

# The Lasting Implications of the AQ Khan Network

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# The Indispensable Role of Intelligence

- Intelligence was the basis for the compromise and dismantlement of the AQ Khan network
- This intelligence breakthrough was the product of a rare blend of exceptional talent, an element of luck, and a long term commitment to success
- It was an uncommon story, involving creative, dynamic, opportunistic, daring, dedicated and non traditional methods of success
- The AQ Khan story serves as a textbook study in how to use intelligence to drive history making policy action

*How can we replicate this success?  
Can we count on intelligence when  
we need it again ?*

# Intangibles of Intelligence Success

- To find another AQ Khan, or unravel a Muhammad Atta-like footprint of an attack, we must be able to find something we have never seen - and stop something from happening that has never happened before
- Traditional activity does not generally produce our greatest intelligence successes
  - ◆ Resources alone are not enough
- A culture of *truth seeking* must be strong enough to...
  - ◆ Capture imagination
  - ◆ Promote experimentation and creativity
  - ◆ Overcome risk aversion
  - ◆ Avoid the dangers of group think

*“The most important failure was one of imagination.”  
-9/11 Commission Report*

# Finishing the Job

- What have we missed? Hopefully not...

- ◆ al Qa'ida and AQ Khan
- ◆ Pakistani NGO UTN and AQ Khan
- ◆ North Korea, Syria, and....

Prevent reconstitution of the AQ Khan network

- ◆ Monitoring European supplier companies
- ◆ Accessibility of nuclear-related information on the internet

- Successfully prosecute/neutralize Khan's associates

- ◆ Track record on WMD criminals is poor
- ◆ Criminalization of smuggling activity

- Assess AQ Khan's legacy: presaging the future

- ◆ Networks in a nuclear threat spectrum
- ◆ Shortcuts to a bomb

## A Single Threat Spectrum

The threat of a globally transforming nuclear event flows from any actor's capability of constructing one yield producing bomb along a spectrum that ranges from the most sophisticated nuclear weapons to a crude bomb or improvised nuclear device.

Combinations of possible actors include states working alone, states working with states, groups with states, and groups with groups.

Supplier networks can help enable states and groups.

These myriad combinations increase the number of pathways to a nuclear event.

# Shortcuts to a Bomb

- Pathways to a bomb are enabled by leveraging the capabilities of networks
- Terrorist use of networks
  - ◆ Patrons and trusted brokers
  - ◆ Undiscovered AQ Khan-like rogue networks
  - ◆ Nuclear supplier companies
  - ◆ Non governmental organizations
  - ◆ Organized crime and narcotics
  - ◆ People smuggling networks
  - ◆ Terrorist support networks
- Impact of publicly available information
- Increase in production, transportation and storage of nuclear materials

# The Nuclear Black Market

- **Material is Missing – we must find it before it reaches a buyer**
- **Materials Seizures: lessons learned**
  - ◆ Fortuitous nature of success
  - ◆ Material not reported missing
  - ◆ Lack of feel for the “black market”
  - ◆ Several seizures of unresolved cases of significant quantities of material
  - ◆ Seizures of sample quantities of larger available amounts
  - ◆ Under-reporting due to secrecy, lack of transparency and perceived national interests
  - ◆ Difficulty of identifying customers
  - ◆ Mistrust among states due to stings and fears of “stimulating the market”

*“No material. No Bomb. It’s that simple.” US Weapons Physicist*