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Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Wednesday, December 1, 2010

Putin: Failure to Ratify START would be 'Dumb'

By JIM HEINTZ, the Associated Press

MOSCOW — Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin is warning that his country will find it necessary to build up its nuclear forces, if the United State's doesn't ratify a new arms reduction treaty.

The treaty, called New START, was worked out this year amid praise that it marked a newly cooperative spirit between Washington and Moscow. However, many Republicans in the U.S. Senate are expressing reluctance to ratify it.

Putin, in an interview to be broadcast Wednesday on the CNN television channel, said that if the treaty isn't ratified, "we'll have to react somehow," including deploying new nuclear technology.

In interview excerpts posted on CNN's website, Putin said the treaty is in the United States' best interests and it would take "a very dumb nature" for legislators to ignore that.

Putin's comments come a day after President Dmitry Medvedev made a similar warning to the West on another defense issue, NATO's proposal to build a European missile defense system. Russia has been invited to participate in the system, but substantial questions remain, including whether Russia would be an equal partner with the Western alliance.

"In the next 10 years, the following alternatives await us — either we reach agreement on missile defense and create a full joint cooperation mechanism, or, if we don't reach a constructive agreement, a new phase of the arms race will begin," Medvedev said Tuesday in his annual address to both houses of parliament. "And we will have to make a decision on deploying new means of attack."

In Washington, Republicans reluctant to ratify New START quickly said Tuesday the Obama administration had dealt with some of their misgivings, raising the prospect for U.S. Senate approval of the treaty.

President Barack Obama has insisted that completion of the treaty is a national security imperative, and he argued for the pact at a White House meeting with congressional leaders.

Republicans, led by Sen. Jon Kyl, have rejected the president's contention that the treaty must be dealt with during Congress' current short year-ending session, arguing that the Senate has more pressing business and several issues on the nuclear deal remain unresolved.

Still, the Republicans' positive comments raised the possibility that the treaty might be approved by the end of the year.

Sen. Bob Corker, a Republican member of the Foreign Relations Committee, said Tuesday that Obama administration officials responded late Monday night to several matters raised by Kyl and himself about modernization of the remaining U.S. nuclear arsenal and sufficient funds for safeguarding the stockpile.

The treaty would reduce the limits on strategic warheads held by the United States and Russia to 1,550 for each country from the current level of 2,200 and would establish a system so each country could inspect and verify the other's arsenal.

In addition to their concerns about modernization, Republicans also have argued that the treaty would limit U.S. missile defense options.

<http://www.ajc.com/news/nation-world/putin-failure-to-ratify-761112.html>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

Russia to Build Up Nuclear Forces if New START Not Ratified - Putin

1 December 2010

Russia will be forced to build up its nuclear forces if the United States does not ratify the New Strategic Arms Ratification Treaty, Putin told CNN in an interview to air on Wednesday.

"That's not our choice. We don't want that to happen. But this is not a threat on our part," Putin told CNN's Larry King. "We've been simply saying that this is what all of us expects to happen if we don't agree on a joint effort there."

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and U.S. President Barack Obama signed the new treaty on April 8 in Prague to replace the START 1 agreement that expired in December 2009. It can only come into force after it is ratified by both houses of the Russian parliament and the U.S. Senate.

Russia has said it will act symmetrically with the United States regarding treaty ratification, but the treaty has met strong Republican opposition in the U.S. Senate over concerns that it may weaken U.S. anti-missile defenses.

The Republicans won a solid majority in the U.S. congressional elections in early November, meaning Obama has until January, when the new Congressmen take up their positions, to try to push the treaty through.

Putin said it would take "a very dumb nature" for the United States to ignore its own interests, but if it does, "then we'll have to react somehow," including by deploying new nuclear missile technology.

Putin said that without the treaty, Russia will have to arm itself against the "new threats" posed by U.S. plans for a European-based missile defense system.

"We have been told that you'll do it in order to secure you against the, let's say, Iranian nuclear threat," Putin said. "But such a threat, as of now, doesn't exist."

The new Russian-U.S. pact obligates both nations to cap their fielded strategic nuclear weapons to 1,550 warheads, while the number of deployed and non-deployed delivery vehicles must not exceed 800 on either side.

King asked Putin what he thought about one of the cables disclosed by Wikileaks on Sunday in which U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates describes the Russian government as an "oligarchy run by the security services."

"When we are talking with our American friends and tell them, there are systemic problems in this regard, we can hear from them 'Don't interfere with our affairs. This is our tradition and it's going to continue like that.' We are not interfering," Putin said. "But to our colleagues, I would also like to advise you, don't interfere either [with] the sovereign choice of the Russian people."

The Russian Prime Minister also told CNN that he would make a "concerted decision" with Medvedev about whether he would seek the presidency again in 2012 when the time comes.

"We'll see. There is still quite time before the elections take place," Putin said, adding that another WikiLeaks claim that he plays Batman to Medvedev's Robin was "aimed to slander one of us."

"The truth of the matter is, this is about our interaction, which is an important factor of the domestic policies in this country. But to be honest with you, we didn't suspect that this would be done with such arrogance, with such a push and, you know, being so unethically done."

MOSCOW, December 1 (RIA Novosti)

<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20101201/161572836.html>

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SpaceWar.com

Top US Senator 'Confident' in Nuclear Treaty Vote

By Staff Writers

Washington, Agence France-Presse (AFP)

December 2, 2010

Democratic US Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid said Thursday he was confident that lawmakers would act this year on a landmark nuclear arms control treaty with Russia despite Republican opposition.

"I think if we set our mind to it, we can get it done," Reid told reporters, amid behind-the-scenes negotiations aimed at clearing a path for ratification of the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START).

Asked whether he felt those talks were making progress, Reid replied: "The answer is, yes, I feel that. But as far as being able to hear anything that we have things worked out on it, the answer is no at this stage."

Republicans have vowed to block action on the treaty this year, seeking ironclad assurances that the treaty would not handcuff US plans to deploy a missile defense system and calling for billions of dollars to pay for upkeep of Washington's nuclear arsenal.

But some have also privately said over the past few months that they aim to deny President Barack Obama what would be a major diplomatic victory.

Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman John Kerry, a Democrat, said early Thursday that negotiations were making progress towards unlocking Republican opposition and setting the stage for a vote.

"And we're certainly going to work in good faith to try to make that happen in the next days, hours," he said.

Number-two Senate Republican Jon Kyl, his party's point man on the issue, has pledged to block action on the accord this year, citing modernization worries.

The White House plans to spend 85 billion dollars over ten years to refurbish US atomic weapons.

The 100-seat Senate currently counts 56 Democrats and two independents who vote with them, and ratification requires 67 votes. Republicans hold 42 seats now but that number will rise to 47 when a new Congress arrives in January.

