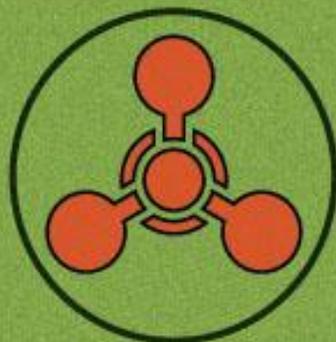


# REASSESSING THE WMD CHALLENGES: THE NEXT PHASE?



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# **Reassessing the WMD Challenges:** **The Next Phase?**

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## Introduction

### **Professor Yonah Alexander**

Director, Inter-University Center for Terrorism Studies

The resort to force as a tactical and strategic tool in the struggle for power within and among nations is as old as history itself. As Homer observed more than three thousand years ago: “The blade itself incites to violence.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, the *modus operandi* of both strong and weak actors has been to deploy a wide range of arms, from primitive to high tech to mass destruction (biological, chemical, radiological, and nuclear).

Suffice to mention several historical examples of this evolutionary process. During the first century, Jewish extremists known as Zealot *Sicarii* used daggers in surprise attacks against Roman leaders in occupied Judea. Similarly, primitive martyrdom missions were undertaken by the *Hashashin* (Assassins) against the Crusaders in the Middle East in a campaign lasting some 200 years between the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries. The strategic implications of this record have amply demonstrated that even “low-level” tactics are durable and effective.

Indeed, over the subsequent centuries, violent conflicts featured the evolution of weaponry from swords and catapults to guns and explosives and increasingly to more sophisticated land, sea, and air arms. Antoine-Henri Jomini (a military philosopher and general under Napoleon and Tsar Nicolas I who was best known for his influential book, “Summary of the Art of War,” published in 1838) keenly predicted that “the means of destruction are approaching perfection with frightful rapidity.”<sup>2</sup>

The First and Second World Wars ushered in the era of weapons of near total destruction. Such capabilities have increased to the degree that they could forever challenge the existence of civilization itself.

More specifically, biological threats include viral infections (e.g. smallpox and hemorrhagic fevers), bacterial infections (e.g. anthrax, plague, tularemia, and botulism), and toxic poisons (e.g. ricin). Chemical challenges consist, for instance, of nerve agents (e.g. VX, Sarin, Tabun), mustard gas, hydrogen cyanide, and chlorine gas.

More alarmingly, “super” threats facing humanity that emerged out of the “nuclear age” and the “age of terrorism” have been dominated by four challenges: nuclear wars between states; future spread of nuclear weapons; catastrophic nuclear accidents; and nuclear violence by terrorist groups. This security context has generated multiple academic initiatives for the purpose of providing some findings and recommendations on the need to prevent mass destruction attacks by state and non-state bodies.

One project was developed by the “Task Force on the Prevention of Nuclear Terrorism,” co-sponsored by the Institute for Studies in International Terrorism (ISIT) at the State University of New York and the Nuclear Control Institute (NCI) in Washington D.C. That effort resulted in the publication of two books: Nuclear Terrorism: Defining the Threat (Pergamon-Brassey’s, 1986) and Preventing Nuclear Terrorism (Lexington Books, 1987). Both volumes were co-edited by Paul Leventhal (NCI President) and Yonah Alexander (ISIT Director).

Related security studies include contributions to numerous publications such as *Terrorism: An International Journal* (Taylor and Francis, 1988-1991); *Terrorism: An International Resource File*, 1970-1990 (University Microfilm International, 1988-1991); *Technology Against Terrorism: Structuring Security* (Office of Technology Assessment, U.S. Congress, 1992); and *Super-Terrorism: Biological, Chemical, Nuclear* (Transnational Publishers, 2002), co-edited by Yonah Alexander and Milton Hoenig.

A second academic effort in this field was the 1988 development of an international multidisciplinary project on “Preventing Super-Terrorism,” administered by Professor Yonah Alexander, Director of the Inter-University Center for Terrorism Studies (IUCTS) at The George Washington University, and Professor Yuval Ne’eman, the Wolfson Distinguished Chair in Theoretical Physics at Tel Aviv University. The purpose of this project, chaired by Professor Edward Teller of Lawrence Livermore Research Laboratory and Stanford University, was to both develop coherent counter-proliferation policies and increase governmental and public understanding of the risks of and responses to super-terrorism without providing sensitive information that could prove useful to potential perpetrators of terrorist acts involving weapons of mass destruction. An international task force of experts representing various disciplines and nationalities was responsible for formulating a critical analysis of the dimensions of the challenge and for developing a strategy to cope with it.

Among the issues considered were the following:

- *Proliferation Trends*: What is the distribution of biological, chemical, and nuclear knowledge, technology, and materials in the 21st century?
- *Trends in Terrorism*: What are the trends in post-Cold War conventional terrorism and the prospects for “Super-Terrorism” (actors, capabilities, motives, methods of operation, and targets)?
- *Impact and Costs of “Super-Terrorism”*: What are the impacts and costs of “Super-Terrorism” – human, material, psychological, and strategic?
- *Current Responses to “Super-Terrorism”*: What are the current responses to “Super-Terrorism” – governmental, intergovernmental, and private sector?
- *Requirements for Future National, Regional, and Global Defense against “Super-Terrorism”*: What are alternative strategies to prevent and cope with “Super-Terrorism”?

