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U.S. SENATE CLIMATE CHANGE CLEARING HOUSE

## United States Senate

November 21, 2013

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The President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

I write to express my concern about a recent BBC report<sup>1</sup> that nuclear weapons made in Pakistan are “sitting ready for delivery” to Saudi Arabia and to request that you take all necessary actions to prevent a nuclear arms race in the Middle East. Given Iran’s continued pursuit of a nuclear weapons program, it is not surprising that Saudi Arabia may have been pursuing its own program as well. The difference is Saudi Arabia reportedly has been pursuing its program outside its borders to reduce the heightened scrutiny that Iran is currently receiving.

As early as the 1980s, Saudi Arabia was secretly purchasing CSS-2 ballistic missiles, a missile thought to have been intended to be used with a nuclear capability. Meanwhile, Pakistani nuclear scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan is believed to have possessed blueprints for a nuclear weapon designed to fit this missile system. Since then Saudi Arabia has been providing what Pakistani Major General Feroz Hassan Khan described as “generous financial support” for Pakistan’s nuclear program. And, as recently as 2009, Saudi Arabia’s King Abdullah stated that if Iran is able to develop nuclear weapons, Saudi Arabia will also “get nuclear weapons.” I have personally conveyed my concerns over the prospect of Saudi-Pakistani collusion to senior Pakistani civilian and military officials, who have strongly denied any involvement by their government in providing nuclear weapons technologies or materials to the Saudis. I would be interested in the Administration’s assessment of the nature and extent of any nuclear cooperation between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, including the potential for such cooperation to result in the transfer of sensitive technologies or materials which could be used in a nuclear weapon.

A State Department report<sup>2</sup> from this past May indicates that the United States is currently pursuing a nuclear cooperation agreement with Saudi Arabia. If this agreement were to proceed, the U.S. could one day be exporting nuclear technology to a country that has clear and stated intentions to obtain nuclear weapons in the event such weapons are acquired by one of its regional rivals. In addition to your ongoing diplomatic efforts to curb Iran’s nuclear program, it

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-24823846>


<sup>2</sup> <http://nnsa.energy.gov/sites/default/files/nnsa/06-13-multiplefiles/7%20James%20Warden%20-%20123%20Agreements.pdf>

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is clear that diplomatic efforts must also be expended to ensure that other nations in the Persian Gulf do not themselves develop a nuclear weapons capability either through directly obtaining them or by using the cover of a civilian nuclear program to develop them indigenously.

I strongly urge you to cease negotiations to allow Saudi Arabia to acquire U.S. or U.S.-origin nuclear technology, to take steps to ensure that Pakistan does not transfer nuclear weapons to Saudi Arabia or any other entity, and to modify the terms of any other nuclear cooperation agreement under negotiation to include an assurance that the country in question will not reprocess plutonium or enrich uranium that could enable it to develop nuclear weapons on its own. I thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator