

# THE SUNflower



## NUCLEAR AGE PEACE FOUNDATION

Issue #177 - April 2012

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## Perspectives

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### **For Nuclear Security Beyond Seoul, Eradicate Land-Based 'Doomsday' Missiles**

by David Krieger and Daniel Ellsberg

President Obama and other world leaders gathered at the Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul, South Korea, this week to address threats posed by unsecured nuclear material. If Mr. Obama is truly concerned about nuclear safety, he should seriously consider doing away with the 450 inter-continental ballistic missiles deployed and ready to fire at Russia on a moment's notice.

Last month we were among 15 protesters who were arrested in the middle of the night at Vandenberg Air Force Base, some 70 miles north of Santa Barbara, Calif. We were protesting the imminent test flight of a Minuteman III inter-continental ballistic missile.

To read more, [click here](#).

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### **Try a Little Nuclear Sanity**

by Lawrence Wittner

On February 8, 2012, Congressman Edward Markey (D-MA) took to the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives to introduce the Smarter Approach to Nuclear Expenditures Act (H.R. 3974). This SANE Act would cut \$100 billion from the U.S. nuclear weapons budget over the next ten years by reducing the current fleet of U.S. nuclear submarines, delaying the purchase of new nuclear submarines, reducing the number of ICBMs, delaying a new bomber program, and ending the nuclear mission of air bombers.

Our leaders in Washington could join Representative Markey and his Congressional allies in cutting back the U.S. government's vast and expensive nuclear doomsday machine and using the savings to provide for the needs of the American people. Surely it's time to try a little nuclear sanity.

To read more, [click here](#).

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### **Why Not Get the Law and Politics Right in Iran?**

by Richard Falk

In his important article in the *New York Times* on March 17, 2012, James Risen summarized the consensus of the intelligence community as concluding that Iran abandoned its program to develop nuclear weapons in 2003, and that no persuasive evidence exists that it has departed from this decision.

It might have been expected that such news based on the best evidence that billions spent to get the most reliable possible assessments of such sensitive security issues would produce a huge sigh of relief in Washington, but on the contrary it has been totally ignored, including by the highest officers in the government. The president has not even bothered to acknowledge this electrifying conclusion that should have put the brakes on what appears to be a slide toward a disastrous regional war. We must ask why such a prudent and positive course of action has not been adopted, or at least explored.

To read more, [click here](#).

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## Nuclear Disarmament

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### Obama Promises to Seek New Nuclear Reductions with Russia

President Obama has promised to engage in negotiations with Russia for deeper cuts in each country's nuclear arsenal. Speaking before the Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul, President Obama said, "We can already say with confidence that we have more nuclear weapons than we need."

He continued, "Going forward, we'll continue to seek discussions with Russia on a step we have never taken before - reducing not only our strategic nuclear warheads, but also tactical weapons and warheads in reserve."

The president is expected to address the issue with his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, when the two meet in May. Obama will likely face strong opposition from Congressional Republicans, who already accuse him of breaking promises to "modernize" the US nuclear weapons complex in exchange for ratification of the New START Treaty last year.

Spetalnick, Matt and Laurence, Jeremy, "Obama Vows to Pursue Further Nuclear Cuts with Russia," [Reuters](#), March 26, 2012.

## Nuclear Proliferation

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### Nuclear Talks with Iran Scheduled for April

The "P5 plus one" (United States, Russia, France, China, United Kingdom and Germany) are planning to meet on April 13 to discuss Iran's nuclear program. The parties have not met for talks since January 2011.

A lack of progress during a new set of discussions with Iran would leave little room for further dialogue or for curbing momentum toward armed confrontation, one U.S. government source said. A number of high-level department insiders are pessimistic about the possibility of further talks succeeding.

"Nuclear Talks with Iran Scheduled for April: Report," [Global Security Newswire](#), March 21, 2012.

## Nuclear Insanity

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### Montana Senator Sees Land-Based Missiles as a Stabilizer

Senator Max Baucus (D-MT) said that Montana's congressional delegation would not allow a reduction in the number of Minuteman III Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles in silos in the state. Sen. Baucus went on to explain the three main reasons behind this decision: the weapons are stabilizers; they could "hit anywhere quickly;" and they are more cost-effective than other nuclear weapons.

