

The White House

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

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Trilateral Announcement Between Mexico, the United States, and Canada on Nuclear Security

At the March 2012 Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul, South Korea, the Governments of Mexico, the United States, and Canada announced the completion of an important joint nuclear security project to convert the fuel in Mexico's research reactor from highly enriched uranium (HEU) to low enriched uranium (LEU). The project was initiated at the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, D.C. in April 2010, and was carried out by the three countries, working closely with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The full conversion of the reactor from the use of HEU to LEU fuel supports the goal of minimizing the use of HEU for civilian purposes. By converting its research nuclear reactor, Mexico contributes to non-proliferation.

President Calderón stated, "With this decision, Mexico reaffirms its commitment to building a world free of the nuclear threat. Each country must do its share to reach a safer North America and a safer planet. This is a clear example of the significant work we can do together in the North American region."

This effort, which was conducted and completed under the auspices of the IAEA, benefited from the hard work and dedication of hundreds of individuals from all three countries and the IAEA, and it further strengthens nuclear security in North America.

President Obama stated, "I would like to thank Mexico, Canada and the IAEA for their support of our joint nuclear security efforts. Our strong trilateral partnership, supported by the IAEA, has made our people safer and advanced our international nuclear security effort leading into the Seoul Summit."

Prime Minister Harper added that "The successful completion of this project demonstrates the concrete steps countries can collectively take in the context of the Nuclear Security Summit. We will continue to work with the United States and Mexico to enhance nuclear security in our region and worldwide."

The conversion will not only extend the length of time the Mexican reactor can operate with LEU fuel, it also makes the reactor eligible for further program engagement under the IAEA. With the provided fuel, Mexico's National Institute for Nuclear Research (ININ) also has the potential to increase the reactor power output, which would greatly improve its capabilities for medical and industrial isotope production, silicon doping, neutron radiography, and nuclear physics research such as neutron activation analysis.



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