A third academic activity was the 2012 undertaking of a research project on a “WMD-Free Zone in the Middle East” (WMDFZME). This ongoing effort is administered by the IUCTS in cooperation with the International Center for Terrorism Studies (ICTS) at the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies in Arlington, Virginia, and the Inter-University Center for Legal Studies at the International Law Institute (ILI) in Washington, D.C. The objective of this project is to organize a series of seminars and to conduct research with experts from both the public and the private sectors to offer recommendations for ultimately achieving a Middle East free of WMD.

It is in this connection that the co-sponsoring institutions of the WMDFZME project, in cooperation with the Center for National Security Law at the University of Virginia, organized a seminar on “Reassessing the WMD Challenges: The Next Phase?” held on October 30, 2013 at the ILI. The purpose of this event was essentially to discuss the outlook for the dismantling of Syria’s chemical weapons and preventing Iran from obtaining military nuclear capability. The

distinguished panel included Charles A. Duelfer, former Special Advisor for Strategy regarding Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Programs; Greg Gross, former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense and senior staff member, U.S. Senate; Michael Eisenstadt, Senior Fellow and Director of the Military and Security Studies Program at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy; and Dr. Milton Hoenig, nuclear physicist and a co-author, with Professor Yonah Alexander, of *The New Iranian Leadership: Ahmadinejad, Terrorism, Nuclear Ambition, and the Middle East* (published by Praeger in 2011). The slightly edited presentations of the panelists are incorporated in this publication.

Since this report deals only with the WMD situation in the Middle East as of October 2013, it is noteworthy to mention that a subsequent study, “Tehran’s Bomb Challenge: Crossroads, Roadblocks, and Roadmaps to Rapprochement?” was published in March 2014. The electronic version is available at [www.terrorismelectronicjournal.org/knowledge-base/selected-seminar-reports/](http://www.terrorismelectronicjournal.org/knowledge-base/selected-seminar-reports/).

Since the release of that publication, there have been several important developments on the ground. First, according to press reports in May 2014, France asserted that there are “at least 14 indications”<sup>3</sup> that Syria has used chlorine gas since October of last year. Secretary of State John F. Kerry warned that such attacks would be “...against the weapons convention that Syria has signed up to...”<sup>4</sup> if confirmed. Second, President Rouhani has expressed commitment to solving the nuclear matter diplomatically as Iran reduced its illicit imports that violated UN sanctions. At the same time, however, Iran’s military is implementing a plan to pursue a ballistic missile program.

Finally, an acknowledgement is due to the contributors to this study, “Reassessing the WMD Challenges: The Next Phase?,” for their cooperation as well as to our colleagues at the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, Michael S. Swetnam (CEO and Chairman) and General (Ret.) Alfred Gray (Twenty-Ninth Commandant of the United States Marine Corps; Senior Fellow and Chairman of the Board of Regents). Also, gratitude is due to the International Law Institute, particularly to Professor Don Wallace, Jr. (Chairman), Kim Phan (Executive Director), Robert Sargin (Deputy Director & Chief Financial Officer), and William Mays (Director and Editor of Publications) for their encouragement and continuous support. Moreover, the Fall 2013, Spring 2014, and Summer 2014 teams of graduate and undergraduate interns, coordinated by Sharon Layani (University of Michigan), provided useful research assistance. The group includes Sheila Davis (Duquense University), William Docimo (London School of Economics), Tyler Engler (Georgetown University), Gabriella Gricius (Boston University), G. Genghis Hallsby (University of Iowa), Avioz Hanan (University of Maryland), Kai Huntamer (University of California, Los Angeles), John Jermyn (State University of New York at Albany), Garth Keffer (University of California, Davis), Michael Klement (University of Denver), Uri Lerner (American University), James Nusse (The George Washington University), Roxanne Oroxom (University of Maryland), Stephanie Rieger (University of Wisconsin), Courtney Van Wagner (University of Georgia), David Wiese (University of Exeter), and Reed Woodrum (Princeton University). Reed Culver designed the cover and Mary Ann Culver prepared the manuscript for publication. Both deserve special gratitude for their exceptional support.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Odyssey*, xvi

<sup>2</sup> Baron Antoine-Henri Jomini, *The Art of War*, translated by Capt. G.H. Mendell and Lt. W.P. Craighill, (Philadelphia: J.P. Lippincott & Co., 1862) p. 48.

<sup>3</sup> Wroughton, Lesley. "France Says Syria Used Chlorine in 14 Recent Attacks." Reuters. Thomson Reuters, 13 May 2014. Web. 22 May 2014. <<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/14/us-syria-crisis-idUSBREA4C00720140514>>.

<sup>4</sup> Wroughton, Lesly, William James, and Guy Faulconbridge. "Kerry Says Has Seen Raw Data That Suggests Syria Used Chlorine in Gas Attacks." Ed. Stephen Addison. Reuters. Thomson Reuters, 15 May 2014. Web. 22 May 2014. <<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/05/15/us-syria-crisis-kerry-idUSBREA4E0LL20140515>>.

**Charles A. Duelfer**

Former Special Advisor to the Director of Central Intelligence for Iraq, WMD; leader of the Iraq Survey Group on WMD; and acting Chairman of the UN Special Commission on Iraq (UNSCOM); currently, Chairman of the Board, OMNIS, Inc.

We are a small group, so I think probably you can best guide the discussion. Consequently, I'll try to be brief. I cannot promise that I will succeed in achieving this goal.

