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## Fact Sheet

Office of the Spokesperson

**Washington, DC**

**August 26, 2011**

Libya has been a country of proliferation concern and attention by the United States for many years. Since the beginning of the crisis in Libya this year, the United States has focused on the potential that increased insecurity on the ground could increase proliferation risks, including with the country's remaining stockpiles of uranium, chemical agents, and conventional weapons. We have remained intensely focused on preventing proliferation as the crisis has evolved. Monitoring relevant facilities and supporting Libya's efforts to secure those arms and materials have been and remain key priorities.

The United States has stressed the importance of securing these materials and arms stockpiles and has taken action to prevent their proliferation. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, Assistant Secretary Jeffrey Feltman, Ambassador Gene Cretz, and Special Representative Chris Stevens have raised these issues with Libya's Transitional National Council (TNC), which has made clear that it recognizes the importance of securing all proliferation-sensitive materials and weapons.

Libya is a state-party to nonproliferation agreements, including the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention, and the Biological Weapons Convention. We welcome the assurances that we have received from the TNC that Libya will meet all of its international commitments. The United States is supporting Libya in upholding these obligations and stands ready to assist in securing or safely eliminating materials and arms that pose proliferation risks.

### Nuclear-Related Sites

- All sensitive elements of Libya's nuclear program, including those received from the A.Q. Khan network, were removed in early 2004.
- Libya's remaining inventory of highly enriched uranium was completely removed as of December 2009, marking the end of a five-year effort to convert the research reactor at the Tajura nuclear research center to run on low enriched uranium fuel. Nevertheless, we continue to closely monitor the facility.
- We also continue to monitor Libya's stockpile of uranium yellowcake. This material would need to go through an extensive industrial process, including enrichment, before it could be used in building a bomb. Such processes do not exist in Libya.

### Chemical Agents

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- All of Libya's remaining chemical stocks – 11.3 metric tons of mustard agent and 845 metric tons of chemical precursors – are located together in non weapons-useable form in a remote area far removed from the fighting, inside steel containers placed within bunkers accountable to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). Based on all our current information, we assess that this facility is secure.
- These extremely hazardous materials are in a bulk form, and require a high-level of expertise, sophistication, and proper equipment in order to utilize the bulk agent in a usable weapon. We continue to monitor these materials.
- The Qadhafi regime destroyed the aerial bombs manufactured to deliver its chemical weapons in 2004 under the supervision of international inspectors from the Chemical Weapons Convention implementing organization, the OPCW.

#### Ballistic Missiles/Scuds

- Prior to the crisis, Libya had an estimated force of 400 aging Scud ballistic missiles, a majority of which are assessed not to be operational.
- These missiles have a limited range of 300 kilometers.

#### Conventional Weapons

- Since the beginning of the crisis, we have been actively engaged with our allies and partners to help prevent the proliferation of Libya's conventional weapons. Our main concern is Libya's inventory of shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles, also known as Man-Portable Air-Defense Systems (MANPADS).
- The United States is working with NATO to provide all known locations of such weapons so that the TNC can secure and eventually dispose of these weapons.
- The United States is providing \$3 million in support to two NGOs, MAG International and the Swiss Foundation for Demining to recruit and train staff local explosive ordnance disposal teams. The teams have been operating in the east since May, but will move to areas in western Libya as the security situation improves. These teams also are providing assistance and guidance to the TNC in the routine recovery of potentially unstable munitions and classifying these for safe storage or destruction. To date teams have cleared over 450,000 square meters of land and destroyed over 5.8 tons of munitions, including five MANPADS.
- The State Department-led MANPADS Task Force has led two teams of experts to the region where they consulted with Libya's neighbors over ways to counter possible proliferation of MANPADS and conventional weapons. The inter-agency teams visited Mauritania, Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, Mali, Morocco, Niger, and Chad.
- The State Department and other international actors have emphasized to the Transitional National Council that the Libya's future leaders must effectively secure MANPADS and other conventional weapons. In early August, State Department experts met with TNC representatives in Malta to convey concerns over potential MANPADS proliferation.

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