

## Press Release

### **U.S., Russia Reaffirm Commitment to Dispose of Enough Plutonium for 17,000 Nuclear Weapons** *Jul 13, 2011*

*Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement enters into force*



WASHINGTON, D.C. – The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) today announced the formal entry into force of the amended Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement (PMDA) after an

exchange of diplomatic notes this afternoon by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov at the State Department. The United States and Russia reaffirmed their commitment to each dispose of no less than 34 metric tons each of their surplus weapon-grade plutonium by irradiating the plutonium as mixed oxide (MOX) fuel in nuclear power reactors. The material to be disposed under the Agreement is enough for 17,000 nuclear weapons.

Over the last year, the amended PMDA has been provisionally applied by the U.S. and Russian governments and has now been ratified by action of the Russian Duma and by Russian President Dmitri Medvedev's approval on June 3, 2011. The two countries have today exchanged diplomatic notes bringing the agreement into full effect.

"This milestone marks important progress on U.S. and Russian commitments to eliminate nuclear weapons material," said Laura Holgate, Senior Director, WMD Terrorism & Threat Reduction at National Security Council. "Such eliminations are the ultimate in improving nuclear security, as they permanently remove the threat of theft or misuse of nuclear material, at the same time reducing the burden of securing materials."

"I am pleased that the United States and Russia are formally moving forward with their plutonium disposition partnership," said Anne Harrington, NNSA's Deputy Administrator for Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation. "As we work to implement the unprecedented nuclear security agenda outlined by Presidents Obama and Medvedev, NNSA looks forward to working with the Russian State Atomic Energy Corporation 'Rosatom' to implement the next phase of cooperation under this amended Agreement."

First signed in September 2000, the PMDA was amended in April 2010, by a Protocol signed by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on the margins of President Obama's Nuclear Security Summit in Washington D.C. This Protocol codified a revised Russian plutonium disposition program based on using fast reactors for irradiating the plutonium and operating under strict nonproliferation conditions. According to the amended PMDA, the United States will provide up to \$400 million to support plutonium disposition in Russia, subject to future appropriations, and Russia will fund the balance of its disposition program, estimated to be more than \$3 billion. NNSA and its Russian counterpart, Rosatom, will also jointly seek international contributions for Russia's program.

To implement U.S. plutonium disposition, NNSA is overseeing the construction of three major facilities at the Savannah River Site: the MOX Fuel Fabrication Facility; the Waste Solidification Building; and a pit disassembly and conversion capability. At the same time, Russia is making significant investments in its

MOX fuel fabrication capabilities and construction of the BN-800 fast reactor (both currently scheduled to become operational in 2014). Under the amended PMDA, both countries will begin disposition in 2018.

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Established by Congress in 2000, NNSA is a semi-autonomous agency within the U.S. Department of Energy responsible for enhancing national security through the military application of nuclear science in the nation's national security enterprise. NNSA maintains and enhances the safety, security, reliability, and performance of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile without nuclear testing; reduces the global danger from weapons of mass destruction; provides the U.S. Navy with safe and effective nuclear propulsion; and responds to nuclear and radiological emergencies in the U.S. and abroad.



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