

Fact Sheet: New Strategies to Defeat New Threats

The greatest threat facing America in the 21 st Century is the possibility of an attack by terrorists armed with a nuclear weapon. The most difficult step for a terrorist to take in making a nuclear weapon is getting highly enriched uranium or plutonium. Unfortunately, there is enough of this material to make literally thousands of nuclear weapons sitting in inadequately secured sites in dozens of countries across the world – some 600 tons of it is in the former Soviet Union alone. We know that al Qaeda is already seeking this material, yet we are not doing enough to keep it out of their hands. In fact, less nuclear weapons material was secured in the two years after 9/11 than in the two years prior.

In a speech in Palm Beach , Florida , John Kerry set out his strategy to prevent nuclear terrorism by keeping terrorists from getting dangerous weapons or nuclear materials. Kerry said the pace of efforts to secure these materials is not sufficient given the threat we face. Kerry's strategy uses all of our resources and the might of international alliances to: (1) safeguard existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons and materials within four years, (2) end production of fissile materials for use in nuclear weapons, (3) reduce existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons materials, (4) end nuclear weapons programs in nations like North Korea and Iran, (5) enhance international efforts to stop trafficking in nuclear materials, and (6) make preventing nuclear terrorism a major national priority.

I. Safeguard Existing Nuclear Weapons Materials Worldwide. Under John Kerry's plan, any material that could be used in a nuclear weapon will be treated like a nuclear weapon. All nuclear weapons material will be safeguarded within four years by:

- **Accelerating Programs to Secure all Nuclear Weapons and Materials in the Former Soviet Union within Four Years .** By the end of 2003, only 22% of the estimated 600 tons of the vulnerable nuclear material in the former Soviet Union had received comprehensive security upgrades, and only 43% had even had basic, quick-fix upgrades. Yet President Bush has not made securing these vulnerable weapons and materials a priority, allowing summit after summit with Russian President Putin to go by without any action to overcome the bureaucratic obstacles to improving security. At their most recent summit in September 2003, the United States and Russia laid out an agenda for U.S.-Russian cooperation that did not even include the subject of securing nuclear stocks. As a result of this inaction, completing this work will take 13 years if we continue at the current pace.

Kerry will accelerate this work , breaking through the bureaucratic logjams that have hampered progress so that all nuclear weapons and materials in the former Soviet Union will be secured in four years. Kerry will make this a priority in our relations with Russia by immediately working to develop a strategic plan to secure all these weapons and materials.

- **Completing a Global Cleanout of Potential Bomb-Making Materials in Four Years .** Highly enriched uranium that can be used to create nuclear bombs is still used to fuel over 130 research

reactors in more than 40 countries, many with only modest security. Kerry's plan will remove potential bomb material provided by the Soviet Union and the United States from vulnerable sites outside the former Soviet Union within four years. It took the Administration three years to even announce their plan to do this, and by their own schedule it would take a decade to complete it – far too long given the gravity of the threat.

- **Establishing Global Standards for Safekeeping of Nuclear Materials** . Kerry will lead a major multinational effort to establish and enforce an international standard for the safe custody of nuclear weapons and materials. He will expand the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction program to provide assistance where necessary for countries to meet this standard. And he will re-establish U.S. leadership in international efforts to stop the spread of nuclear weapons and materials by establishing a Contact Group of nations to work together to implement this and prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and materials.

II. End Production of New Fissile Material for Nuclear Weapons . Given the challenge of securing the thousands of nuclear weapons that already exist, the world does not need more nuclear weapons. John Kerry's plan will work to end the production of nuclear material for use in nuclear weapons by:

- **Negotiating a Global Ban on Production of Material for Nuclear Weapons** . There is strong international support for a ban on all production of highly enriched uranium and plutonium for use in nuclear weapons that would permanently cap the world's nuclear weapons stockpiles. Yet the Bush Administration has failed to move forward, keeping this initiative frozen in a lengthy inter-agency review process. Kerry will immediately ask the members of the U.N. Security Council to formally pledge never again to produce such material for weapons. He will then lead a broad international coalition to verifiably ban production of such materials by any nation.