The agreement, a key part of Obama's efforts to "reset" relations with Moscow, restricts each nation to a maximum of 1,550 deployed warheads, a cut of about 30 percent from a limit set in 2002, and 800 launchers and bombers.

The agreement, which has broad US public support, would also return US inspectors who have been unable to monitor Russia's arsenal since the agreement's predecessor lapsed in December 2009.

The Russian lower house of parliament has indicated it will ratify the treaty only after the US Senate acts.

http://www.spacewar.com/reports/Top_US_Senator_confident_in_nuclear_treaty_vote_999.html

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The Middle East Media Research Institute
December 1, 2010
Special Dispatch No.3414

Amir Hossein Shirani, Abducted Employee at Secret Iranian Nuclear Plant, Reveals Location of Plant and of Nuclear Scientists, Says: The Facility Enriched Uranium in Order to Build a Nuclear Weapon

Following are excerpts from an interview with Amir Hossein Shirani, an employee at a secret Iranian nuclear plant, who was abducted by the Sunni Baluchi opposition group Jundallah. The interview aired on Al-Arabiya TV on November 27, 2010.

Amir Hossein Shirani: "In the name of God the Merciful the Compassionate, my name is Amir Hossein Shirani, son of Mohammad. My ID number is 2428, and I was born in 1971. I have a bachelor's degree.

"Thanks to a relative of mine, engineer Ahmad Soltani, who directed a secret nuclear facility, I worked there for three years. While I was working there, I noticed that this facility was used for uranium enrichment, needed for the building of a nuclear weapon. The facility was kept secret from all the security agencies."

Interviewer: "What topics were discussed at meetings in this facility?"

Amir Hossein Shirani: "In this secret facility, meetings were held, and I participated in many of them due to my relation to engineer Soltani. At these meetings, Mr. Soltani and other engineers would say that since our enemies, like America and Israel, have atomic weapons – atomic bombs – we too must obtain such a bomb, and that since our neighboring country Pakistan has obtained such a weapon, we too must obtain it. They said that our status must not be inferior to that of Pakistan."

Interviewer: "What people were in charge of this facility? Can you name them?"

Amir Hossein Shirani: "The names of the engineers and the heads of the facility are, for example, engineer Aghazadeh, a.k.a. Hajji, who was general supervisor and inspector of all the workshops. He would travel once a week from Tehran to Esfahan to conduct the inspection.

"Engineer Ahmad Soltani, who lives on Upper Charbagh Street in Esfahan, was the head of the workshop in which I used to work.

"Engineer Reza Pasandi, one of the engineers and Soltani's advisors, lives on Charbagh Street, in Esfahan.

"Engineer Ali Farahamnd, one of Soltani's advisors and experts, lives on Khadjou Street in Esfahan.

"Engineer Mohammad Tavakkoli lives in Darvazeh Shiraz in Esfahan.

"Engineer Ghanbarian and engineer Ghassemi, who are among the experts in the facility, live in an apartment building on Abbasabbad Street in Esfahan.

"Engineer Adeli lives in Shahin Shahr north-east of Esfahan."

Interviewer: "How many people work in this facility?"

Amir Hossein Shirani: "There are three shifts a day, and fifty people work in each shift. They work around the clock, enriching uranium."

Interviewer: "What is the exact address of this facility?"

Amir Hossein Shirani: "It is 15 km south-east of Esfahan, opposite a village called Baran Shomali."

Interviewer: "What institutions would send people to monitor this facility?"

Amir Hossein Shirani: "People would come from various institutions, such as the Leader's office, from the President's office, the Intelligence Ministry, and the IRGC."

Interviewer: "They say that they do not want to manufacture nuclear weapons, but use it only for agricultural, medical, and industrial purposes. Can you confirm the claims of Iran?"

Amir Hossein Shirani: "No, during the time that I was working at this facility, such peaceful purposes were not discussed in the meetings and were not evident. All they did was to enrich uranium night and day, in an effort to obtain a nuclear bomb, in order to threaten the Arab countries and the world." [...]

<http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/4804.htm>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

Russia Has No Grounds to Suspect Iran of Nuclear Weapons Plans - Putin

2 December 2010

Russia does not believe Iran plans to develop nuclear weapons but supports efforts by the International Atomic Energy Agency to clarify the situation, Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin said.

The West, led by the United States, suspects Iran of pursuing a secret nuclear weapons program, but the Islamic Republic insists it needs nuclear power solely for civilian purposes.

Asked during a satellite interview with U.S. talk show host Larry King, aired on CNN Wednesday, what Russia's attitude is toward Iran's nuclear program, Putin said: "Iran's nuclear program has been implemented for 20 years."

"Iran has recently in this or that way shown that it is ready for dialogue with the international community and the IAEA. Yes, we know that there are questions at the initial stages of work on the program, and we support the IAEA in its desire to receive exhaustive answers," he told King.

"We are concerned... about any theoretical possibility of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. This relates to absolutely all states, including Iran," Putin said.

"At the same time, we have no grounds to suspect Iran of striving to possess nuclear weapons," the Russian premier said.

"I see nothing blameworthy here, nothing infringing upon Iran's interests if it makes its programs open as much as possible and satisfies the legitimate interest of the specialized international organization - the IAEA - in its work," he said.

"At the same time, I still have the opinion that Iran has the right to pursue nuclear programs under international organizations' control," Putin said.

MOSCOW, December 2 (RIA Novosti)

<http://en.rian.ru/world/20101202/161585511.html>

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Tehran Times – Iran

Thursday, December 2, 2010

All Fuel Rods Loaded into Core of Bushehr Reactor

Tehran Times Political Desk

TEHRAN - Iran has completed the last phase of loading fuel into the core of the Bushehr nuclear power plant and has closed the 130-ton lid of the reactor.

“This phase is the most important operational work of the plant,” said Atomic Energy Organization of Iran Director Ali Akbar Salehi.

On October 26, 163 fuel rods, each weighing 82 tons, were loaded into the core of the reactor, Salehi stated.

He expressed hope that the plant would be connected to the national power grid by February 19, 2011.

When it is first connected to the national grid, the reactor will be producing 400 megawatts of electricity and within three months it will reach 100 percent of its capacity and produce 1000 megawatts of electricity, Salehi explained.

He went on to say that when the 1000-megawatt plant reaches its optimal capacity, it will generate one-fortieth of the electricity output of the country.

The Bushehr power plant will operate under a Russian guarantee for a year, he added.

Over the next 20 years, Iran plans to build enough nuclear power plants to generate 20,000 megawatts of electricity.

The launch of Iran’s first nuclear reactor will probably be a disappointment for the United States and Israel, which claim the Islamic Republic is using its civilian nuclear energy program as a cover for a nuclear weapons program.