What strikes me about the situation in Syria (I'm going to set aside Iran for the moment) is how far things have come so quickly. Let me just tick through a timeline.

On August 21, 2013, there was a massive use of chemical weapons in Syria, which provoked an international response; the UN which had a team in Damascus to investigate other allegations of earlier CW use, was immediately tasked redirected to investigate the new massive attack.

As that team was conducting its work, on September 9, Sergey Lavrov, (who I would note spent five years as Russian Ambassador to the UN during the 1990's at the height of the Iraqi WMD issue-- so he knows about the UN inspection mechanisms that were applied to Iraq—and he certainly knows how those lessons may be applied to Syria). Lavrov said publicly that “we are calling on the Syrian authorities. Not only to agree on putting chemical weapons storages under international control, but also for its further destruction and for them to join the OPCW --the chemical weapons convention.”

The next day, on September 10, less than two weeks after this massive use of CW, President Barack Obama made an address to the nation where he was said that he was going to ask Congress for the authority to conduct a military strike against Syria in reaction to the CW attack for which United States intelligence clearly assigned the responsibility to Damascus. He said the goals were twofold: to deter and degrade the Syrian chemical weapons capability.

The next day, September 11, US Secretary of State John Kerry agreed to meet with Lavrov in Geneva to discuss the option of addressing Syrian CW via a UN mechanism.

So, it's just 20 days after that massive use. On September 12, a day later, Bashar al-Assad agreed to the Russian proposal. At the same time, Bashar al-Assad told the Russian TV at the time that they would accede to the CWC, and this was not because of American pressure.

On September 14, Lavrov and Kerry agreed in Geneva to a framework for the elimination of chemical weapons in Syria, and this laid out the path ahead which would use both the existing mechanism of the OPCW and the Security Council.

Lavrov and Kerry returned to their respective capitals, on September 14. Syria acceded to the CWC. Coincidentally at about the same time, Ake Sellstrom, the chief UN inspector who investigated the August 21 use of chemical weapons, issued his report.

On September 27, a month after that use, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 2118 which laid out the process and set the goals and schedule for getting rid of the Syrian CW

program – its munitions, its production capacity, and its agent. At the same time and carefully choreographed with that, the Executive Committee of the OPCW, the executive arm that implements the CWC, passed a decision laying out the groundwork, and rules that would apply to the Syrian disarmament.

On October 1, three days later, the first inspection team entered Damascus to begin its work.

On October 11, the Norwegians and the Nobel Committee decided to award the OPCW the Peace Prize for that year.

On October 16, the UN named a coordinator for the joint work of OPCW and the implementing organization set up under the Security Council and named a coordinator, Sigrid Kaag, who is a Dutch national, knows the UN system, and speaks Arabic.

On October 27, the Syrians submitted their declaration to the OPCW detailing their infrastructure and munitions and so forth. This declaration was judged to be in the ballpark by the experts at OPCW.

On October 30, the UN submitted its first status report to the Security Council. That report said basically that the initial team had accomplished its assigned mission – it established an inventory of CW sites, did a baseline survey of the facilities which Syria declared—visiting all of them except for two, (which may or may not have been important but they were outside of the secure zone). But they reported that they had accounted for and destroyed (in the terms of the UN, “functionally destroyed”) the Syrian capability to produce CW munitions.

I detail all of this because that’s progress at lightening speed for the international community. When you look at weapons destruction and arms control over the past several decades, how is it that between August 21 and October, basically just two months, an entire country’s CW capacity has been taken off of the table?

It’s an astonishing thing that something happened that quickly. Decades ago when I was involved in arms control during the Cold War, I had a sense that arms control came in two and possibly three types. There were those agreements that set useless limits, there were those that limited useless things, and then potentially there were agreements that limited useful things and set useful limits; but it was hard for me to find a lot of cases where that applied.

And looking at the Syrian CW case, why is it all of a sudden they agreed to do this? Why now? And now, chemical weapons have been almost taken off of the map. They remain in countries that are not a part of the CWC. Only leaving Egypt, North Korea, South Sudan, and Angola. There are 190 other countries that have acceded to the treaty. There are two that have signed but have not ratified, Israel and Burma. But we are now at a point where chemical weapons are kind of taken off of the map-- at least on the part of state actors. The residual problem is non-state actors, and that may be a big problem.

For discussion, let me just put a couple of questions out. I have my own answers, but they are open questions worth thinking about.

All of this is taking place in the context of a much broader problem. In fact, probably the only good thing that you can point to in respect to Syria and the whole region is that we now appear to be very close to getting rid of Syrian chemical weapons. That says nothing about the rest of the mess in the area. People argue about this: Does this progress on CW convey legitimacy to the Bashar al-Assad regime, and is that not a negative? How does this ripple on in its affect with Iran? Is it a good example? Is it a bad example? I don't know. It's an interesting debate in all those points. I would point to the role of Russia. Why is it that Russia did this? It's very interesting, and Lavrov as I described, he knows this stuff, he is very smart, he is, I shouldn't say this but he is one of the smartest people up at the UN in my experience. I don't think anybody other than Lavrov could have done this because he knew but the mechanisms from the Iraq experience, but he also knew Bashar al-Assad, he would not have proposed this if he didn't know that Bashar al-Assad was going to come through on this deal. So thinking about it, Russia all of a sudden is playing a very interesting and unique role. They understand the UN inspections and, critically they understand the Bashar regime.

