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NNSA Forms New Task to Address Nuclear and Radiological Threats **Will consolidate the Department of Energy's threat reduction efforts**

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) Administrator Linton Brooks today announced the establishment of the Nuclear Radiological Threat Reduction Task Force within the Office of Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation. The new task force represents another important step in combating the threats posed by radiological dispersion devices or "dirty bombs".

"This threat reduction task force will bring together, under one organization, all of the Department of Energy's radiological threat reduction efforts both domestically and abroad to ensure much greater effectiveness in meeting radiological threats," Brooks said. "This task force shows Secretary Abraham's commitment to meeting the threat posed by nuclear and radiological terrorism on a global basis."

The Nuclear Radiological Threat Reduction Task Force (NRTRTF) will have two primary missions: (1) to identify, secure and store on an interim basis high-risk radiological materials that could be used as a radiological dispersal device, both in the United States and overseas, in cooperation with foreign governments; and (2) to establish an inventory of the most vulnerable research reactors worldwide and develop an action plan to effectively meet and mitigate these vulnerabilities.

Operationally, the task force will oversee the Global Research Reactor Security Program to mitigate risks posed by research reactors that exist today in over 50 countries. In this regard, the task force will work closely with other countries and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). To meet the challenges of radiological materials, the task force will consolidate and manage two ongoing programs: (1) the Department of Energy's domestic program to recover and secure radiological material, the Off-Site Source Recovery Program, which is being transferred from the Office of Environmental Management; and (2) the International Radiological Threat Reduction Program, currently managed by another office with the Office of Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation.

The combination of these programs will ensure that the NNSA has the capability to address the full spectrum of radiological threats, including locating and securing vulnerable radiological materials and recovering and securing unwanted and abandoned radioactive sealed sources within the United States that pose security and health risks. Edward McGinnis, a nuclear and radiological nonproliferation expert within NNSA, will head the task force.

NNSA is a semi-autonomous agency of the Department of Energy. It enhances U.S. national security through the military application of nuclear energy, maintains the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile, promotes international nuclear nonproliferation and safety, reduces global danger from weapons of mass destruction, provides the U.S. Navy with safe and effective nuclear propulsion, and oversees national laboratories to maintain U.S. leadership in science and technology.

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