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## Mullen says he is comfortable with Pakistani nukes

Friday April 03, 2009 (0609 PST)

**NEW YORK: The top US military officer said on Thursday he is "reasonably comfortable" Pakistan's nuclear weapons are secure.**

Admiral Mike Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told a lunchtime audience at the Hudson Union Society, said the US has invested in an effort to keep the weapons secure and that Pakistan has "taken significant steps in recent years, so I'm comfortable".

"My biggest concern is that if Pakistan gets to a point where it implodes, you've got a country that could be an Islamist, theocratic country with nuclear weapons which could both use them and proliferate them. One of our goals is to make sure that doesn't happen," Mullen said. He also explicitly linked the Inter-Services Intelligence to elements of the insurgency inside Pakistan, a connection that others have said helps empower extremist groups. "They've got an intelligence organisation that must, in my view, change its strategic approach and be completely disconnected from the insurgents. And they're not right now," he said.

End.

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