Let me just mention one other thing to keep an eye. As I mentioned, there was a UN report on the CW use that took place on August 21<sup>st</sup>. It was interesting if you look at the annexes of that report. They have photographs and analysis of the munitions used. My guess is that those munitions will not match up with the munitions Syria has declared in its inventory. So what I'm suggesting here is that chemical munitions may not necessarily be fully under the control of state governments. I think there may be leakage over to nonstate actors. I think is an area of for one of your studies. As more information about the inspections comes out, I would keep an eye on this question of the munitions used on August 21 and those declared by the Syrian government to the OPCW.

One other thing, drawing on my Iraq experience, is that Iraq had and used a lot of chemical weapons during the war with Iran. Iran was conducting military offensives using tactics we came to call "human wave attacks", and chemical munitions really saved the Saddam regime at that point. So, going to my point of concerning whether these are useful or useless systems which we have taken off the map, I think there is an argument that Syria is giving up a potentially useful, albeit horrible, capability. Chemical munitions were very useful militarily to the Iraqi army during the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s. So, I find that in itself, this is interesting. It's not like we are taking a weapon off the table which is without utility. There may be alternative better ways of performing a military function, and maybe that's the case now; but it's an interesting point.

Finally, let me acknowledge that it sounds like I have already declared victory on this narrow Syrian CW problem, but we are not there yet. The chemical agents—some agent is in final form but most of the chemicals in Syria are the agent precursors—still must be either neutralized or removed from Syria. I think, however, that there is a path forward on that. Of course, there is a risk some rebel groups may see this process as not in their interest and may try to upset it one way or another. But I think that the dialogue which is going on between the United States, Russia, and some other European countries suggests that there is a pretty good path forward. Certainly by the standards which President Obama laid out in his speech to the nation which was to "deter and degrade the Syrian CW capacity", the process which we are going on now is going to achieve a greater degree of success on that score than the military strike would have.

## Greg Gross

Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense and senior staff member, U.S. Senate; currently, consultant on foreign policy and military affairs

The International Law Institute deserves special praise for taking on such a challenging mission of understanding the role that international law can play in confronting intractable issues like terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The issue before us today is extraordinarily complex. As Charles suggested, we could go on for many hours, yet only begin to touch the surface of this pernicious problem. Charles, you laid out—I think very well—a success of sorts regarding Syria’s chemical weapons, and let’s hope this narrow success continues. You raised important questions that I’m going to delve into because they reveal that this Syria deal does not look as good as a sole focus on Syria’s chemical weapons suggests.

First of all, specifically in the Syria case, we have to understand the broader motivational calculations that underlie the decision by Syria’s senior leadership to get rid of their chemical weapons. Clearly this was a strategic decision based on a calculation that they didn’t need these weapons to accomplish their objectives in fighting the insurgency in Syria. In other words, this agreement does nothing to end the conflict, or even to reduce the level of death and destruction we are seeing there.

And likewise, Russia’s motivation in advocating and facilitating Syria’s decision likely was, in part, to embarrass the Obama Administration. As you know, famously, Secretary of State John Kerry did not expect a positive answer to the proposal he made, in passing, that the U.S. would withdraw the threat of military force if Syria verifiably eliminated its chemical weapons program. I know John Kerry very well. He certainly is a man who does make a lot of proposals. This was an impulsive one that nevertheless did lead to this result—not a bad result, by the way—and I give the Obama administration credit for having pivoted as quickly as it did. However—while Syria may now be getting rid of its chemical weapons—thanks to this pivot Russia has now inserted itself into the Middle East in a way that, frankly, we have not seen since Henry Kissinger was Secretary of State in the 1970s, and this may have profound longer term strategic implications for our role in that critical region.

Secondly, from a more global perspective—including the nuclear weapons perspective—a victory by the Assad regime, with massive Iranian support, in Syria’s civil war will likely only increase Iran’s influence in the region and beyond. Such a victory will also most certainly energize Iran’s nuclear weapons aspirations. Remember that Syria reportedly had a nuclear weapons program that was wiped out through military action by Israel. We could probably say more about this at a classified level. This was not done through negotiations, and certainly not through non-proliferation regimes.

So let’s now talk more directly about that other topic interconnected with Syria, which is Iran. I’ll proceed by first pointing out where we’re at now with Iran. As everyone here knows, the negotiations are going on even yesterday and today. In November, we’re expecting more diplomatic meetings, I think it’s November 7 and 8, I believe, in Geneva. There have been

meetings of the International Atomic Energy Agency, technical, legal discussions with the Iranians. Within all of those discussions, of course, top Iranian leaders in Tehran continue to say they will not cease and desist the further production of enriched uranium, and everyone here knows what that means. In fact, there has been no reduction in the Iranian program since a pause of sorts that happened in the middle of the last decade during the George W. Bush Administration. Iran continues the program. There is no evidence that it will do so in the future.

Of course, people who know Iranian president Hassan Rouhani's history; who know the history of the current defense minister of Iran; who know the history of some of the other key figures now in power who were in the Khatami government of the 1990s—people who expressly said back then, and even earlier this year, things like: “a climate of negotiation,” quote unquote, allowed us to continue to improve our technologies. Those who know these people and their history have good reason to suspect Iran's motivations in the current negotiations. Obviously, there's more that the current administration knows than anyone here. I would hope that they understand that the U.S. in these negotiations must always focus on what the Iranians are actually doing, not what they are saying. Rouhani has a long history as a hardliner who talks sweetly; and, in fact, he and his kind in Iran have consistently bragged about their success in using sweet-talk to distract the West while simultaneously continuing their nuclear program.