However, the International Atomic Energy Agency has conducted numerous inspections of Iran’s nuclear facilities and has never found evidence of diversion.

Russia completed the Bushehr plant despite pressure from the United States and Israel. The plant will be operated by Russian and Iranian technicians for several years.

http://www.tehrantimes.com/index_View.asp?code=231277

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The Star – Malaysia

Thursday, December 2, 2010

UN Nuclear Chief Steps Up Pressure over Syria Site

By Fredrik Dahl and Sylvia Westall

VIENNA (Reuters) - The U.N. nuclear agency chief said on Thursday he had formally urged Syria to provide his inspectors with speedy access to the remains of a suspected nuclear site, signalling growing frustration over the issue.

For more than two years Syria has blocked International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) access to the remains of a desert site that U.S. intelligence reports say was a nascent North Korean-designed nuclear reactor intended to produce bomb fuel.

The site, known as either al-Kibar or Dair Alzour, was bombed to rubble by Israel in 2007. Syria, an ally of Iran, denies ever having an atom bomb programme.

In a report last month Yukiya Amano, the IAEA director general, said Syria was not allowing U.N. nuclear inspectors to visit numerous suspect sites, and had provided scant or inconsistent information about its atomic activities.

On Thursday, he told the IAEA's 35-nation governing board he had written a letter to Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Moualem on Nov. 18, the first time the IAEA chief has appealed to Syrian authorities directly, rather than just through his reports.

He asked the government to provide prompt IAEA access to relevant information and locations related to Dair Alzour and to cooperate with the agency in general, Amano told the closed-door meeting, according to a copy of his speech.

A diplomat close to the probe said the letter reflected the "growing urgency" of the matter.

Earlier this year the IAEA gave some weight to suspicions of illicit nuclear work at the site by saying that uranium traces found during a 2008 visit by inspectors pointed to nuclear-related activity.

NO PROGRESS

The agency wants to re-examine Dair Alzour so it can take samples from rubble removed immediately after the air strike.

Washington has said the IAEA may need to consider invoking its "special inspection" mechanism to give it the authority to look anywhere necessary in Syria at short notice.

But diplomats and analysts believe the IAEA will refrain from escalating the dispute at a time of rising tension with Iran, which the West suspects of seeking nuclear weapons.

Amano said he would not speculate on what would happen if Syria did not respond to his request for cooperation.

The agency last resorted to special inspection powers in 1993 in North Korea, which still withheld access and later developed a nuclear explosive capacity in secret.

Syria says the IAEA does not need to go back to Dair Alzour because it already has proof it was a non-nuclear military site. It has also suggested uranium particles found at the site came from Israeli weapons or were dropped from the air, an assertion dismissed by the West.

The IAEA also wants access to three other Syrian sites under military control whose appearance was altered by landscaping after inspectors asked to visit.

Amano said Syria had not cooperated with the IAEA since June 2008 over Dair Alzour and other sites.

"As a consequence, the agency has not been able to make progress towards resolving the outstanding issues related to those sites," he said in Thursday's speech.

Editing by Kevin Liffey

http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2010/12/3/worldupdates/2010-12-02T204429Z_01_NOOTR_RTRMDNC_0_-533018-1&sec=Worldupdates

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Mainichi Daily News – Japan

November 30, 2010

Japan Discussed with W. Germany in 1969 Possibility of Going Nuclear

TOKYO (Kyodo) -- Japan's Foreign Ministry released a report Monday effectively acknowledging that Japan discussed the possibility of going nuclear with West Germany in 1969 despite its 1967 declaration of opposing the production, possession and presence of nuclear weapons.

The report said diplomatic papers from West Germany the Japanese ministry examined said that foreign ministry officials met with counterparts from West Germany in the resort town of Hakone, west of Tokyo, on Feb. 4 to 5 in 1969 and hinted at possessing nuclear arms and sought support from the country.

The Japanese ministry also questioned Egon Bahr, who was then head of the German Foreign Ministry's policy planning office and attended the meeting in 1969, and he told it that he heard Japanese officials making a statement during the meeting suggesting Japan may move to possess nuclear weapons, according to the ministry.

Citing the documents from West Germany, the report said a foreign ministry official who headed the Japanese delegation told West Germany it is possible for Japan to create nuclear weapons in the event a threat occurs on the Korean Peninsula and that Japan and West Germany should cooperate to be free from the United States.

The report indicates that thorough discussions were made on whether Japan should possess nuclear arms among members of the government ahead of its signing in 1970 of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

Japan also declared for the first time in 1967 what are now called the "three non-nuclear principles" of not producing, not possessing and not allowing the entry of nuclear weapons into the country, and a resolution to abide by them was adopted at the Diet in 1971.

The ministry released the report and documents concerned as Foreign Minister Seiji Maehara ordered it on Oct. 4 to look into a TV program aired the previous day by Japanese public broadcaster NHK, formally known as Japan Broadcasting Corp.

Quoting a former senior foreign ministry official, NHK reported that in the 1969 meeting, Japan explained to West Germany that the country may have to consider possessing nuclear weapons within 10 to 15 years and that it had a technology to extract nuclear materials to create nuclear warheads.

The ministry said in the report that Japanese diplomatic papers it looked at failed to confirm that Japanese officials made any remarks to that extent.

But based on the West German papers and statements by Bahr, the report concluded that some passages coincide with the NHK report and that the ministry cannot completely rule out the possibility that Japanese officials made some of the remarks.

According to documents Bahr submitted to Willy Brandt, then German foreign minister, Japan was then predicting that it might be put in abnormal circumstances within 10 to 15 years after the signing of the NPT, for example, if the United States were to deal with China on nuclear weapons.

(Mainichi Japan) November 30, 2010

<http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/news/20101130p2g00m0fp058000c.html>

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The Hindu – India

Singapore, December 1, 2010

South Korea Relies on U.S. Nuclear Umbrella: Envoy

By P. S. Suryanarayana

South Korea firmly believes that “if [it is] attacked by a nuclear weapon, the United States will use the same weapon” against the attacker.

In a conversation with *The Hindu* on the current inter-Korean crisis, South Korea's Ambassador to Singapore Oh Joon said: “Both South Korea and Japan are under U.S. nuclear umbrella. That means: if we are attacked by a nuclear weapon, U.S. will use the same weapon. [However] there is no U.S. nuclear weapon stationed in South Korea.”

Mr. Oh did not raise or imply the possibility of a nuclear strike by North Korea against his country at this time. But his articulation of Seoul's confidence in the reliability of the U.S. nuclear umbrella acquires importance because North Korea has atomic weapons.

Speaking to *The Hindu* from Tokyo, Japanese spokesman Hidenobu Sobashima said: “We rely on the U.S. for the security of Japan. Therefore, we feel that Japan-U.S. security arrangement is very important and we don't feel there is inconsistency between this security arrangement and what we pursue under nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.”

