

**ADHERENCE TO AND COMPLIANCE WITH  
ARMS CONTROL, NONPROLIFERATION, AND DISARMAMENT  
AGREEMENTS AND COMMITMENTS**



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Prepared by the U.S. Department of State**

## **SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC (SYRIA)**

### **FINDING**

The Syrian Arab Republic (Syria) remains in violation of its obligations under Article III of the NPT and its CSA with the IAEA. Syria failed to declare and provide design information to the IAEA for the construction of a nuclear reactor at al Kibar in Deir Ezzour, which was destroyed in an Israeli airstrike in September of 2007. Syria's clandestine construction of the al Kibar reactor and its continued denial of IAEA requests for access and information concerning the al Kibar reactor and information concerning three reported functionally related locations are clear violations of its obligations under its CSA, including with respect to modified Code 3.1 of the

Subsidiary Arrangements to its CSA. To the extent that these activities were undertaken in connection with an effort to develop nuclear weapons, Syria may have violated Article II of the NPT. Given the IAEA's finding of particles of chemically processed uranium compounds at the site, the United States remains concerned regarding whether any undeclared nuclear material might exist in Syria.

### **CONDUCT GIVING RISE TO COMPLIANCE CONCERNS**

Syria became a State Party to the NPT in 1968, and its CSA entered into force in 1992. It had not signed the AP as of the end of 2021.

Until September 2007, Syria was building an undeclared nuclear reactor at al Kibar (in the governorate of Deir Ezzour) in eastern Syria. The DPRK assisted Syria with its construction and equipment installation. The Israeli air strike in 2007 destroyed the reactor before it could become operational. Following the reactor's destruction, Syria went to great lengths to clean up the site and to destroy evidence of what had previously existed at the site. By December 2007, Syria had constructed a large building directly over the location where the reactor had once stood.

In May 2011, the IAEA Director General (DG) released a report assessing that the facility at al Kibar was "very likely" a nuclear reactor that should have been declared to the Agency pursuant to Articles 41 and 42 of Syria's CSA and Code 3.1 of the Subsidiary Arrangements thereto. The IAEA based its assessment on a broad spectrum of factual information, including environmental samples taken during the Agency's visit to the site in June 2008 (which contained particles of anthropogenic natural uranium), as well as commercial satellite and radar imagery, procurement information, and information provided by IAEA Member States. The report also noted that the reactor had features highly similar to the gas-cooled, graphite-moderated reactor at Yongbyon in the DPRK.

During the reporting period, the IAEA DG issued a written report on Syria and provided updates at IAEA Board of Governors (BOG) meetings confirming that Syria had not provided any new information that would have an impact on the Agency's assessment that the facility at al-Kibar was "very likely" a nuclear reactor that should have been declared to the Agency. The IAEA DG continued to urge on Syria to cooperate fully with the Agency in connection with all unresolved issues.

There were no other new developments relating to Syria's nuclear activities during the reporting period.

Additional information is provided in the higher classification Report.

See previous years' reports for additional compliance history and background information.

### **ANALYSIS OF COMPLIANCE CONCERNS**

The United States judges Syria to be in violation of its obligations under the NPT.

Article 41 of Syria's CSA with the IAEA specifies that "the provision of design information in respect of the new facilities ... shall be provided as early as possible before nuclear material is introduced into a new facility." Article 42 states, among other requirements, that "design information to be provided to the Agency shall include, in respect of each facility, when applicable: (a) the identification of the facility, stating its general character, purpose, nominal capacity and geographic location, and the name and address to be used for routine business purposes ...." The NPT states in Article III(1) that "[t]he safeguards required by this Article shall be applied on all source or special fissionable material in all peaceful nuclear activities within the territory of such State, under its jurisdiction, or carried out under its control anywhere."

On May 24, 2011, the IAEA DG released a report assessing that the building destroyed at al Kibar was "very likely" a nuclear reactor that should have been declared by Syria pursuant to Articles 41 and 42 of its CSA and modified Code 3.1 of the Subsidiary Arrangements thereto. The United States agreed with this finding.

The ongoing civil war and security situation in Syria do not affect this finding. The IAEA DG's specific, repeated requests to Syria for additional information and access have consistently been met with Syrian denials, rather than provision of the information requested and consultations on how it would provide the requested access when conditions allow.

### **EFFORTS TO RESOLVE COMPLIANCE CONCERNS AND NEXT STEPS**

On June 9, 2011, the IAEA BOG adopted a resolution finding Syria in noncompliance with its CSA for the undeclared construction of a nuclear reactor in Deir Ezzour and called for Syria to urgently remedy its noncompliance and provide the IAEA with access to all information, sites, material, and persons necessary to resolve all questions regarding the exclusively peaceful nature of Syria's nuclear program. The Board also called upon Syria to sign and bring into force an AP to its CSA.

The IAEA BOG resolution also referred the matter to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Following the IAEA's referral, the UNSC met in 2011 to discuss the matter, but took no action. The UNSC has not addressed Syria's nuclear activities subsequently.

In 2021, the IAEA DG confirmed that Syria has not provided any new substantive information to the IAEA regarding the al Kibar reactor, and continued to urge Syria to cooperate fully with the IAEA in connection with all unresolved issues. The DG continues to publicly call on Syria to reengage with the IAEA, noting that he is willing to talk to Syria "constructively and cooperatively."

The United States and likeminded partners have continued to deliver strong national statements in the IAEA BOG and other international fora calling on Syria to cooperate with the IAEA to remedy its safeguards noncompliance and to publicly refute misinformation from Russia, Syria, and Iran. The United States and likeminded partners also called for continued reporting from the DG and maintaining the item on the agenda for each quarterly BOG meeting. The United States

also raised the issue of Syria's NPT noncompliance in national statements at the 2018 and 2019 NPT Preparatory Committee meetings.

The United States will continue to support the IAEA's investigation of Syria's undeclared nuclear activities, including the IAEA's requests for greater Syrian transparency, and work to ensure that the BOG and DG remain seized of the issue until Syria has fully cooperated with the IAEA to address all outstanding issues.