Montana's congressional delegation stands behind Sen. Baucus in the belief that intercontinental ballistic missiles "virtually guarantee we'll never have a nuclear war."

The op-ed by David Krieger and Daniel Ellsberg at the beginning of this edition of *The Sunflower* shows just how dangerous these missiles really are.

Hall, Ryan, "Baucus Says he Won't Support Cutting U.S. Warheads," [Great Falls Tribune](#), March 9, 2012.

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## Missile Defense

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### **Russian Foreign Minister Responds to Open Letter**

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has responded to an open letter on missile defense issues that was coordinated by numerous individuals and organizations, including the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation. The letter addressed the brewing conflict between the United States and Russia over U.S. and NATO plans to deploy missile defenses in Eastern Europe.

In his reply to NAPF President David Krieger, Mr. Lavrov held open the possibility of finding a diplomatic solution to the conflict. He said, "Despite the growing hardship we do not close the door either for continuing the dialogue with the US and NATO on missile defense issues or for a practical cooperation in this field."

To read the full response, [click here](#).

To read the original open letter on missile defense issues, [click here](#).

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### **New Delays in Missile Defense Testing**

U.S. Defense Department officials have pushed back the next missile intercept test from July to December 2012. The postponement was met with criticism, but the officials argue that they need more time to prepare because they do not want a repeat of the 2010 failure.

In December 2010 an Exoatmospheric Kill Vehicle (EKV), designed to destroy incoming enemy ballistic missiles outside the atmosphere, failed to hit an incoming "dummy" warhead. That was the eighth failure in 15 tests of the system.

Rep. Loretta Sanchez (D-CA), ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee, said, "In the GMD program, which stands at about a 45 percent test success rate, it means determining the causes of the recent test failures, and [ensuring] that they're adequately resolved and corrected before buying additional costly interceptors."

Grossman, Elaine, "U.S. Officials Defend Delay for Next Missile Intercept Test," [Global Security Newswire](#), March 7, 2012.

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## Nuclear Testing

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### **UK Nuclear Test Veterans Denied Compensation**

In a 4-3 majority vote, the UK Supreme Court ruled against a class action lawsuit brought by over 1,000 nuclear test veterans against the Ministry of Defense (MoD). The ex-servicemen argued that they suffered from various health issues as a result of 21 nuclear tests carried out by the British government in Australia and Christmas Island in the 1950s. Among the health issues were cancer, skin defects, and fertility problems.

The Supreme Court ruled in favor of MoD because, they believed, the nuclear test veterans' claims were time-barred. The Supreme Court found that it would be difficult for the veterans to establish a solid correlation between the nuclear tests and their ill-health because of the time that had elapsed, therefore ruled against them.

Afterward, the MoD said in a statement: "The Ministry of Defense recognizes the debt of gratitude we have to the servicemen who took part in the nuclear tests. They were important tests that helped to keep this nation secure at a difficult time in terms of nuclear technology." After fighting in the courts for over two years, nuclear test veterans say they will continue to seek "justice and recognition."

"Veterans Lose Nuclear Weapons Test Damages Bid," [BBC News](#), March 14, 2012.

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## UN Human Rights Expert Visits Marshall Islands

United Nations Special Rapporteur Calin Georgescu visited the Marshall Islands from March 26-30 to assess the impact on human rights of the nuclear tests conducted by the United States between 1946 and 1958. This was the first-ever trip to the Marshall Islands by an independent expert of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

"This visit will give my mandate the chance to gather lessons learnt in this field of nuclear testing and ensure accountability in such cases," Mr. Georgescu said prior to his visit. "It will also be an exceptional opportunity to assess how the Marshallese peoples' basic rights including the right to food, adequate housing and health have been affected."

"Marshall Islands / Toxic Waste: First Fact-Finding Mission By UN Human Rights Expert On Hazardous Waste," [Scoop](#), March 22, 2012.

## Nuclear Waste

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### High Cesium Levels Found Near Los Angeles

High levels of radioactive cesium were found outside of Los Angeles on the grounds of the Santa Susanna Field Laboratory, where an experimental nuclear reactor suffered a meltdown in 1959. New samples taken by the Environmental Protection Agency have found that cesium levels in parts of the complex are nearly 1,000 times the benchmark used by the agency.