So, what I would do, what I would recommend be done about Iran, because nuclear weapons are a game changer in the Middle East, is as follows:

First, it has to be understood that an Iranian nuclear weapon is a vastly worse thing than a North Korean nuclear weapon. I remember the debates back during the Clinton Administration on whether military action should have been taken against North Korea to destroy their nuclear weapons program. Some Republicans in Congress were advocating military strikes, while the Clinton Administration believed that negotiation, most tellingly with the '94 agreement, would solve the problem. It didn't solve the problem. North Korea now has nuclear weapons. Perhaps you could argue that we're learning to live with that problem, we're managing it, but maybe not; we'll see. What I would recommend, firstly, is that the administration work publicly to educate the American public about what's actually at stake for us with Iran. They did not do this with Afghanistan; they have to do it with Iran.

Secondly, we need to rebuild the coalition of regional powers—allies, partners and friends in the region—who share the desire to stop the Iranian nuclear program. Many of you who follow this closely understand how Obama's policies on Syria and Egypt have had the opposite effect. In the case of Syria, promising aid to the opposition but never delivering it, and making deals with the Russians that, in the view of many of our partners in the region, secure the Assad Regime.

Our policies on Egypt, which have caused fury on the part of key allies: we supported the Mubarak overthrow, we supported Morsi, and when Morsi was overthrown in the “non-coup-coup” we ended up cutting military aid to the Egyptians.

I'm hoping the Administration's public utterances about Egypt are belied by the actual discussions we are having with the military there. I hope their statements are more for show, because clearly the Egyptian military leaders who are now in power understand the problem of

Iran—and, by the way, they also support existing treaty obligations that Egypt has committed to for several decades, and they are acting to crack down on terrorist groups that have emerged in the Sinai under Morsi.

And, of course I should mention Iran itself, the way we are dealing with Iran. The current negotiations were undertaken with no consultation with our allies in the region, and this has caused great concern.

I would recommend that everyone here, if you haven't, take a look at David Ignatius's piece in the Washington Post last week; do so now. He describes the U.S.-Saudi relationship as a "crack up, a slow motion car wreck that has been on the way for more than two years," and two weeks ago, Saudi Arabia refused to take its U.N. Security Council seat, in what Prince Bandar—who was the ambassador here for many, many years and a friend of the United States—described as "a message for the United States and not the United Nations." We've already gone through the U.S.-Egyptian relationship. The United Arab Emirates does not trust the United States. Jordan has had high-level meetings with the King of Saudi Arabia over these concerns, and Jordan has made more subtle, quiet public statements of the sort that befit King Abdullah, who is known for being, like his father, a very diplomatic and effective sovereign.

And then there's the issue of Iraq, which is a complicated player in dealing with Iran. But Iraq, as we all here know, is facing challenges unprecedented since the surge—extreme levels of violence. Every day there are multiple bombings. Al Qaeda in Iraq is active in that country in a way it hasn't been for years. General Petraeus just had a piece in *Foreign Policy* where he lays out what he did in the surge, how it succeeded, and how the Iraqi government now had to do it all over again. I don't think they're going to be able to accomplish this on their own, and given the Obama Administration's failure to negotiate a new status-of-forces agreement, we are not in a position to provide the support Iraq will need, and that is a problem. Another damaged relationship is with Israel; but I'm not here going to go through the well-known problems in the U.S.-Israel relationship over Iran—they're obvious to anyone who follows the news.

And finally, concerning coalition building, is France and the United Kingdom, Europe in general. For reasons I don't understand, the administration has publicly criticized the United Kingdom for its handling of the Syria military action vote in the House of Commons. I happen to have worked in the House of Commons in the mid-'80s, and I learned quite a bit about how their political system works; and the vote that occurred in the House of Commons was a major blow to Cameron's domestic credibility. An ally and friend would have reached out to Cameron and provided him with political and diplomatic cover for such a serious political defeat for the Prime Minister, who is a friend of the United States. Instead, the White House publicly heaped scorn and ridicule on the United Kingdom and Cameron's leadership in failing to get that vote. That was a mistake. I lived in France for a number of years and I love the French. They can be great allies in places like Africa and elsewhere, but the United Kingdom's relationships and capacity, its military in the Middle East are second only to ours.

Thirdly, the Administration is trying to delay further congressionally imposed sanctions on Iran. Mark Kirk and others have been pushing this for quite some time in the Senate. The White House is now very publicly letting it be known that they are opposed to this; they want it

delayed. I would argue that instead the Administration should be using the threat of congressionally imposed tighter sanctions as a useful tool in their negotiations with Iran. A useful stick to incentivize the Iranians.

Fourthly, the Obama Administration has suggested that Iran's simply fulfilling its obligations is our "maximalist position." This is a quote coming from them in the negotiations. This approach, of course, is short-sighted and dangerous. To the contrary, the administration should instead be pushing strongly, in a committed way, for tough results; they should have clear goals that are tough in these negotiations. They shouldn't hold back at the outset, but I'm afraid they are holding back. Yes, the answer is 'negotiate'; but there's something often said: "Don't repeat the mistakes of history." It's a truism. We shouldn't repeat the mistakes of the past. But it is just as true that we all too often end up wrongly applying the lessons of the past to new, very different situations. And that's exactly what we're doing in the case of Iran. The Obama Administration is doing everything in its power not to repeat the mistakes of Iraq. It's doing everything in its power not to repeat the mistakes of what it argues was a unilateralist U.S. approach during the Bush Administration. But what they may now be doing is replacing the mistakes of Iraq with the mistakes of North Korea in 1994 where we had a final agreement to solve this problem, an agreement that North Korea violated almost immediately.

