

Board of Governors

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Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Syrian Arab Republic

Report by the Director General

1. On 19 November 2008, the Director General reported to the Board of Governors on the implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Syrian Arab Republic (Syria) (GOV/2008/60). The Board requested the Director General to keep it informed of developments, as appropriate. This report covers relevant developments since that date.

A. Chronology of Events

2. As indicated in the Director General's previous report, analysis of the environmental samples taken from the Dair Alzour site revealed a significant number of anthropogenic natural uranium particles (i.e. produced as a result of chemical processing). Syria has stated that the origin of the uranium particles was the missiles used to destroy the building (GOV/2008/60, para. 8).

3. In order to confirm Syria's assertion about the possible source of uranium particles found at Dair Alzour, the Agency requested Syria, in a letter dated 26 November 2008, to provide access to the site (including the water treatment plant at the site), and any other locations where the debris from the building and equipment, and any salvaged equipment removed from Dair Alzour, had been and/or was currently located, so that the Agency could take samples of, and environmental samples from, these items and materials. In that letter, the Agency also:

- requested that Syria share the results of any assessments that it may have performed regarding the materials used during, or resulting from, the bombing;
- requested, as a transparency measure, that the Agency be permitted to visit additional locations;

- reminded Syria that the requests for information and documentation referred to in the Agency's letter of 3 July 2008, which related, inter alia, to information concerning the destroyed building, remained unanswered; and
- stated that it stood ready to discuss these matters and to conduct the activities referred to above as soon as possible.

4. In a letter dated 17 February 2009, Syria reiterated its statement that the destroyed facility, and the current facility, on the Dair Alzour site were military installations. Syria provided information in response to some of the questions raised in the Agency's letter of 3 July 2008 concerning the purpose of the water pumping station and the water purification station found on the site and procurement efforts in connection with certain equipment and material. However, the responses Syria provided were only partial and included information already provided to the Agency, and did not address most of the questions raised in the Agency's communications. The Agency is now assessing the information provided by Syria.

5. In a letter to Israel dated 26 November 2008, referring to the claims made by Syria about the origin of the uranium particles found at Dair Alzour, the Agency requested Israel to provide information which would enable the Agency to determine whether munitions alleged to have been used by it could have been the source of the uranium particles (GOV/2008/60, paras 8 and 18). With respect to the Agency's request, Israel, in a letter dated 24 December 2008, stated only that "it rejects Syrian claims on the matter" and that "Israel could not have been the source of the uranium particles found on the site of the nuclear reactor".

B. Agency Verification

6. The Agency has continued its analysis of all information available to it as a result of the 23 June 2008 visit to the Dair Alzour site, as well as information from other sources. Additional analyses of the environmental samples taken from the Dair Alzour site have also been carried out by a number of laboratories participating in the Agency's Network of Analytical Laboratories. These analyses have revealed additional particles of anthropogenic uranium. These uranium particles, and those identified as a result of the previous analyses, are of a type not included in Syria's declared inventory of nuclear material.

7. The Agency's current assessment is that there is a low probability that the uranium was introduced by the use of missiles as the isotopic and chemical composition and the morphology of the particles are all inconsistent with what would be expected from the use of uranium based munitions.

8. As indicated in the Director General's previous report (GOV/2008/60, paras 5–7), the Agency has requested from Syria clarification of efforts by Syrian entities to procure materials and equipment which could support the construction and operation of a nuclear reactor. The Agency is continuing to assess the information related to these procurement efforts, including that provided by Syria in its letter of 17 February 2009.

C. Summary

9. The presence of the uranium particles at the Dair Alzour site, the imagery of the site available to the Agency and information about certain procurement activities need to be fully understood. Syria therefore needs to provide additional information and supporting documentation about the past use and nature of the building at the Dair Alzour site, and information about the procurement activities. Syria needs to be transparent by providing additional access to other locations alleged to be related to Dair Alzour. These measures, together with the sampling of destroyed and salvaged equipment and debris, are essential for the Agency to complete its assessment.

10. The Director General calls upon Syria to take the above measures as soon as possible. The Director General also calls on Israel and other States that may possess relevant information to make the information available to the Agency, including satellite imagery, and to agree to the Agency's sharing of such information with Syria.

11. The Director General will continue to report as appropriate.