Mr. Sobashima was answering questions whether the U.S. nuclear umbrella for Japan was an issue in the ongoing talks between Tokyo and New Delhi for a possible civil nuclear pact. He would not go into the “contents” of these talks, but his comments are relevant to the current inter-Korean crisis, which has forced Japan also to go on alert.

On the ongoing U.S.-South Korea military exercise, which began on Sunday in the same sea-area where North Korea bombed Yeonpyeong Island a week ago, Mr. Oh said: “The exercise was not [originally] designed as a response to this incident. It was planned earlier. But we will make more efforts to make this exercise more responsive to such a situation [in the future].” Noting that “self-defence was proportionate to the attack we received” a week ago, he emphasised that South Korea's response, “from now on, is not going to be proportionate [and] it can be punitive.”

“There is [also] no reason for China to be not constructive ... in reining in North Korea. ... China is our largest trading partner and ... there are more common interests than differences in how to deal with North Korea. China might be taking different approaches sometimes, but its eventual goals regarding the Korean peninsula are same as South Korea's and the United States',” said Mr. Oh.

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/article926076.ece>

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London Guardian

North Korea may be Hiding More Nuclear Sites, US Tells Watchdog

IAEA expresses 'great concern' over reports of new North Korean uranium enrichment facility

By Reuters

Friday, 3 December 2010

The head of the UN nuclear watchdog has voiced deep concern about North Korea's expanded nuclear programme, as Washington warned that the secretive state may be hiding even more atomic sites.

North Korea boasted about its nuclear advances this week, saying it was operating a uranium enrichment plant with thousands of centrifuges. Centrifuges are devices that spin at supersonic speed and refine uranium so that it can serve as fuel for nuclear power plants or, if refined to a much higher degree, for atomic bombs. If confirmed, such a facility could offer it a second pathway to making a nuclear bomb.

"These developments ... are a clear manifestation of the risks posed by North Korea's defiance of its international obligations and commitments," the US envoy Glyn Davies told an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) meeting in Vienna.

He said in a speech to the IAEA's 35-nation governing board that it was likely Pyongyang had been pursuing enrichment capability before April 2009, the date it most recently claimed.

"If so, there is a clear likelihood that [it] has built other uranium enrichment-related facilities in its territory," Davies said.

The IAEA director general, Yukiya Amano, expressed "great concern" about reports of the new uranium enrichment facility and construction of a light water reactor in North Korea.

Details about North Korea's uranium enrichment activities surfaced last month in a report by a US nuclear scientist who had been invited to the country. He said he had seen hundreds of centrifuges and had been told there were more, which the North Koreans said were operating.

North Korea said its enrichment work was aimed at atomic power production, but it already has a plutonium-based nuclear device and carried out two nuclear test explosions in 2006 and 2009. So far it has not shown that it has a working, deliverable nuclear bomb.

The country has refused full IAEA oversight since 2002 and expelled inspectors last year, leaving the Vienna-based agency with little means to assess its latest nuclear claims or to pressure it into opening up its work to UN monitoring.

The nuclear revelations compounded tensions on the Korean peninsula which have been running high since Pyongyang fired an artillery barrage at a South Korean island, Yeonpyeong, killing four people.

At the IAEA meeting, the European Union urged North Korea to halt construction work on its nuclear facilities and to "refrain from taking any further actions that would increase tensions in the region."

Some analysts say the attack was Pyongyang's attempt to force the resumption of international negotiations that could bring it aid. Others saw it as an attempt to boost the military credentials of the country's leader-in-waiting, Kim Jong-un, the youngest son of ailing leader Kim Jong-il.

Six-party talks aimed at stopping North Korea's nuclear programme were suspended in December 2008 after Pyongyang walked out.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/dec/03/iaea-north-korea-uranium-enrichment-site>

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London Guardian – U.K.

WikiLeaks Cables Expose Pakistan Nuclear Fears

US and UK diplomats warn of terrorists getting hold of fissile material and of Pakistan-India nuclear exchange

By David Leigh

Tuesday, 30 November 2010

American and British diplomats fear Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme could lead to fissile material falling into the hands of terrorists or a devastating nuclear exchange with India.

The latest cache of US embassy cables released by WikiLeaks contains warnings that Pakistan is rapidly building its nuclear stockpile despite the country's growing instability and "pending economic catastrophe".

Mariot Leslie, a senior British Foreign Office official, told US diplomats in September 2009: "The UK has deep concerns about the safety and security of Pakistan's nuclear weapons," according to one cable classified "secret/NOFORN [no foreign nationals]".

Seven months earlier the US ambassador to Islamabad, Anne Patterson, cabled to Washington: "Our major concern is not having an Islamic militant steal an entire weapon but rather the chance someone working in government of Pakistan facilities could gradually smuggle enough material out to eventually make a weapon."

The leak of classified US diplomatic correspondence exposes in detail the deep tensions between Washington and Islamabad over a broad range of issues, including counter-terrorism, Afghanistan and finance, as well as the nuclear question. The cables also revealed that:

- Small teams of US special forces have been operating secretly inside Pakistan's tribal areas, with Pakistani government approval, while senior ministers have privately supported US drone attacks.
- The ambassador starkly informed Washington that "no amount of money" from the US would stop the Pakistani army backing Islamist militants and the Afghan Taliban insurgency.
- The US concluded Pakistani troops were responsible for a spate of extrajudicial killings in the Swat Valley and tribal belt but decided not to comment publicly to allow the army to take action on its own.
- Diplomats in Islamabad were asked by the Pentagon to survey refugee camps on the Afghan border, possibly for air strike targeting information.
- The president, Asif Ali Zardari – whose wife, Benazir Bhutto was assassinated – has made extensive preparations in case he too is killed, and once told the US vice-president, Joe Biden, that he feared the military "might take me out".

Pakistan's rulers are so sensitive about their much-prized nuclear weapons that in July 2009 they stalled on a previously agreed plan for the US to recover and dispose of highly enriched uranium spent fuel from a nuclear research reactor, in the interests of preventing proliferation and theft. They told the US embassy: "If the local media got word of the fuel removal, "they certainly would portray it as the US taking Pakistan's nuclear weapons".

US fears over Pakistan were spelled out in an intelligence briefing in 2008. "Despite pending economic catastrophe, Pakistan is producing nuclear weapons at a faster rate than any other country in the world," the secret cable said.

Leslie, director general of defence and intelligence at the Foreign Office, made clear the UK shared these anxieties when she spoke to US diplomats at a London arms control meeting in September 2009. The Pakistanis were worried the US "will drop in and take their nukes", she said, according to a US cable to Washington. Pakistan was now prepared to accept "nuclear safety help" from British technicians, but only under the auspices of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The cable said Leslie thought nuclear proliferation was the greater danger to the world, but it "ranks lower than terrorism on the public's list of perceived threats".

