

DAILY BULLETIN

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PRESIDENT BUSH VISITS RUSSIAN EMBASSY TO HONOR TERROR VICTIMS

Says U.S. stands shoulder-to-shoulder with Russia against terrorism

President and Mrs. Bush visited the Russian Embassy in Washington September 12 to honor the victims of the brutal terrorist attack at a school in the small town of Beslan in North Ossetia.

The President said the attacks were "beyond comprehension," and he offered America's prayers and condolences to the Russian people. "The United States stands side-by-side with Russia as we fight off terrorism, as we stand shoulder-to-shoulder to make the world a more peaceful place and a free place," he said.

Following is a transcript of the president's remarks:

Remarks by the President to the Press Pool
Russian Embassy
September 12, 2004
Washington, D.C.

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Ambassador, thank you for receiving Laura and me. I'm here to express my country's heart-felt sympathies for the victims and the families who suffered at the hands of the evil terrorists. The United States stands side-by-side with Russia as we fight off terrorism, as we stand shoulder-to-shoulder to make the world a more peaceful place and a free place.

The atrocities that took place in the school were beyond comprehension. Many in America, and I know many in Russia, simply cannot conceive the hearts of a person that would mow down innocent children. And the killers, once again, reminded us -- remind us of the duties we have as free people to work in concert, to work in unity, to make this world a better place.

And so Mr. Ambassador, I'm honored. Please pass on my very best wishes to President Vladimir Putin, a man who I admire. I talked with Vladimir right after the incident. We had a very good discussion about the need for us to continue to work together. I pledged our government would continue to work with the Russian government and the Russian people.

And may God bless the people of Russia and may God bless those who suffer. Thank you all very much.

POWELL SAYS STRONG NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DIRECTOR "ESSENTIAL"

Intelligence director would need "real budget authority," he says

Secretary of State Colin Powell says he fully supports President Bush's proposals on intelligence reform, and specifically the creation of a national intelligence director with "real budget authority" to coordinate the nation's intelligence agencies.

Testifying before the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee with Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge September 13, Powell said his needs as secretary of state are "somewhat unique," but that the president's reform proposals would be very useful. However, he said the 9/11 Commission's recommendation that the national intelligence director (NID) have deputies from U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), the CIA and the FBI is not part of the president's proposal. "President Bush believes that we need clear lines of authority, and to have in the structure people who have to report to two different masters would not contribute to clarity of responsibility and accountability," he said.

Powell discussed four main areas in which he believes that the president's intelligence reform proposals would

serve him well. First, he said, the secretary of state needs "global coverage all the time. ... I need intelligence on developments in all countries and regions. I need it to provide information and insight to our ambassadors around the world and to those of us in Washington," he said.

Second, Powell said, he needs expert judgments on what is most likely to happen, whereas the military commonly prefers to have intelligence judgments on worst-case scenarios. He needs to know "what will influence the course of events; what will it take to change the course of events; and how much diplomatic capital or other blandishments it will take to achieve the foreign policy goals of the president in specific circumstances," which is often "far short of the worst case."

Third, Powell said, he needs both specifically crafted intelligence that responds to and even anticipates his needs, and informed, competitive analysis. "Precisely because my intelligence needs differ from those of the Secretary of Defense or the Secretary of Homeland Security or the Secretary of Energy, not to mention the unique requirement of our military services, I'm not well served, nor are they, by collectors and analysts who do not understand my unique needs, or who attempt to provide a one-size-fits-all assessment," he said.

The fourth point Powell made to the committee was the need to take advantage of "complementarities, synergy, competitive analysis and divisions of labor." There must always be more than one analytical unit covering every place and problem, he said, but every intelligence agency should not cover everything. As a corollary, he said not all parts of the intelligence community are equally qualified to make judgments on all issues. "You would not give your dentist a vote in the proper course of treatment for a heart problem, and we should not derive much comfort or confidence from any judgment proceeded by 'most agencies believe.' It's not good enough any longer," he said.

Powell also made several other points:

-- The intelligence community does not generally examine its own performance, especially "the quality and utility of its analytical products." A "rigorous post-mortem analysis" of intelligence successes and failures is needed. Powell endorsed Senator Pat Roberts' idea of an intelligence inspector general's office to make such evaluations.

-- The recent executive order on improving terrorism information-sharing among agencies needs to be extended to intelligence on all topics.

-- Decisions on dissemination of intelligence information should be made by agency heads or their designees, and not by the information collectors. And,

-- The intelligence community must stop routinely classifying information at higher levels and making access to information more difficult than it should.

SECRET MISSION AIRLIFTS ENRICHED URANIUM FROM UZBEKISTAN

Energy Department reveals U.S., Uzbek, Russian cooperation

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announced September 13 that some highly enriched uranium fuel (HEU) suitable for building nuclear weapons has been successfully returned to Russia from Uzbekistan.

The secret mission, completed September 9, involved airlifting the uranium from an airport near Tashkent, Uzbekistan, to a facility in Dmitrovgrad, Russia, where it will be down-blended to low enriched uranium that does not pose a proliferation threat.

“It was only with the strong cooperation of the Uzbeks and Russians that we were able to successfully complete this important international security mission,” said Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham in a news release on the mission.

This is the fifth successful shipment of uranium being returned to Russia. The other shipments of HEU fuel were repatriated from Romania, Bulgaria, Libya and Serbia.

DOE also announced that the United States and Russia will host more than 300 participants at a Global Threat Reduction Initiative (GTRI) International Partners’ Conference next week [September 18-19 in Vienna, Austria]. The conference will focus attention on efforts to secure vulnerable nuclear and radiological material that pose a threat to the international community.

