

India indicated that nuclear power generation was at "crossroads" and any further delay in its development could prove dangerous to humanity on account of non-availability of other energy resources. "Now the only practical way would be to rapidly bring in technology-based solutions that provide an integrated answer to all these issues," Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Anil Kakodkar said at an IAEA conference at Beijing. "We are at crossroads. On one hand we have to address the challenge of rapidly

depleting fossil energy resources and the threats of climate change and on the other hand we are grappling with fears relating to safety, security and proliferation. With every passing day, these issues are likely to assume increasingly alarming proportions," Kakodkar said. (Press Trust of India, 22 April 2009)

24 April 2009

"At Kudankulam, third reactor construction can begin by year-end"

India could start construction of the third reactor at Kudankulam in Tamil Nadu by year-end provided India and Russia wrap up the signing of the techno-commercial agreements in the next couple of months. Both sides are already collaborating in the construction of two reactors and have expressed their desire to work jointly in building four more at the same site. While the first two units are of 1000 MWe capacity, the others could be of 1200 Mwe, Sudhindra Thakur, senior official of the Nuclear Power Corporation of India said. He was participating in a videoconference on the Russian and Indian experience in ensuring nuclear safety. (The Hindu, 24 April 2009)

25 April 2009

Pakistan building third nuclear reactor at Khushab

Even as the US remains focused on concerns over the Taliban's relentless advance towards Islamabad, Pakistan is increasing its capacity to produce plutonium at its Khushab nuclear facility. Citing new satellite images of the facility, the Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS) said the imagery suggests construction of the second Khushab reactor is "likely finished and that the roof beams are being placed on top of the third Khushab reactor hall". "The operational status of the second reactor is unknown, but it could start in the near future," said the report put together by ISIS president David Albright and senior research analyst Paul Brannan. (Express Buzz, 25 April 2009)

Nuclear Cooperation / Treaties / Agreements

13 April 2009

Setbacks in India's nuclear power plans

It was touted as a deal that would change the global energy landscape, opening new vistas for global as well as

Indian power companies. Yet just six months after the historic India-U.S. nuclear deal was signed, unshackling India's nuclear power generation sector, analysts are predicting hurdles for the "huge opportunities" this sector was expected to open. A plethora of challenges – including national security, regulatory risks, high costs, lack of clarity in policies, and above all the global economic meltdown – suggest that India's nuclear renaissance will be a long, drawn-out process that could try the patience of utilities and equipment manufacturers, analysts say. (United Press International, 13 April 2009)

13 April 2009

India working on ratification procedures

India is working on the ratification procedures of the India Specific Safeguards Agreement (ISSA), signed with the International Atomic Energy Agency on February 2 in Vienna, to place its civilian nuclear power plants for international inspection. "We are working on the ratification procedures of the ISSA. Ratification is a legal step and is expected to be completed soon," Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Anil Kakodkar told. "We will catch up with the schedule mentioned in the agreement and place reactors classified as civilian as per the Separation Plan under a single umbrella. We will place first the newly constructed plants at the Rajasthan Atomic Power Station (RAPS) Units 5 and 6 this year under the IAEA." (The Hindu, 13 April 2009)

16 April 2009

Nuclear-capable Prithvi-II clears user trial test

India tested an advanced version of the nuclear-capable Prithvi-II ballistic missile, with a strike range of 350 km, from the Chandipur integrated test range off the Orissa coast. The significant aspect about this test was that it was conducted as "a user or training trial" by the tri-service Strategic Forces Command (SFC), created in January 2003 to manage the country's nuclear arsenal. (The Times of India, 16 April 2009)

22 April 2009

India Criticizes IAEA over N-Tech Transfer

India has criticized the role being played by the United Nations nuclear watchdog over its limited effort to encourage the transfer of technology from advanced nations to support the need of developing and less developed countries for nuclear power. Dr Anil Kakodkar, chairman of the Indian Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) said the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) spent 55 per cent of its resources on nuclear verification and

administration, and devoting much less on issues relating to the transfer of technology through technical co-operation among nations and issues relating to the fuel cycle. (RTT News, 22 April 2009)