Another senior British official at the meeting, Jon Day, the Ministry of Defence's director general for security policy, said recent intelligence indicated Pakistan was "not going in a good direction".

The Russians shared concerns Pakistan was "highly unstable". Yuri Korolev, from the Russian foreign ministry, told US officials: "Islamists are not only seeking power in Pakistan but are also trying to get their hands on nuclear materials."

Speaking in February in Washington, he called for the problem of Pakistani nuclear sites to be addressed in ongoing missile control talks, claiming: "Over the last few years extremists have attacked vehicles that carry staff to and from these facilities. Some were killed and a number were abducted and there has been no trace seen of them."

Korolev said: "There are 120,000-130,000 people directly involved in Pakistan's nuclear and missile programmes ... There is no way to guarantee that all are 100% loyal and reliable."

He claimed extremists were now recruiting more easily: "Pakistan has had to hire people to protect nuclear facilities that have especially strict religious beliefs, and recently the general educational and cultural levels in Pakistan has been falling."

These fears are expressed in the secret state department files against a backdrop of Pakistani determination to build more nuclear warheads.

A Chinese foreign minister, He Yafei, sought to explain to the Americans why Pakistan was blocking fissile material control talks. At a London meeting in 2009, he said: "The underlying problem ... is that India and Pakistan view each other as enemies. Nuclear weapons are crucial to Pakistan. Indeed, a Pakistani military leader said his army was no match for the Indian army."

US diplomats in Islamabad were told Pakistan was working on producing smaller, tactical nuclear weapons that could be used on the battlefield against Indian troops. "The result of this trend is the need for greater stocks of fissile

material ... Strategic considerations point Pakistan in the direction of a larger nuclear force that requires a greater amount of fissile material, Pakistani officials argue."

The US conducted its own secret analysis of India's military contingency plans, which are codenamed Cold Start. India has said that if sufficiently provoked, it would mount a rapid invasion of Pakistan.

The US said in a cable that it doubted the Indian army was capable of doing so: "It is the collective judgment of the mission that India would likely encounter very mixed results. Indian forces could have significant problems consolidating initial gains due to logistical difficulties and slow reinforcement."

But the US ambassador to India, Tim Roemer, warned in February that for India to launch Cold Start, would be to "roll the nuclear dice". It could trigger the world's first use of nuclear weapons since Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

"Indian leaders no doubt realise that, although Cold Start is designed to punish Pakistan in a limited manner without triggering a nuclear response, they cannot be sure whether Pakistani leaders will in fact refrain from such a response."

Pakistan 'in tatters'

A senior US intelligence official was "unrelentingly gloomy" about Pakistan, the current safe haven for al-Qaida in the Afghanistan war, during a private briefing of Nato representatives.

Peter Lavoy, national intelligence officer for south Asia, concluded in November 2008 that nuclear-armed Pakistan's economy was "in tatters" and the country could "completely lose control of its Pashtun territories over the next few years", according to a leaked US cable.

More than a third of people were unemployed or underemployed, he said.

"Pakistan's population is becoming less and less educated, the country lacks sufficient energy and clean water resources to serve its population, and there is minimal foreign investment."

A few months later, in April 2009, Patterson was slightly less gloomy, saying Pakistan was not a "failed state".

"We nonetheless recognise that the challenges it confronts are dire. The government is losing more and more territory every day to foreign and domestic militant groups; deteriorating law and order in turn is undermining economic recovery. The bureaucracy is settling into third-world mediocrity, as demonstrated by some corruption and a limited capacity to implement or articulate policy."

She said: "Extremism ... is no longer restricted to the border area. We are seeing young Punjabi men turn up in [the tribal areas] and Afghanistan as fighters recruited from areas of southern Punjab where poverty, illiteracy and despair create a breeding ground for extremism."

The good news was that President Asif Ali Zardari "while far from perfect", was "pro-American and anti-extremist; we believe he is our best ally in the government", she said.

This January, however, the US special envoy to Afghanistan and Pakistan, Richard Holbrooke, told Indian government officials in Delhi that: "the army was the key decision-maker while President Zardari was increasingly sidelined". He said the civilian government had a limited capacity to move against groups behind the Mumbai terror attacks in 2008.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/nov/30/wikileaks-cables-pakistan-nuclear-fears>

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CNN International

Pakistan Dismisses Nuclear Fears in Leaked U.S. Cables

By the CNN Wire Staff

December 1, 2010

(CNN) -- Top Pakistani officials on Wednesday dismissed fears over the safety of the nation's nuclear weapons revealed in U.S. diplomatic cables.

"Pakistan's nuclear assets are safe," said Qamar Zaman Kaira, the information minister. "All major countries, including the U.S., have shown they're satisfied with the security of our nuclear assets."

U.S. diplomatic cables cited by The New York Times reveal concerns over Pakistan's uranium stockpile, its role in the struggle against Islamic militants and its economic crisis.

The documents are among the vast cache of U.S. State Department papers that WikiLeaks, a website known for leaking official secrets, began releasing Sunday to widespread condemnation from the United States and its allies. CNN cannot independently verify the content of all the cables from the website.

Cables revealed by The Times show that the U.S. ambassador in Islamabad was concerned over a supply of highly enriched uranium at an aging research reactor, allegedly enough to build several "dirty bombs."

The Times cites a cable dated May 27, 2009, in which Ambassador Anne Patterson said the Pakistani government was dragging its feet on an agreement that would allow the U.S. to remove the material. She said the Pakistani government was concerned that the "sensational" international and local media coverage of Pakistan's nuclear weapons made it impossible to proceed at this time."

A foreign ministry spokesman said fears over the nation's nuclear weapons are misplaced.

"Their fears are misplaced and doubtless fall in the realm of condescension," spokesman Abdul Basit said. "There has not been a single incident involving our fissile material which clearly reflects how strong our controls and mechanisms are."

Basit said Pakistan has "extended experience in handling nuclear stuff."

Nuclear safety was not the only concern linked to Pakistan in the cables.

One document cited says Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari had told U.S. Vice President Joe Biden that the Pakistani military might "take me out."

However, Kaira said, the nation was not at risk of a coup.

"All of Pakistan's institutions, including military, have learned lessons from the past," the minister said. "There would be no military coup today. The people of Pakistan will not allow a coup."

Other governments are also preoccupied by Pakistan, including Saudi Arabia, according to a CNN survey of the leaked cables.

In a cable sent to Washington in February, Ambassador James Smith writes: "King Abdullah firmly believes that Asif Zardari is the primary obstacle to the government's ability to move unequivocally to end terrorist safe havens there ('when the head is rotten, it affects the whole body')."