Following is a Department of Energy release:
Washington, D.C.
September 13, 2004

Secret Mission to Recover Highly Enriched Uranium in Uzbekistan Successful

Fuel Returned to Secure Facility in Russia

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Eleven kilograms of enriched uranium fuel, including highly enriched uranium (HEU) that could be used for nuclear weapons, were safely returned to Russia from Uzbekistan in a secret mission conducted by the United States, Uzbekistan, and Russia, U.S. Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham announced today. The mission was completed September 9, 2004.

“The recovery, return and eventual elimination of this highly enriched uranium are an important milestone in our campaign to reduce this dangerous material worldwide,” Secretary Abraham said. “It was only with the strong cooperation of the Uzbeks and Russians that we were able to successfully complete this important international security mission.”

The highly enriched uranium was airlifted under guard from an airport near Tashkent, Uzbekistan to a secured facility in Dmitrovgrad, Russia. There, the uranium will be down-blended to low enriched uranium.

The nuclear fuel assemblies were originally supplied to Uzbekistan for use in the Russian-designed 10 megawatt VVR-SM multi-purpose research reactor, located near the Uzbekistan capital, Tashkent.

During the 1-day mission, approximately 11 kilograms of enriched uranium nuclear fuel, including HEU, were loaded into two specialized transportation containers provided by the Russian Federation. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards inspectors and U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) technical experts were present in Uzbekistan to monitor the process of loading the fuel into the canisters.

The facility in Russia that received the material has worked closely with the United States to implement security upgrades under the Bush Administration’s U.S.-Russian Material, Protection, Control and Accounting Program. Along with a decision to return the uranium to Russia, the Uzbekistan government also has made a decision to convert the VVR-SM research reactor to use low

enriched uranium fuel, furthering our nuclear nonproliferation goals.

The mission was conducted under the Global Threat Reduction Initiative (GTRI), outlined by Secretary Abraham before the International Atomic Energy Agency in May 2004.

On February 11, 2004, President Bush stated in a speech at the National Defense University that the greatest risk to the United States or anywhere else in the world is the possibility of a nuclear, radiological, chemical or biological terrorist attack. The U.S. Department of Energy has several ongoing efforts to combat this threat. In the latest step to increase effectiveness in preventing nuclear and radiological materials from falling into the hands of terrorists or other rogue actors, Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham announced the Global Threat Reduction Initiative (GTRI).

The mission of the GTRI is to remove and/or secure high-risk nuclear and radiological materials and equipment around the world that pose a threat to the United States and to the international community. This initiative will comprehensively address all vulnerable nuclear and radiological materials throughout the world and secure and/or remove these materials and equipment of concern as expeditiously as possible.

“The Bush Administration continues to take the lead in implementing nonproliferation programs to benefit the international community,” Secretary Abraham said. “I applaud the efforts of Uzbekistan for its cooperation with the United States, Russian Federation, and the IAEA under the Global Threat Reduction Initiative to reduce the threat of nuclear proliferation by returning HEU to Russia.”

“Our Administration has realized significant nonproliferation accomplishments including the breakup of the A.Q. Khan network and Libya’s decision to give-up its nuclear weapons program and work with us to remove its equipment,” Abraham said.

This is the fifth successful shipment of uranium being returned to Russia. In the past year, DOE has repatriated a total of 48 kg of HEU fuel to Russia from Romania, Bulgaria and Libya. And, in August 2002, 48 kg of Russian-origin HEU were repatriated from a research reactor near Belgrade, Serbia.

Next week, Abraham said the United States and Russia will be hosting more than 300 participants at the GTRI International Partners’ Conference. The International Partners’ Conference will focus international attention on efforts to secure vulnerable nuclear and radiological material that pose a threat to the international community.

AFGHANISTAN MAKES PROGRESS ON MANY FRONTS

Reconstruction, elections, disarmament, education, refugees

Following is a fact sheet from the U.S. embassy in Afghanistan September 12 detailing the progress accomplished in Afghanistan during the past month on a variety of fronts:

Update

The focus of the United States and its coalition partners continues to be reconstruction, elections and Disarmament, Demobilization, and Re-integration (DDR). The facts below list progress made in Afghanistan on several fronts over the last month.

Elections & Voter Registration

-- To date over 10.6 million Afghans have registered to vote -- 41 percent of them are women.

-- The presidential election campaign season officially opened September 7.

Education

-- More than 4.8 million children are enrolled in schools throughout the country, the largest number in the history of Afghanistan.

-- 500,000 children are expected to return to the warm-weather school locations this September in the south and east.

Afghan National Army (ANA)

-- The ANA has 13,500 soldiers. There are another 3,000 currently being trained.

Afghan National Police

-- The Afghan National Police has 29,275 police officers (trained by the United States and Germany).

Disarmament, Demobilization, and Re-integration (DDR)

-- 14,665 Afghan Militia Forces have been disarmed since April.

-- 12,720 of those soldiers are about to begin the reintegration program.

Heavy Weapons Cantonment

-- Heavy weapons are now completely cantoned in Kabul.

-- Cantonment continues in Gardez, Mazar, and Jalalabad and will begin in Konduz today (September 12).

Infrastructure

-- Work began on the Kandahar to Tirin Kowt Road. The road will be complete at the end of 2005.

Refugee & IDP return

-- Over 600,000 refugees and internally displaced persons have returned to their homes since January 2004.

Please Note: Most texts and transcripts mentioned in the U.S. Mission Daily Bulletin are available via our homepage www.usmission.ch. Select "Washington File" from the drop-down menu under "News."