III. Reduce Existing Stocks of Nuclear Weapons and Materials : In the former Soviet Union alone, there are nearly 20,000 nuclear weapons and enough nuclear material to produce 50,000 more Hiroshima-sized bombs. We must reduce these existing stocks of nuclear weapons and materials. Under Kerry's plan, America will lead by example in accomplishing this by:

- **Ending Development of the New Generation of Nuclear Weapons** . The Administration is spending millions of dollars developing bunker-busters and mini-nukes, a new generation of more “usable” nuclear weapons. Kerry will signal to the world that America is serious about stopping proliferation by putting an end to these programs.
- **Accelerating Reductions in U.S. and Russian Nuclear Arsenals** . Kerry will work with the Russians to accelerate the timetable of planned and agreed consolidation and reductions in U.S. and Russian nuclear arsenals.
- **Reducing Stocks of Dangerous HEU and Plutonium in Russia** . Kerry will work with the Russians to accelerate the “blending down” of HEU into energy reactor fuel and speed the

disposition of plutonium, a process which is now bogged down in a bureaucratic tangle.

IV. End Nuclear Weapons Programs in Hostile States like North Korea and Iran : We must ensure that hostile states like North Korea and Iran do not have nuclear weapons capabilities and that no nation can use the guise of peaceful energy programs to develop them. Kerry's plan will work toward this by:

- **Ending North Korea's Nuclear Weapons Program as a Top Priority .** Our goal must be to end North Korea's nuclear weapons program and permanently eliminate its enrichment and reprocessing efforts. All options must remain on the table to accomplish this. Any agreement must have rigorous verification, and must lead to complete and irreversible elimination of North Korea's nuclear weapons program. Despite the obvious threat, for eighteen months we have negotiated largely over process while the North Koreans have reportedly made enough new bomb material for 6-9 new nuclear weapons. Kerry believes we should continue the six party negotiations with the North Koreans, but also be willing to have direct bilateral talks. And we must be prepared to negotiate a comprehensive agreement that addresses the full range of issues of concern to us and our allies.
- **Preventing Iran from Developing Nuclear Weapons .** A nuclear armed Iran is an unacceptable risk to the national security of the United States and our allies in the region. While we have been preoccupied in Iraq, Iran has reportedly been moving ahead with its nuclear program. We can no longer sit on the sidelines and leave the negotiations to the Europeans. It is critical that we work with our allies to resolve these issues and lead a global effort to prevent Iran from obtaining the technology necessary to build nuclear weapons. Iran claims that its nuclear program is only to meet its domestic energy needs. The Kerry proposal would call their bluff by organizing a group of states to offer Iran the nuclear fuel they need for peaceful purposes and take back the spent fuel so they cannot divert it to build a weapon. If Iran does not accept this offer, their true motivations will be clear. Under the current circumstances, Kerry believes we should support the International Atomic Energy Agency's efforts to discern the full extent of Iran's nuclear program, while pushing Iran to agree to a verifiable and permanent suspension of its enrichment and reprocessing programs. If this process fails, we must lead the effort to ensure that the IAEA takes this issue to the Security Council for action.
- **Strengthening the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty .** Kerry will strengthen the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty by closing the loophole that allows countries like Iran and North Korea to develop nuclear weapons capabilities under the guise of a peaceful, civilian nuclear power program. He will work to create a consortium of states that would guarantee fuel supply and removal of spent fuel to states that agree not to have enrichment or reprocessing facilities of their own. At the same time, he will oppose the construction of reprocessing facilities in any countries that do not currently have them. Kerry will also strengthen the NPT's enforcement and verification mechanisms by making adoption of the Additional Protocol mandatory. And he will work with the IAEA to refocus its mission so that there is an increased emphasis on stopping the spread of nuclear weapons materials.