Kaira refuted the accusation, saying the government is committed to the war against terrorism.

"We have won the war in many parts of the country and we are winning in other parts of the country. I admit the success is slow because the war is very long."

A cable from June 2009 said Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak told U.S. diplomats that Pakistan was his "private nightmare," suggesting that the world might wake up one morning "with everything changed" after a potential Islamic extremist takeover.

CNN's Reza Sayah and Tim Lister contributed to this report.

<http://edition.cnn.com/2010/WORLD/asiapcf/12/01/pakistan.wikileaks.reaction/?hpt=T1>

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Times of India – India

'Pak Army No Match for India's so We Want More Nukes'

By Chidanand Rajghatta, TNN,
December 1, 2010

WASHINGTON: Despite "pending economic catastrophe," Pakistan is producing nuclear weapons at a "faster rate" than any other country in the world, according to a stunning American appraisal that forms part of the cables relating to US-Pakistan relations leaked by the whistleblower organization wikileaks.

The assessment was conveyed by US National Intelligence Officer for South Asia Dr Peter Lavoy to NATO representatives in November 2008 amid widespread, and continuing, apprehensions among major powers, recorded in separate cables, about the security of the weapons and its possible heist by terrorists, extremists and fundamentalists, including those in the government.

Among those expressing concern about the safety of Pakistani nukes are British and Russian officials, even as American and Chinese interlocutors mull over how to address Pakistan's fear of India that is ostensibly leading it to crank out nuclear weapons rapidly even it stalls a treaty to end production of fissile material (FMCT).

In one particularly startling cable, a high ranking Chinese official, vice foreign minister He Yafei, is quoted as hearing from a Pakistan general that Pakistan needs nuclear weapons because of its inferior army. "Indeed, a Pakistani military leader said his army was no match for the Indian army," the cable records Yafei as saying.

But the most elaborate scenario of a nuclear heist in Pakistan comes in a heavily redacted cable which cites an unnamed Russian official questioning the security measures Islamabad claims to have established, and which is frequently accepted as secure by Washington, and suggesting that the Pakistan's growing Islamization constitutes an imminent nuclear danger.

"Russia is aware that Pakistani authorities, with help from the US, have created a well-structured system of security for protecting nuclear facilities, which includes physical protection. However, there are 120,000-130,000 people directly involved in Pakistan's nuclear and missile programs... there is no way to guarantee that all are 100% loyal and reliable," the cable, conveying the Russian view, reads

"In addition to the Islamist interest in these facilities," the cable continues, "Russia also is aware that Pakistan has had to hire people to protect nuclear facilities that have especially strict religious beliefs, and recently the general educational and cultural levels in Pakistan has been falling. Due to these facts, extremist organizations have more opportunities to recruit people working in the nuclear and missile programs... Russia thinks Pakistan should also be a particular focus of discussion."

Showing little trust in their much-touted ally, US officials offer a slightly different take in another cable, saying, "Our major concern is not having an Islamic militant steal an entire weapon but rather the chance someone working in Government of Pakistan facilities could gradually smuggle enough material out to eventually make a weapon.

A lengthy cable discussing Pakistan's opposition to the fissile material cut off treaty also notes the trauma inflicted on Islamabad by the US-India nuclear deal, which Pakistan believes has "unshackled" India's nuclear weapons program by freeing up domestic uranium to make more bombs, hence necessitating Pakistan stalling FMCT as it ramps up its arsenal.

"Islamabad has chafed over the US-India 123 Agreement, arguing it also needs civilian nuclear power to meet energy demand; we have repeatedly advised the GOP that it should not expect a similar agreement because of AQ Khan's proliferation activities," notes another cable.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/us/Pak-army-no-match-for-Indias-so-we-want-more-nukes/articleshow/7022922.cms>

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BBC News – U.K.

1 December 2010

Pakistan's Growing Nuclear Programme

By Syed Shoaib Hasan, BBC News, Karachi

Pakistan's first nuclear reactor was established with help from the United States in 1965 during the regime of military dictator Gen Ayub Khan.

Gen Khan's protege and then foreign minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, was the driving force behind the programme, which was based at Nilore near Islamabad.

It was set up under the Atoms for Peace programme initiated by President Dwight D Eisenhower.

At the time it was strictly peaceful and intended to help meet Pakistan's civilian energy needs under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

A few years later Zulfikar Ali Bhutto became prime minister. He launched a nuclear weapons programme in 1974 as India and Pakistan competed in a new South Asian arms race.

Codenamed Project 706, Pakistan's plan to enrich its own uranium was conceived and led by Munir Ahmed Khan, a brilliant US-trained nuclear and electronics engineer.

He was joined a year later by a name that is now synonymous with Pakistan's nuclear programme - Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan.

It was Dr Khan - later disgraced for transferring technology to Iran and Libya - who was instrumental in setting up Pakistan's first nuclear enrichment plant at Kahuta near Islamabad.

Project 706 thus became Kahuta Research Laboratories, where enriched uranium for Pakistan's first nuclear weapon was produced.

Pakistan is believed to have developed a nuclear device by 1984, when Dr Khan alluded to it in an interview with a Western journalist.

Since then Pakistan's nuclear power complex has undergone a rapid expansion.

The organisation in charge is the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC), which is headed by a civilian nuclear physicist or engineer.

It operates eight fuel production and enrichment facilities, three mining concerns and one heavy water production facility.

The original bomb was a small uranium device with about the power of those the US dropped on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima or Nagasaki.

It was unwieldy and could only be launched from a bomber specially fitted for the purpose.

But Pakistan has made rapid advances since then - it is now said to have 70-90 weapons in its stockpile.

Many of these have been miniaturised to be mounted on ballistic missiles with ranges of more than 2,000km (1,245 miles), bringing many Indian cities within reach.

China is believed to have played a critical role in Pakistan's nuclear programme, and is said to have helped it manufacture many of its weapons.

Nuclear weapons development and advancement in Pakistan is primarily done by PAEC with Chinese collaboration, reports say.

Western officials believe that long-range missile technology was also acquired from North Korea in the 1990s - in exchange for Pakistani help with its nuclear programme.

Meanwhile, proliferation experts believe Pakistan continues to make rapid strides in the development of uranium enrichment facilities and its weapons development complex.

Work has been proceeding rapidly on the construction and expansion of plants in Chasma and Sihala.

Pakistani engineers, with help from the Chinese, are also said to be in the advance stages of developing MIRV technology for its missiles. This would allow the military to fit several warheads on the same ballistic missile and then launch them at separate targets.

Security

PAEC has hundreds - perhaps a few thousand at most - civilian employees working directly for it. An exact figure is not available. They include scientists and engineers, as well as technicians and other support staff.