Two other quick points. First, missile defense for regional partners in the Middle East and Europe. We have to aggressively expand this program. This was something being pushed at the end of the last Bush Administration. I was involved in this to some extent, and we need to expand on that.

And we cannot push for further reductions in our strategic weapons capabilities. That is a bigger point. When we do so, we actually end up incentivizing small powers like Iran to go nuclear or further develop nuclear weapons. This is the opposite to how the Obama Administration has been approaching these talks with the Russians. If we were to further reduce our nuclear weapons stockpiles, allies like the United Kingdom and France may indeed follow our lead. But bad actors—like Iran, North Korea, and Syria until recently—will likely view such reductions as U.S. weakness that enhances the influence and prestige they gain from possessing even a small number of nuclear weapons.

So that's my quick take on the topic before us. Hopefully, it wasn't too long a beginning to my part of our discussion.

**Michael Eisenstadt**

Senior Fellow and Director, Military and Security Studies Program, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy

What I think I'll do is just toss out some thoughts about first of all Syrian motivation for agreeing to dismantle its chemical weapons (CW) program and the implications for Iran. In particular, what lessons did Iran draw from this episode and what are the likely implications in nuclear negotiations with Iran?

Immediately after Syria signaled that it would act in conformity with the framework agreement between the United States and Russia, Secretary of State John Kerry said that the credible threat of American force was the key factor in accounting for the Syria decision. I think it's hard to avoid the conclusion that it probably played a very important role. What's odd is that at the time that Syria accepted the Russian plan, it seemed clear to at least many people in Washington and the United States (U.S.) that the U.S. was already not going to strike by then. So there seemed to have been a disconnect between the Syria decisions and the actual political reality in Washington. How does one account for that? I would say that it was due in part to a delay in comprehension on what was going on in Washington; maybe it was a failure to understand how the U.S. system works, that maybe Syrian President Bashar al-Assad thought that U.S. President Barack Obama would act anyhow whether or not the public or the Congress was opposed to it. And Assad probably was under a lot of pressure from the Russians who were trying to convince him that this was actually a pretty good deal for him. And based on what Assad has said in interviews since then he has probably concluded CW were more of a liability than an asset at this point. He found that limited use of CW produces limited benefits, while massive use invites foreign military intervention.

It had also become clear that conventional arms are the true weapons of mass destruction in Syria. In addition, agreeing to the Russian plan ensured that the U.S. had a compelling interest in the survival of the Assad regime for at least as long as the CW disarmament process continued. So I think from Assad's point of view, the agreement gave him a new lease on life. Agreeing to disarm provided him an insurance policy against an American strike and at least a lease on life for the duration of this process. Also, I think it is quite possible that the Russians promised to replace Syria's military losses if they signed onto the agreement. I think it's possible that the Russians said, "Look, you are going to win this fight conventionally, and we will replenish your conventional weapons to make sure that you prevail. A bit of speculation on my part, but I think we've seen enough in the media to believe that this may have happened.

Although I would also say that a shortage of weapons is not Assad's biggest problem. A lot of his army has melted away; he can only rely on three or four divisions. So the regime has equipment from about eight other divisions which are sitting unused. Some of it has been looted, and it has been taken by the opposition, and some might not be operational, due to lack of maintenance. But what they really need, is reliable, competent manpower. In the interim, however, that has been provided by Hezbollah and Iran. But maybe the promise of additional arms played a role as well.

Finally, while we can't rule out cheating by Assad, we should not assume he will inevitably cheat on this agreement. It provides him with a lot of benefits—as it has enabled him to continue starving out large numbers of Syrians and continuing with the conventional fight. So I'll just say again that things might change. He might find reason to renege later on disarmament if he can get away with it, but don't assume he will cheat. Much will depend on the kind of expectations the U.S. creates with regard to the price of renegeing.

In terms of the implications of these developments in Syria for Iran and the lessons that Iran drew from them, there was concern at the time of the American stand-down that this would harm America's ability to achieve an agreement with Iran with regard to nuclear weapons. In fact, even the president said to the Iranians, "Don't draw the wrong conclusions." indicating that what the U.S. did in Syria doesn't necessarily apply to Iran, and that all options are still on the table. My feeling is that for a long time now, Iran has been skeptical of the likelihood of an American strike, and what happened in Syria only deepened this skepticism. This was a preexisting problem, however, the result of 30 years of American policy towards Iran, where the main American approach to dealing with Iranian terrorism has been American restraint. The U.S. has never retaliated militarily for Iranian terrorism—and perhaps that was appropriate, but this has led Tehran to believe that it can get away with certain things without dealing with the prospect of military retaliation. The U.S. had a credibility problem to begin with, and I think the recent Syrian episode compounded it.

