



PROPHETIC TIMES

WEEKLY WORLD NEWS UPDATE

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

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WORLD POPULATION TO HIT 7 BILLION IN 2012

June 19, 2008 Brietbart.com reported: "The world's population will reach 7 billion in 2012, even as the global community struggles to satisfy its appetite for natural resources, according to a new government projection.

There are 6.7 billion people in the world today. The United States ranks third, with 304 million, behind China and India, according to projections released Thursday by the Census Bureau. The world's population surpassed 6 billion in 1999, meaning it will take only 13 years to add a billion people.

By comparison, the number of people didn't reach 1 billion until 1800, said Carl Haub, a demographer at the Population Reference Bureau. It didn't reach 2 billion until 130 years later.

"You can easily see the effect of rapid population growth in developing countries," Haub said. Haub said that medical and nutritional advances in developing countries led to a population explosion following World War II. Cultural changes are slowly catching up, with more women in developing countries going to school and joining the work force.

That is slowing the growth rate, though it is still high in many countries. The global population is growing by about 1.2 percent per year. The Census Bureau projects the growth rate will decline to 0.5 percent by 2050. By then, India will have surpassed China as the most populous country."...

The new Census report comes amid record high oil and gasoline prices, fueled in part by growing demand from expanding economies in China and India."..."

EXTREMIST GROUPS CONTINUE TO SEEK NUCLEAR WEAPONS: US OFFICIAL

June 17, 2008 SpaceWar.com reported: "Extremist groups continue to actively seek nuclear weapons, a senior US official said Tuesday during a meeting in Spain of a US-Russian initiative to fight nuclear terrorism.

"Combating nuclear terrorism is especially important today," US Undersecretary of State for Arms Control John Rood told a news conference. "Regretably we continue to see indications in the United States from information we collect of the very terrorist groups we are most concerned about making concerted efforts to acquire nuclear capabilities with the express intent to use them against our peoples," he added.

Over 200 delegates from 56 nations, as well as the European Union and the International Atomic Energy Agency, are taking part in the three-day gathering which got underway in Madrid on Monday.

The meeting is the fourth of its kind since the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism was founded in 2006 by US President George W. Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin to reinforce control of nuclear facilities and materials in order to prevent such groups from accessing them. It was formed amid heightened global concern over nuclear programs in North Korea and Iran.

The closed-door gathering in Madrid is aimed at "developing and consolidating an international work plan of a technical nature to improve the fight against nuclear terrorism," Spain's foreign ministry said in a statement. The world's five leading nuclear powers -- the United States, Russia, China, Britain and France -- form the core of the initiative which now includes 73 member states. Ireland, Malta, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are recent additions to initiative."..."

FRANCE TO OVERHAUL MILITARY MAY REJOIN NATO

June 17, 2008 The Voice of America reported: "French President Nicolas Sarkozy announced a major overhaul of the country's defense to better meet new threats like terrorism. From Paris, Lisa Bryant reports Mr. Sarkozy also announced France was ready to rejoin NATO's military wing, after a four-decade absence.

President Sarkozy presented France's new defense strategy in a much awaited speech, outlining a leaner military that he argued would be better equipped to respond to terrorism, missile attacks and other modern-day threats.

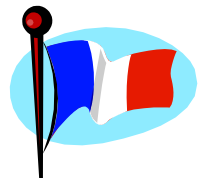
Mr. Sarkozy said that six or seven years from now, French forces will total 225,000. He acknowledged that amounted to a steep cut from their current level of 270,000, and that bases would be closed. But he vowed to make France even stronger militarily than it is today.

While Mr. Sarkozy said the government was looking for cost cutting measures, he also said it would spend roughly \$4.6 billion more annually to equip its forces.

The French president also said France aims to soon return to NATO's military command after pulling out in 1966.

Mr. Sarkozy said those who authored the defense report saw no reason why France should not participate in NATO's defense wing. He said France would retain complete freedom on deciding whether or not to participate in military operations and officials say it would remain in control of its nuclear-defense program.

Mr. Sarkozy has also emphasized building up the EU military capabilities, and had been expected to push this when France takes over the



bloc's rotating presidency next month. But he may now face a roadblock, since Ireland rejected the EU treaty that is aimed to further integrate Europe, including its defense strategy."