In all, tens of thousands of security and other personnel are thought to work in Pakistan's nuclear complex.

Because of security concerns all PAEC staff are said to be thoroughly screened by Pakistan's intelligence services.

These have been expanded to include checks on any sort of connection to extremist religious organisations.

Post-9/11, several Pakistanis scientists were arrested for alleged links to al-Qaeda.

While most of them were released after several months of interrogations, additional scrutiny is now given to all serving and prospective employees, intelligence officials say.

Pakistan denies this is under pressure from the US, but concerns from the country's largest investor carry a lot of weight here.

The weapons themselves are then transported and stored by the Strategic Plans division of the army.

In recent times, they have been kept at depots all over the country. Some are said to be near the main air bases, while others are outside the purview of any sort of inquiry.

Pakistan's army remains secretive about the locations of its weapons - although US officials have openly said they believe they are in safe hands.

In the last few years US technical experts are said to have provided training for the Pakistanis on safe nuclear storage procedures and facilities.

The Americans are also believed to have provided \$100m (£64m) to be used to enhance the security of Pakistan's nuclear stockpile.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-11888973>

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Times of India – India

Upgraded BrahMos Cruise Missile Successfully Test-Fired

Press Trust of India (PTI)

December 2, 2010

BALASORE: An upgraded version of 290- km range BrahMos supersonic cruise missile was successfully test fired by India today from Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur off the Orissa coast.

"Block III version of BrahMos with advanced guidance and upgraded software, incorporating high manoeuvres at multiple points and steep dive from high altitude was flight tested successfully from Launch Complex III of ITR," its Director S P Dash said after the test fire from a mobile launcher at 1100 hours.

All telemetry and tracking stations including naval ships near the terminal point have confirmed the mission's success, he said.

"It was a text book launch and the mission was successful," distinguished defence scientist A Sivathannu Pillai, who is also the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Managing Director of BrahMos Aerospace said.

The 8.4 meter missile which can fly at 2.8 times the speed of sound is capable of carrying conventional warheads of up to 300 kg for a range of 290 km.

It can effectively engage ground targets from an altitude as low as 10 meters for surgical strikes at terror training camps across the border without causing collateral damage.

"The trial was witnessed by high ranking officials of the Army, who expressed happiness to have such high potential weapon system," a defence press release said.

Director DRDL, P Venugopalan and Project Director S Som, were present during the launch.

The Defence Minister congratulated DRDO and BrahMos scientists, army officers and the entire team for the success of the mission, it said.

BrahMos is capable of being launched from multiple platforms like submarine, ship, aircraft and land based Mobile Autonomous Launchers (MAL).

One regiment of the 290-km range BrahMos-I variant, which consists of 67 missiles, five mobile autonomous launchers on 12x12 Tatra vehicles and two mobile command posts, among other equipment, is already operational in the Indian Army, defence sources said.

The Indian Navy has begun the process of inducting the first version of BrahMos missile system in all frontline warships from 2005.

The Army is in the process of inducting two more regiments of BrahMos Block-II land-attack cruise missiles (LACM), which have been designed as precision strike weapons capable of hitting small targets in urban environments.

The first flight test of BrahMos missile was conducted on June 12, 2001 at the ITR and the last was successfully carried out on September 5, 2010 from the same place.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Upgraded-BrahMos-cruise-missile-successfully-test-fired/articleshow/7027654.cms>

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Times of India – India

In a Year, India Will Have Nuclear Triad: Navy Chief

By Rajat Pandit, TNN,

December 3, 2010

NEW DELHI: Only three countries, US, Russia and China, can be said to have fully-operational nuclear weapon triads -- the capability to fire nuclear-tipped missiles from land, air and sea. India will gatecrash into this highly-exclusive club by 2012.

Navy chief Admiral Nirmal Verma, not given to making dramatic statements, said the triad will be complete once its crucial underwater leg, the country's first indigenous nuclear submarine aptly named INS Arihant or the "destroyer of enemies", is commissioned towards late-2011 or early-2012.

The land and air legs are already in place with the Agni family of road and rail-mobile ballistic missiles as well as fighter jets like Mirage-2000s and Sukhoi-30MKIs jury-rigged to deliver nuclear weapons.

"When INS Arihant goes to sea, it will be on a deterrent patrol (read armed with nuclear-tipped missiles). The triad will then be in place... the aim is to make it as effective as possible," Admiral Verma said on Thursday, in the run-up to Navy Day on December 4.

This comes barely a day after Wikileaks revealed that American and European diplomats were greatly alarmed about Pakistan's feverish production of nuclear weapons. Estimates show Pakistan already has around 70 to 90 warheads, higher than India's 60 to 80. China, of course, is way ahead with around 240 warheads.

While Pakistan is nowhere near getting a nuclear submarine, China has 10 of them in its 62-submarine fleet, with three of them being SSBNs (armed with long-range strategic missiles). India, in contrast, has just 15 conventional and ageing diesel-electric submarines.

Consequently, INS Arihant is crucial to India's nuclear deterrence doctrine, which revolves around a clear "no-first use" policy. A robust and survivable second-strike capability is hugely dependent on having nuclear-powered submarines, armed with SLBMs (submarine-launched ballistic missiles), which can operate silently underwater for several months at a time.

Admiral Verma said INS Arihant, which was "launched" at Vizag in July 2009, would have potent SLBM capabilities to complete the triad. With INS Arihant's miniature 83 mw pressurised light-water reactor slated to go "critical" within a month or two for sea-acceptance trials, Navy also seems quite confident about ongoing undersea tests of the 700-km K-15 and 3,500-km K-4 SLBMs.

The 6,000-tonne INS Arihant, which has four silos on its hump to carry 12 K-15s or four extended range K-4s, is to be followed by another two nuclear submarines under the secretive Rs 30,000 crore Advanced Technology Vessel (ATV) project.

Navy, on its part, wants to have three SSBNs and six SSNs (nuclear-powered attack submarines) in the years ahead. The force will also finally induct the K-152 Nerpa submarine, on a 10-year lease from Russia, towards April-May 2011 after several delays.

While the 12,000-tonne Nerpa will not come armed with long-range missiles due to international treaties, it will help train Indian sailors in the complex art of operating nuclear submarines. It will also be a lethal hunter of enemy submarines and warships, armed with torpedoes and 300-km Klub-S cruise missiles.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/In-a-year-India-will-have-nuclear-triad-Navy-chief/articleshow/7030573.cms>

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Toronto Sun - Canada

Wednesday, December 1, 2010

Russia's Putin Warns West over Missile Defence

By Steve Gutterman, Reuters

MOSCOW - Prime Minister Vladimir Putin told CNN television that Russia would deploy nuclear weapons and "strike forces" if it were shut out of a Western missile shield, adding punch to a warning from President Dmitry Medvedev.