Iran is less worried about a U.S. military strike than what they call American soft warfare—what they see as American efforts to undermine the ideological underpinnings of the regime and Iranian culture with American culture. For in the end, if you can't raise a new generation of Iranians who buy into the ideology of the regime, the regime will ultimately collapse and the revolution will ultimately fail. That's what they are really fearful of. I think no administration has really, whether the current one or previous ones, recognized this fact or shown a willingness to act on it because it would require a very different policy approach to Iran that we are not really prepared for—intellectually or organizationally. Moreover, some people have raised the possibility that since we demonstrated in Syria that we are willing to cut deals with regimes that many previously thought we were trying to get rid of, maybe Tehran will conclude that we are ready to cut a deal with the Islamic republic? I would argue that will likely draw another lesson Syria as Libya redux. In other words that just as we made a tactical decision to temporarily make peace with Libyan leader Moammar Gaddafi in order to disarm him, only to eventually work for his overthrow when this became possible, likewise we will divest Syria of its chemical weapons, and then work to overthrow the regime when that becomes possible.

Let me make my final points here with regard to Iranian redlines in the ongoing nuclear negotiations. We don't know the details of what Iran presented to the P5+1 in their meetings a couple of weeks ago, but I think you can draw some inferences from what they have been saying publicly about what their red lines are. They've talked, reportedly, about the recognition of Iran's inalienable right to enrich. They have said no more suspending enrichment. They said that actually building a bomb is a red line for them--that they don't have the intention to build one and that there is a nuclear fatwa that would prevent them from doing so, and that in order to reassure the P5+1 on this point, they are willing to agree to greater transparency to build confidence. Fatwas, however, can be issued and rescinded or modified according to

circumstances, so I don't take that as an assurance at face value. But that's what they have been trying to convince the world; that this is a red line for them.

Finally, not acknowledging a possible military dimension to their program is a red line for them. They are saying that allegations that Iran had a nuclear weapons research and development effort are a bunch of lies in order to justify sanctions on Iran. For this reason, it would be very, very hard for them to admit to having done military research and development related to their nuclear program in the past. It is always hard for countries that had clandestine WMD programs to come clean, but this to them is so tightly woven into their narrative of grievance, that I think it will be very hard for them to do so.

What does this mean in practical terms? I think that Iran will insist on some type of centrifuge program, and they might accept limits on the number of centrifuges and the percentage of enrichment they can do, but not the quality of centrifuges. In this way, they can swap quality for quantity with regard to their centrifuge program, because right now there are centrifuges in use that are 100 times more efficient than the ones that Iran has and the U.S. and the Europeans are developing centrifuges that are 300-500 times as efficient. So, you have to think that if they are allowed to keep 1,000 or 3,000 centrifuges, twenty or thirty years down the road they could potentially have a very potent enrichment capability with 1,000 or 3,000 of these much more efficient centrifuges. Likewise, with regard to the additional protocols I mentioned before, Rouhani has talked about greater transparency, but consistent with international law and current universally applicable regulations. So Iran might sign an additional protocol, but an additional protocol alone is not enough, and any kind of monitoring regime has to be much more intrusive than permitted by the additional protocol. One principle of Iranian arms control policy is pushing back against what they perceive as discriminatory provisions. And any kind of additional protocols plus from their point of view would be discriminatory; Iran would be the only country in the world subjected to that kind of monitoring. Therefore, they are unlikely to accept the kind of monitoring that would be necessary to be sure they are not trying to secretly build a bomb.

So in short, I think it will be very hard to get a deal, but who would have thought we would have gotten a deal on Syria? But let's see how that goes. It's too soon to call that a policy success.

**Dr. Milton Hoenig**

Nuclear physicist and coauthor with Professor Yonah Alexander of *The New Iranian Leadership: Ahmadinejad, Terrorism, Nuclear Ambition, and the Middle East* (Praeger Security International) and *Super Terrorism: Biological, Chemical, and Nuclear* (Transnational Publishers)

I will start by noting that Weapons of Mass Destruction depend on both materials and delivery systems.

The Chemical Weapons Convention concentrates heavily on isolating materials and destroying them--as we see now with the 1,000 tons of chemical precursors declared in Syria. Materials are the key. No chemical, bio, or nuclear materials means no WMDs to deliver.

Nevertheless, in the nuclear arms reduction treaties between the United States and Russia, the focus is on reducing delivery systems. That leaves the nuclear materials to be reckoned with. The fissile materials—uranium-235 and plutonium – can't be easily destroyed, but they can be diluted, isolated, and guarded.

Under the strictures of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, in states agreeing not to pursue nuclear weapons, a great deal of effort is spent by the International Atomic Energy Agency to verify that nuclear materials and facilities are used only for peaceful purposes, mainly to fuel research reactors and power plants.

The security of highly enriched uranium and plutonium left over in Russia from the Cold War has long been a concern. In 2010 and 2012, at the behest of the United States, Nuclear Security Summits were held to consider this matter and others related to securing the global accumulation of nuclear materials usable for nuclear weapons. A third Summit is scheduled for The Hague in 2014.

Over the past 2 decades, in the just completed Megatons to Megawatts program, 500 tons of leftover Russian highly enriched uranium have been diluted with natural uranium and blended down to low-enriched material sold to the United States, where it has been the source of half the fuel for our nuclear power plants.

Weapon-usable nuclear materials carry a persistent threat, as developing technologies make their manufacture and misuse ever easier.

The United States is trying to promote a policy that countries building their first nuclear power reactors will agree to not accompany them with local uranium enrichment plants or fuel reprocessing plants. The United States does this through so-called “123” agreements that place restrictions on the subsequent use of U.S. origin fuel and technology.