Nuclear Commerce

1 April 2009

First consignment of natural uranium arrives from France

The first consignment of natural uranium of 60 tonnes from French nuclear supplier AREVA Inc. arrived at the Nuclear Fuel Complex (NFC) Hyderabad (India). Following the 123 Agreement between India and the United States and waiver by the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), India signed an agreement with France for bilateral cooperation for supply of nuclear reactors and fuel. Subsequently, Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) entered into a contract with AREVA for supply of 300 tonnes, and a part of that quantity was received by the NFC. (The Hindu, 1 April 2009)

10 April 2009

Russia delivers first batch of nuclear fuel to India

Russia's TVEL, a subsidiary of state-controlled nuclear power company Atomenergoprom, has delivered its first shipment of nuclear fuel (thirty metric tonnes of pellets) for Indian heavy-water reactors at the nuclear fuel complex in Hyderabad (India), for further conversion into fuel for the Rajasthan nuclear power plant. In line with a \$700 million contract signed Feb 11 with New Delhi on fuel supplies to Indian nuclear power plants, Russia is to supply India with 2,000 metric tonnes of uranium pellets. The fuel contract is another step in burgeoning nuclear cooperation between Russia and India. (The Economic Times, 10 April 2009)

15 April 2009

Russia offers India role in uranium centre project

Russia has offered India the option of participating in its International Uranium Enrichment Centre (IUEC) at Angarsk, Siberia as a means of securing guaranteed fuel supplies in the future. The investments could be considered in lieu of India paying for nuclear fuel to be supplied to the Russian-built Koodankulam Light Water Reactor units and to existing Indian pressurised heavy water reactor units that are to be fuelled by Russian firm TVEL under a bilateral pact. (The Hindu Business Line, 15

April 2009)

17 April 2009

Indo-Canadian N-deal soon: Montek

After sealing nuclear fuel supply deals with Russia and France, India is 'very close' to inking a similar agreement with Canada. With New Delhi planning to import reactors upto 20,000 MW of capacity in next 10 years, it has laid down a road map for strategic partnership with Ottawa and is 'very close' to signing a nuclear cooperation agreement, Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission said. "This offers a major market opportunity to Canadian firms to sell nuclear reactors, fuel and technology for safeguarded nuclear reactors but they have to compete with France, the US, Russia and Australia," Ahluwalia said at a three-day Indo-Canada Energy Conference. (The Indian Express, 17 April 2009)

17 April 2009

Indian nuclear firms told to keep options open

Indian firms should not sign deals with foreign nuclear power firms that restrict their ability to supply to others as the government wants a thriving domestic industry, the country's atomic energy head Anil Kakodkar said. He said there was huge potential for Indian companies to expand in the equipment supply and construction segment, given India's experience in developing technologies for its reactors. "Don't compromise on your IPRs (intellectual property rights)," Kakodkar, chairman of India's Atomic Energy Commission, said at an industry conference. "In setting up agreements, you should not forego opportunities for making equipment for other segments of the nuclear market." (Reuters, 17 April 2009)

23 April 2009

L&T ties up with two more global N-reactor makers

Larsen & Toubro (L&T) is ready for its foray into the nuclear power plant construction business. The largest engineering and construction company in the country, will sign cooperation agreements with General Electric Hitachi of the US and Areva of France, two of the largest vendors of reactors. L&T has already signed cooperation agreements with the other three major reactor makers - Atomstroyexport (ASE), which is part of Rosatom of Russia, Toshiba Westinghouse of the US and Atomic Energy of Canada (AEC). (Business Standard, 23 April 2009)

Chemical / Biological / Radiological

27 April 2009

India Completes Chemical Weapons Disposal; Iraq Declares Stockpile

India has become the third nation to eliminate its known stockpile of chemical weapons; the organization that monitors adherence to the Chemical Weapons Convention announced it. India on March 26 notified the Technical Secretariat to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons that it had completed operations. "This attainment further strengthens the convention as an effective instrument for promoting the objectives of peace and security," said OPCW Director General Rogelio Pfirter. (Global Security Newswire, 27 April 2009)
