

(Continued)

More than 40 countries possess nuclear material that could be used in a nuclear weapon, although 95 percent is held by the United States and Russia. Nuclear proliferation is an increasing security concern, especially as countries improve their own capabilities. This both limits the capacity for disruption and increases the number of countries with the potential to assist or trigger nuclear development programs by others. The combination of nuclear industry development, diffusion of old technology, and strategic aspirations over time will result in an increase in the number of countries with advanced nuclear capabilities and weapons potential. The critical challenge for a terrorist group remains acquisition of a sufficient quantity of fissile material, or acquiring a useable weapon from state inventories.