

Wednesday, May 05, 2010 Israel Today Staff

Obama wants to take Israel's nukes, according to reports

US President Barack Obama is working closely with Russia and Egypt on an effort to rid Israel of its supposed nuclear weapons arsenal, according to several mainstream media reports this week.

Most prominently, the *Wall Street Journal* reported that Obama is keen to adopt an Egyptian proposal to declare the Middle East a nuclear-free zone. A follow-up regional conference would put heavy pressure on all nations to comply.

Being the only country in the Middle East believed to possess nuclear weapons, Israel would be the clear target of such a move. Washington is suggesting that by pressuring Israel to give up its nukes, it has a much better chance to convince Iran to halt its defiant nuclear program.

That angle has become a major topic of discussion at the current Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference taking place at UN headquarters in New York. Arab and Muslim nations have enthusiastically joined and pushed the discussion on Israel's nuclear program in an effort to divert attention from Iran.

Former US Ambassador to the UN John Bolton warned that Obama was playing right into the Muslims' hands, and threatening Israel's long-term security.

"The president is not happy with Israel's nuclear capabilities. I think he would be delighted if Israel gave up its nuclear weapons," Bolton told Israel's Army Radio. "The only unknown answer at this point is exactly how much pressure he would exert on Israel to do just that. Part of that pressure is being exerted right now by even considering the possibility of a conference on a nuclear-weapons-free Middle East."

Israel has never confirmed nor denied that it has nuclear weapons, though most believe the Jewish state to be in possession of at least a couple hundred warheads. Those weapons, if they exist, are the primary deterrent against yet another region-wide Arab attempt to overrun and destroy Israel. Prior to Israel's nuclear program, its Arab neighbors launched three full-scale wars aimed at annihilating the Jewish state.