IRAN SOFTENS NUCLEAR PROGRAMME STANCE

June 16, 2008 The London Daily Telegraph reported: "The apparent softening of Iran's position came after Javier Solana, the European Union's foreign policy chief, led a delegation of senior diplomats from five countries, including Britain, on an official visit to Tehran.

They formally offered to help Iran with a civilian nuclear programme and extend other economic and political concessions, but only if Tehran obeys the United Nations and stops enriching uranium. While there was no definitive response from Tehran, first signs suggested that Iran would keep open the diplomatic channel and refrain from rejecting the offer out of hand.

Ali Larijani, the speaker of parliament and formerly Iran's nuclear negotiator, was careful not to dismiss the proposal in a radio interview yesterday. "The parliament will carefully study the package," he said. Mr Larijani said Iran would welcome negotiations, but warned the West to not expect "Iranians to forget" their rights. Another influential Iranian MP, Allaeddin Boroujerdi, told the official news agency, IRNA, that "we can reach an agreement over common points".

A state-owned newspaper welcomed the two sides' desire for negotiations and called it a sign of "a strategic and logical interaction". But some Iranian reaction was more hostile. On the day that Mr Solana and the delegation arrived in Tehran, a government spokesman said that Iran's right to continue to enrich uranium was "not debatable". "..."

Hossein Shariatmadari, a close adviser to Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, was dismissive of the offer. In an editorial in the state-owned Kayhan newspaper, he described the "package of incentives" as "empty". "..."

Mr Solana's delegation consisted of senior diplomats from Britain, Germany, France, Russia and China. He brought a letter signed by the foreign ministers of all those countries and, crucially, Condoleezza Rice, the US secretary of state. This letter, together with three pages of details, was made available to journalists.

The foreign ministers said it was "possible to change the present state of affairs" provided Iran stopped enriching uranium. They added: "Formal negotiations can start as soon as Iran's enrichment-related and reprocessing activities are suspended."

If Iran does reject this offer, the European Union will probably impose economic sanctions by the end of next month. A senior British official said the Security Council was also likely to agree more counter-measures. "..."

CHAVEZ THREATENS TO BLOCK OIL OVER EU RULES

June 19, 2008 The Associated Press reported: "Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez is threatening not to sell oil to any European country that applies strict new rules for expelling illegal immigrants. Chavez also says Venezuela would block investments from such nations.

He said in a televised speech Thursday that the policy approved by EU legislators shows "signs of fascism."

Chavez said "our oil shouldn't go to those countries" that apply the rules.

The EU parliament passed new guidelines Wednesday under which illegal immigrants can be held in specialized detention centers for up to 18 months before being expelled."

PENTAGON SAYS ITS ON TRAIL OF MISSING NUCLEAR COMPONENTS: REPORT

June 20, 2008 Agence France Presse reported: "US military authorities are unable to find hundreds of nuclear missile components, The Financial Times reported in its online edition Thursday, but the Pentagon shrugged it off as simple record-keeping woes.

The US air force has not located these registered components in its inventories, according to a Pentagon report which, according to some sources, puts the number of missing components at more than 1,000, the FT reported. The Defense Department acknowledged having inventory problems but without confirming problems with nuclear components.

"A record keeping of components was identified as a weakness, but there is a significant difference between missing items and not having a full, complete paper trail for every component," said Bryan Whitman, a Pentagon spokesman. He said the paper trail for components may have become messy because components could have been "destroyed, demilitarized."

A recent inquiry into a mistaken shipment of fuses for nuclear weapons to Taiwan "didn't find anything that would affect either the health and safety of the public or the men and women in uniform or call into question the safety and security and reliability of our nuclear arsenal," he stressed.

A high-ranking anonymous source cited by the FT said the report put the spotlight on nuclear component inventory problems, but did not suggest the unaccounted for items were in the hands of anyone who should not have them.

US Defense Secretary Robert Gates in June sacked the air force's civilian secretary and chief of staff, blaming them for two major blunders, including the Taiwan case. "..."

NUCLEAR

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