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Nuclear experts said they are worried about a potential stockpile of as much as 50 tons of unenriched uranium the Assad government has in Syria.

The uranium is thought to stretch back to an attempt in the mid-2000s to build a nuclear bomb. In 2007, when speculation abounded that Assad's regime was close to building the bomb, Israeli warplanes bombed the nuclear reactor at al-Kibar.

Syria has always denied having a nuclear program and little is known about what exactly the regime still has by way of nuclear material. But at the time of the Israeli attack, experts with the International Atomic Energy Agency said the type of reactor installed at al-Kibar would require 50 tons of unenriched uranium to produce a bomb. Assad had partnered with North Korea to help build the reactor.

Experts told the Financial Times Tuesday there is good cause to be worried about the potential for nuclear material to go unguarded as Syria further devolves into a civil war now nearly two years old.

David Albright, the head of the U.S.-based Institute for Science and International Security think-tank, said there's valid concern about what could play out with the uranium suspected to be in Syria.

"There are real worries about what has happened to the uranium that Syria was planning to put into the al-Kibar reactor shortly before the reactor was destroyed in 2007," he said. "There's no question that, as Syria gets engulfed in civil war, the whereabouts of this uranium is worrying governments. There is evidence to suggest this issue has been raised by one government directly with the IAEA."

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