The U.S. Department of Energy had declared this area suitable for farming and housing in the 1980s after a superficial cleanup. Demands from local residents resulted in the new tests. The EPA now plans to complete decontamination by 2017.

"High Levels of Cesium Found at Former Nuclear Lab Outside L.A.," [The Mainichi Daily News](#), March 9, 2012.

## Resources

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### Summer Course: Hiroshima and Peace

Hiroshima City University will offer its intensive summer course, Hiroshima and Peace, once again this year. The course, open to both undergraduate and graduate students from around the world, consists of lectures, discussions, visits to significant sites in Hiroshima, testimony from a survivor of the atomic bombing and participation in the August 6 Peace Memorial Ceremony.

The course will take place from July 31 to August 9, 2012. For more information and to apply, [click here](#).

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## Global Day of Action on Military Spending

April 17, 2012, marks the second annual Global Day of Action on Military Spending, with actions taking place in more than 30 countries.

Global military spending reached over \$1.6 trillion in 2010, and on April 17th, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) will release the data for 2011. Almost certainly, they'll announce that military spending went up.

[Click here](#) to watch a video promoting the Global Day of Action on Military Spending.

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## Nuclear Budget Busters

The Alliance for Nuclear Accountability, a national network of groups from communities downwind and downstream from U.S. nuclear sites, has published a new report entitled "Nuclear Budget Busters: The U.S. Department of Energy's Riskiest, Most Unaccountable Projects." It details seven projects that have runaway costs and pose unacceptable risks in terms of public health, safety, the environment and nuclear proliferation.

To read the full report, [click here](#).

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## Foundation Activities

### NAPF at the United Nations

The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation will be strongly represented at the 2012 Nonproliferation Treaty PrepCom in Vienna, Austria, from April 30 - May 8. The Foundation will convene a seminar at the Vienna International Centre inside the United Nations complex on Thursday, May 3, addressing the topic, "The Consequences of Continued Failure of Article VI of the NPT."

The Foundation is also publishing a briefing paper for the conference that will be available soon on our homepage. With a donation of \$100 to NAPF, you will enable us to get this important briefing paper into the hands of 20 UN ambassadors. [Click here](#) to donate online today.

NAPF President David Krieger, Director of Programs Rick Wayman, Board member Robert Laney, Geneva representative Christian Ciobanu and New York representative Alice Slater will participate in numerous meetings with UN representatives and NGOs during the two-week conference.

In addition, Geneva representative Christian Ciobanu is coordinating a delegation of 40 European youth interested in learning about diplomacy and nuclear disarmament issues, all of whom will be attending the PrepCom. He is also coordinating a video exhibition on youth and indigenous people's aspirations for a nuclear weapon-free world. To submit your own short video for the exhibition, [click here](#).

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### Nuclear Issues in Washington, DC

NAPF Director of Programs Rick Wayman attended the Alliance for Nuclear Accountability's 24th annual DC Days lobbying event. Over 70 grassroots activists from around the United States came together to bring concerns about nuclear weapons and nuclear waste to members of the Obama administration and Congress.

The activists held over 90 meetings with key staffers, members of Congress and administration officials. ANA also presented awards to Rep. Edward Markey (D-MA) for his support of nuclear disarmament and for introducing the SANE Act, and to Rep. Loretta Sanchez (D-CA) for her support of the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, which oversees safety at the nation's many nuclear sites.

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## Quotes

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"You can bomb their facilities, but you cannot bomb their knowledge. If you were to bomb Iranian facilities, there will be a lesson for Iran - to develop nuclear weapons."

-- **Mohamed ElBaradei**, Nobel Peace Laureate and former director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency

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"While the nuclear weapons program receives a significant budget increase, I am concerned about funding shortfalls for nonproliferation activities, which address the highest risk to the United States - nuclear terrorism."

-- **Sen. Dianne Feinstein** (D-CA)

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## Editorial Team

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David Krieger  
Cristina Medina  
Carol Warner  
Rick Wayman