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US to Help Russia on Nuclear Control

WASHINGTON (AP) - The White House said Thursday it would expand programs to help Russia keep nuclear weapons material under control and to speed up installation of detection devices at U.S. and Russian border posts.

A Bush administration review reflects rising concern over terrorists' acquiring nuclear material from loosely managed Russian stockpiles and smuggling it over U.S. and Russian borders.

Some analysts have questioned whether Russian officials know exactly how many nuclear weapons and how much weapons-grade material are stored in Russia.

More than 30 U.S. programs, with a combined budget of about \$750 million, were reviewed, and a summary of the conclusions was released by the White House. Most of the programs were found to work well, the statement said.

However, the review proposed that the State Department and Energy Department find a less costly and more efficient way to help Russia dispose of excess plutonium, a key element of nuclear weapons.

The program is expected to cost about \$2 billion by the time it is completed several years from now.

The project to end Russian production of weapons-grade plutonium will be transferred to the Energy Department from the Defense Department and several programs to help Russia shutter nuclear weapons factories and install nuclear detection devices at border posts will be merged.

At the same time, programs to find jobs for Russian nuclear weapons scientists are to be expanded. The aim is to limit any incentive to sell dangerous material to suspect groups or nations.

And the United States will work with Russia to destroy tons of nerve gas at Shchuch'ye.

The decisions from the administration's review will be implemented vigorously, the statement said.

In a separate development, Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld said the results of a review of U.S. nuclear weapons programs would be announced next week.

He said it would lay the groundwork for a new approach to strategic deterrence - one that will include "truly deep reductions" in U.S. arsenals combined with deployment of an anti-missile defense capable of protecting the United States, allies and friends from attack.

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