



Complex 2030: Undermines Security, Threatens Environment



The Department of Energy (DOE) is pushing to transform the nuclear weapons complex to design and build a new generation of nuclear weapons. “Complex 2030” ignores U.S. disarmament obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, threatens to derail diplomatic efforts with Iran and North Korea, and creates serious environmental and health risks.

Complex 2030 (a.k.a. the Bombplex) involves a massive overhaul of U.S. nuclear weapons facilities. Far from scaling back nuclear weapons activities, an entirely new plutonium bomb core factory is planned. DOE’s vision includes a continuous stream of new nuclear weapons designs and production, involving a host of new and “modernized” plants at 8 locations across the country.

Enabling New Nukes

The driving force behind Complex 2030 is the so-called “Reliable Replacement Warhead” program. Under RRW, weaponeers want to re-design and rebuild essentially every nuclear weapon in the U.S. stockpile. DOE plans call for a new RRW bomb design coming out of the Lawrence Livermore and Los Alamos nuclear weapons laboratories every 5 years. These newly designed warheads are to be produced at the rate of 125 per year. It is no accident that this is the exact number of plutonium bomb cores that Complex 2030 will produce. Complex 2030 is the “enabler” for DOE’s RRW program.

Environmental and Health Risks

Complex 2030 threatens the air, land, water, and health of communities around DOE’s nuclear weapons facilities. Production of plutonium bomb cores is the work that so polluted the Rocky Flats Plant in Colorado that it was shut down in 1989 following a raid by the FBI environmental crimes unit. All of the current nuclear research and production sites are polluted, and new accidents, spills and leaks are common. Workers at the Livermore and Los Alamos National Laboratories have suffered from plutonium exposure. Highly enriched uranium fires and leaks have plagued the Y12 National Security Complex in Oak Ridge.

Nuclear Proliferation Impacts

Complex 2030 signals to the rest of the world that the United States is rebuilding a Cold War-size production capability. The U.S. cannot expect to convince nations such as North Korea and Iran to give up their nuclear programs while it designs and plans for the production of a new generation of weapons. This provocative plan would increase the global nuclear danger, making our communities less safe.

Financial Costs

The estimated price tag for Complex 2030 starts at \$150 billion, according to the Government Accountability Office. Given DOE’s documented history of

Recommendations

- Congress should eliminate funding for further Complex 2030 planning.
- Congress should direct DOE to prioritize environmental cleanup instead of new weapons programs.
- Congress should increase DOE funding for dismantlement of nuclear weapons.
- Congress should mandate that DOE consolidate plutonium and highly enriched uranium at fewer, more secure sites, chosen to promote safety – not to serve weapons programs.



The Department of Energy plans to replace every warhead in the U.S. nuclear arsenal. The first to be replaced is the Trident missile's W76, the most prevalent warhead in the U.S. arsenal.

cost overruns and the fact that current estimates do not include funds for eventual decommissioning and cleanup, the total cost may approach \$300 billion. This is money needed to clean up the dangerous contamination left by past nuclear weapons design, testing, and production at sites across the country.

False Economies

Most of the consolidation promised in DOE's Complex 2030 plan is sleight of hand. For example, Complex 2030 claims to "consolidate" eight major sites into the *same* eight major sites – with billions of dollars worth of new bomb facilities added.

Plutonium is slated to be removed from Livermore National Laboratory under the Complex 2030 plan. In the near term, however, the amount of plutonium allowed there will increase, threatening nearby residents.

DOE says that Complex 2030 and RRW will facilitate cuts to the stockpile, but for many years both RRW and legacy stockpile warhead designs will be deployed. This could result in a larger overall arsenal, especially if DOE continues to plan for a very large "reserve" of existing warheads and minimal rates of warhead dismantlements.

Alternatives

As a signer of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the U.S. is obligated to negotiate in good faith the elimination of its nuclear arsenal. Any change made to the U.S. nuclear weapons complex must demonstrate compliance with the NPT. The global nonproliferation regime is fraying and may be undone by Complex 2030's heightened emphasis on U.S. nuclear weapons.

Some elements of DOE's plan are worth pursuing. Storing plutonium and highly enriched uranium at fewer locations, one facet of the plan, would reduce the risk of theft and unauthorized access. Complex 2030 also touts an increased emphasis on dismantlement of old nuclear weapons. This, too, is a step in the right direction, but with nearly 10,000 nuclear weapons on hand, DOE need not build new ones before dismantlement can occur.

Strong Public Opposition

In November and December 2006, public comment hearings on Complex 2030 were held at 12 locations around the country. Hundreds turned out to protest the new nuclear weapons complex plans. During the written comment period that followed, approximately 32,000 members of the public registered their opposition. This is the most comments ever received on a DOE proposal and represents a true national referendum against Complex 2030.

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