V. Enhance International Efforts to Stop Trafficking in Nuclear Materials. The most effective way to prevent nuclear terrorism is to secure weapons and materials at the source. At the same time, we should strengthen our ability to prevent trafficking in bomb making materials and components by:

- Working with the International Community to Strengthen Nonproliferation Measures . John Kerry will work with every country to toughen export controls, stiffen penalties, and strengthen law enforcement and intelligence sharing so that disasters like the AQ Khan network can never happen again. And he will work through the United Nations and international treaties to make trade in the technologies of mass destruction an international crime, like slavery and piracy.
- Improving the Proliferation Security Initiative . Only approximately 15 percent of the world's 50,000 large cargo ships are subject to inspection on short notice, and fewer than 20 countries are full participants in the PSI. John Kerry will work with allies to increase participation so that instead of relying on coalitions of the willing, we can create the broader international framework necessary to make such an operation more effective. He will also work to improve the PSI by expanding it to include air and ground transportation.

VI. Make Preventing Nuclear Terrorism a Top National Security Priority . Kerry will make preventing nuclear terrorism a top priority by:

- Appointing a Presidential Coordinator to Prevent Nuclear Terrorism . Kerry will appoint a Presidential Coordinator who will focus exclusively on directing a top line effort to secure all nuclear weapons and materials around the world and prevent a nuclear terrorist attack. This Coordinator will be charged with marshalling all of our resources and making certain that all of the U.S. government's efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and materials are prioritized and integrated into a comprehensive plan.
- Making Preventing Nuclear Terrorism a Cabinet-Level Priority . Kerry will instruct the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Energy to make counter-proliferation efforts a major emphasis of their roles in promoting national security. He will also direct the Secretary of State to make preventing nuclear terrorism a top diplomatic priority.

Key Elements of Kerry Plan Versus Status Under Bush Approach

Task	Kerry Plan	Under Bush Approach
<i>Make Preventing Nuclear Terrorism a Top National Security Priority .</i>		
<i>Coordination and leadership.</i>	Appoint a Presidential Coordinator to prevent nuclear terrorism. Make preventing nuclear terrorism a Cabinet-level priority.	‘ Lugar Says the United States Is Not Committed to Staving Off Catastrophic Terrorism' [www.lugar.senate.gov]

Safeguarding Existing Nuclear Weapons Materials Worldwide

<i>Securing all nuclear materials and weapons in the former Soviet Union</i>	Accelerate and prioritize programs to secure all nuclear weapons and materials in the former Soviet Union within four years .	Up to 13 years to finish the job at this pace; in real terms, requested less money on average than the last Clinton Administration request.
<i>Global cleanout</i>	Complete a global cleanout of potential bomb-making materials in four years .	Global cleanout would take a decade.
<i>Global standards</i>	Establish global standards for safekeeping of nuclear materials.	
<i>Implementation</i>	Establish a Contact Group of nations to work together on implementation of this and other key nonproliferation initiatives.	Pledge goal not met; little money allocated to actual projects; only a small fraction of projects focused on securing nuclear stockpiles.

End Production of New Fissile Material for Nuclear Weapons

<i>Global ban on production of material for nuclear weapons.</i>	Achieve a global ban on production of material for nuclear weapons.	Undertake a continuous inter-agency review process.
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Reduce Existing Stocks of Nuclear Weapons and Materials

<i>A new generation of nuclear weapons?</i>	End development of the new generation of nuclear weapons.	Spend millions to develop bunker-busters and mini-nukes, a new generation of more “usable” nuclear weapons.
<i>Reducing U.S. and Russian nuclear arsenals.</i>	Accelerate reductions in U.S. and Russian nuclear arsenals	Passed-up historic opportunity to verifiably eliminate excess Cold War nuclear weaponry with Moscow treaty ' [Arms Control Assoc., 5/24/02]
<i>Reducing Stocks of Dangerous Highly Enriched Uranium and Plutonium in Russia .</i>	Reduce stocks of dangerous HEU and plutonium in Russia .	Reductions under U.S. funded programs: HEU: 16%; Plutonium: 0 % [Bunn and Wier, Securing the Bomb, 82]