For example, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), which has contracted for South Korea to build 4 nuclear reactors, now has a 123 agreement with the United States in which the UAE agrees to abide by the “golden rule”—no accompanying enrichment or reprocessing plants in the UAE. Fuel is to be bought from foreign suppliers.

South Korea, itself, in a standoff with the United States, wants a revised 123 agreement to allow uranium enrichment and fuel reprocessing, not only indigenously, but as a sweetener to accompany its sale of power reactors to other countries. This would further the spread of fuel enrichment and reprocessing throughout the world rather than encourage the ultimate nonproliferation goal of just a handful of multinational fuel cycle centers.

South Korea claims that the dry reprocessing technology it wants to use—so-called pyroprocessing—which was developed at the Argonne National Laboratory in Chicago—is proliferation resistant because the recovered plutonium is accompanied by other fission products—transuranics and lanthanides—that would provide a radiation shield against seizure by terrorists. But this shielding won't deter a dedicated proliferator, who can simply use the long-proven PUREX process to separate out the plutonium in a vat of acid.

Enrichment and reprocessing technologies are potentially dangerous things. Look at Iran.

At the Natanz centrifuge enrichment plant, Iran enriches the gaseous molecule of uranium and fluorine called uranium hexafluoride. Iran is producing 240 kilograms of 3.5% enriched uranium hexafluoride per month in 9,000 operating centrifuges. This is appropriate for power reactor fuel, but is not being used for that purpose. Instead, as of August 2013, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) reports, a stockpile of over 6,000 kilograms has accumulated—enough for 4 to 5 nuclear weapons, if further enriched to 90% weapon grade. That would take a few months for a single weapon.

Iran also has been enriching uranium to 20%—both at Natanz and at the small enrichment plant at Fordow, built in the side of a mountain. Iran says that this uranium is to fuel its small research reactor in Tehran. But it has been careful to keep the supply on hand at about 180 kilograms, below the red line drawn last year by Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu at 240 kilograms of 20% enriched uranium hexafluoride, the amount Iran would need for a weapon, if further enriched to weapon grade—something requiring just a couple of weeks' time.

Iran is building the IR-40 heavy-water reactor at Arak, touted as being for medical isotope production. But it could also produce 2 bombs worth of plutonium a year that could be separated in a quickly constructed small reprocessing plant, making the reactor a prime target for an Israeli military strike before fuel loading starts.

Also, Iran could have concealed secret centrifuge plants. The point is that a clandestinely operating centrifuge plant has no identifying signatures. It could house tens of thousands of spinning centrifuge machines in an average size facility. The plant does not have any unusual requirements for electric power. And it does not emit any identifying chemical gases or vapors to the environment.

Even more dangerous is using laser isotope separation. Iran has admitted to experimenting with this for enriching uranium, but it won't supply details to the IAEA. Laser isotope separation—L-I-S for short—is the next big proliferation worry. In the United States, GE-Hitachi has been licensed by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to build a commercial laser enrichment plant in North Carolina using the successful Australian SILEX process. Uranium enrichment in a clandestine LIS facility would be fast and difficult to detect.

In the negotiations now going on between Iran and the five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany, the elephant in the room is Iran's nuclear-related activities with "possible military dimensions," PMD's for short. These past activities have been cited by the IAEA and beg further explanation.

For example, the IAEA has evidence of experiments on the symmetric placement of detonators on a hemisphere of high explosive—an arrangement that would be appropriate only for creating the converging shock wave in an implosion nuclear weapon. Also, there is evidence of work on the design of a compact warhead to fit into the nose cone of a Shahab-3 ballistic missile. In the documents obtained by the IAEA, Iran never mentions the word, "nuclear," but the nuclear weapon context is unavoidable.

In addition, the IAEA would like to investigate explosives tests in a chamber at the Parchin military site to which it has been denied access while the site has been thoroughly cleaned and stripped of its possibly contaminated top soil.

Monday and Tuesday, in Vienna, experts from the IAEA and Iran met again to try working out a structured approach to answering the IAEA's questions. A joint statement described the talks as "very productive." Getting answers to the PMD questions will be important for achieving successful negotiations at a higher level.

Another matter that is likely to come up in a negotiated agreement is the need for enhanced safeguards on the surviving elements of Iran's enrichment program. These would go beyond the Additional Protocol to its Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement with the IAEA. Iran adhered to the Additional Protocol between 2004 and 2006, allowing inspections of suspect nuclear sites. Enhanced safeguards would allow more frequent inspections, remote camera monitoring, and more extensive environmental monitoring, among things to increase transparency.

Enhanced verification is strategic to a Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone, should that ever come about. Despite the vast divide between Israel and its Middle East neighbors, it is time to start building confidence. The meeting in Helsinki sought by Jaakko Laajava, the Finish Under-Secretary of State, would be a good place to start this difficult task, no matter what the magnitude of the differences. Diplomatic efforts that led to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) show that progress can be made without first settling larger political conflicts and disputes.

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Established in 1994, the activities of IUCTS are guided by an International Research Council that offers recommendations for study on different aspects of terrorism, both conventional and unconventional. IUCTS is cooperating academically with universities and think tanks in over 40 countries, as well as with governmental, intergovernmental, and nongovernmental bodies.

### International Center for Terrorism Studies (ICTS)

Established in 1998 by the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, in Arlington, VA, ICTS administers IUCTS activities and sponsors an internship program in terrorism studies.

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