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IAEA Safeguards Report on Syria: Cooperation from Syria Worsens, Special Inspection Needed

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The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has released its [November 23, 2010 Safeguards report on Syria](#). The IAEA reports that Syria, despite responding to IAEA letters, is still not answering IAEA questions regarding inconsistencies in Syria's statements and unresolved issues regarding the suspected reactor construction site at Al Kibar and the preparation of uranyl nitrate and irradiation activities.

The IAEA reports that in a meeting on September 3, "an agreement was reached with Syria on a plan of action for resolving...inconsistencies" between Syria's statements and the IAEA's findings regarding uranium samples found at the Miniature Neutron Source Reactor (MNSR) in Damascus. Syria had declared to the IAEA after the initial discovery that the uranium particles originated from "previously unreported activities" at the site.

In what appeared to be the first step in implementing its action plan to address these inconsistencies, the IAEA sent a letter to Syria on September 9 seeking clarification over Syria's statements regarding amounts and types of material used in the preparation of uranyl nitrate and irradiation activities at a plant in Homs. The IAEA stated that Syria's response, however, that did not clarify the issue and only added further inconsistencies. Furthermore, Syria informed the IAEA on October 29 that access to the Homs pilot plant, which the Agency requested access to and provided Syria with a list of locations to be accessed and activities to be performed, was not subject to inspection under Syria's Safeguards Agreement with the IAEA. Syria stated that the IAEA's request for access needed to be discussed further. Syria told the IAEA that access to the Waste Management Department of the Atomic Energy Commission of Syria (AECS) to investigate the presence of nuclear material outside of Syria's declared inventory would be granted in March or April 2011.

Regarding the Al Kibar reactor, the IAEA continues to report that "Syria has not engaged substantively with the Agency on the nature of the Dair Alzour site since the Agency's June 2008 visit and, since August 2009, has not responded to issues" related to the suspected reactor, questions on procurement data and the end use of barite, and access to other locations in Syria suspected of being functionally related to the suspected reactor construction project, as well as to facilities which may contain remnants of the destroyed building. The IAEA notes that Syria has not cooperated with the Agency on its requests to visit three other locations suspected to have a connection with the Al-Kibar reactor.

Syria has demonstrated that it will not cooperate constructively with the IAEA and it continues to dodge its questions. It continues to refuse access to sites over which the IAEA has questions. Its denials for additional access to the Al-Kibar site and three related sites, and recent denial to the IAEA to visit the Homs pilot plant underlines the need for Syria to implement the Additional Protocol and clarify its activities.

This report makes clear that Syria's cooperation with the IAEA has [worsened](#). The IAEA Director General should call for a special inspection in Syria.