In an interview with Larry King taped on Tuesday, Putin also said the WikiLeaks scandal was "no catastrophe" and told the United States not to meddle with Russian elections.

Putin said missile threats against Europe must be tackled jointly — a reference to an agreement reached at a Nov. 20 Russia-NATO summit to cooperate on missile defence. Plans are sketchy and Russia has warned it wants an equal role.

If Russia's proposals are rejected and Western missile defence installations create "additional threats" near its borders, "Russia will have to ensure its own security," he said.

Russia would "put in place new strike forces ... against the new threats which will have been created along our borders," he said, according to a translation in an excerpt on CNN's website. "New missile, nuclear technologies will be put in place."

Putin said Russia was not threatening the West, but the remarks underscored the Kremlin's insistence on maintaining a significant role in a missile defence system and suggested improving ties could sour again if agreement is not reached.

In his state of the nation address on Tuesday, Medvedev warned that a new arms race would erupt if U.S. and NATO offers of cooperation on missile defence failed to produce a concrete agreement within a decade.

"That's not our choice, we don't want that to happen. This is no threat on our part," Putin said. "We've been simply saying that this is what all of us expect to happen if we don't agree on a joint effort there."

U.S. plans for a missile shield have been a major irritant in its ties with Moscow since the Cold War. Now both Russia and the West are casting missile defence cooperation as a crucial ingredient in recipes to bring the former foes closer.

As part of a campaign to 'reset' strained relations with Moscow, President Barack Obama last year scrapped Bush-era plans for a radar and interceptor missiles in eastern Europe that Russia said would be a major threat to its security.

POWERFUL PUTIN

Russia has been far more accepting of Obama's revised blueprint, which involves shorter-range interceptors. But Putin suggested Russia would feel threatened if the United States pushes ahead without significant Russian input.

The Kremlin warnings come amid uncertainty over U.S. Senate ratification of New START, a strategic nuclear arms limitation treaty signed by Obama and Medvedev in April and seen as the linchpin of improving relations.

Russia emphasises it could withdraw from New START if a U.S. missile shield develops into a threat to its security.

Putin's interview was conducted shortly after Medvedev delivered his biggest annual address in the Kremlin, timing that seemed to emphasize that the former president has a strong hand on Russia's reins despite now holding Russia's No. 2 office.

"I think he is underscoring for the West that he remains one of Russia's two leaders — that he maintains serious reserves of power and would like to continue to take part in determining foreign policy," analyst Alexei Makarkin told Ekho Moskvyy radio.

U.S. diplomatic cables revealed by the website WikiLeaks describe Putin as Russia's "alpha-dog" ruler and Medvedev as a sidekick-like "Robin to Putin's Batman".

In an excerpt from the interview, Putin said the WikiLeaks scandal was "no catastrophe" and that some experts believe it could have been engineered for "political purposes."

Putin steered Medvedev into the Kremlin in 2008 and has suggested he may return in a 2012 vote. He said he and Medvedev would make a "concerted decision" about who would run, CNN said.

Responding to a leaked cable citing U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates as portraying Russia as undemocratic, Putin said Gates was "deeply misled," CNN reported.

He said that when Russia raised shortcomings in U.S. democracy, it was told not to interfere. "I would also like to advise you, don't interfere either (with) the sovereign choice of the Russian people," CNN quoted him as saying.

<http://www.torontosun.com/news/world/2010/12/01/16385641.html>

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Russia Today – Russia

Moscow-NATO Roadmap on Missile Defense to be Approved in December

December 2, 2010

A roadmap on Russia-NATO co-operation on missile defense is to be approved at the meeting of the Russian-NATO Council gathering on December 8, Russian permanent representative to the alliance, Dmitry Rogozin has said.

According to the diplomat, currently experts are working on prospects for missile defense co-operation. Later in December, Russia and alliance representatives are due to meet in Brussels to approve the so-called road map for the European system of missile defense, reports Itar-Tass.

Rogozin underlined that Moscow-NATO co-operation will depend on "*how we are able to agree on missile defense.*"

There are two possible ways: either the creation of a European missile defense system with Russia's participation, or against it. *"There is no other alternative,"* he told a media conference in Moscow.

The official went on to say that if *"we discover that, due to our joint efforts, the missile defense infrastructure emerges on Russia's north-western borders, in the sector of the country's strategic forces, we will have no choice but to deploy strike forces to suppress such missile defense."*

Rogozin specifically underlined, though, that Moscow is against such a development of the scenario.

"We have honestly warned our NATO colleagues of this possible scenario in case the Lisbon agreements are violated," he added.

Dmitry Rogozin explained that currently Moscow is concerned over *"NATO's haste regarding the [missile defense] issue"*. He added that if the two sides fail to synchronize the work, it will result in an arms race.

He noted that it had been agreed to "prepare the framework of our possible European missile defense co-operation by the July meeting of Russia-NATO Council defense ministers." *In case there are attempts to "desynchronize the process, i.e. to reach agreement on creating joint missile defense at the NATO meeting in March and present us its option in June, we will not join anything like that,"* the Russian diplomat warned.

Rogozin also observed that Russia has already made its proposals on the matter.

The diplomat noted that the entire idea of the creation a European defense shield is more an ideological issue rather than a question of ensuring security.

<http://rt.com/politics/nato-missile-defense-roadmap/>

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Kansas City Star

Wednesday, December 1, 2010

Samuel T. Cohen, Inventor of the Neutron Bomb, Dies at 89

By THOMAS H. MAUGH II, Los Angeles Times

Samuel T. Cohen, the father of the controversial tactical nuclear weapon known as the neutron bomb, which was designed to kill people and other living things but inflict minimal damage on buildings and other property, died Sunday at his home in Brentwood on the west side of Los Angeles. He was 89 and died two weeks after the removal of a cancerous tumor from his stomach, according to his son Paul.

A conventional nuclear weapon releases massive amounts of radiation and heat that incinerates humans and inanimate objects alike, leaving behind radioactive debris that contaminates the area for years or decades. A neutron bomb, or enhanced radiation weapon, in contrast, has only about one-tenth the explosive power of a comparable fission weapon, and most of its output is in the form of neutrons - tiny neutral particles that can pass through walls, vehicles, tanks, armor and other inanimate objects with little or no damage.

But those neutrons cause severe, lethal damage to the nuclei of living cells, killing combatants quickly. Because of its limited range, however, there is little danger to nearby civilians and little or no residual radiation to threaten the environment after the battle.

"It's the most sane and moral weapon ever devised," Cohen said in an interview with The New York Times shortly before his death. "It's the only nuclear weapon in history that makes sense in waging war. When the war is over, the world is still intact."

Critics, however, took a different view, charging that the limited damage associated with the neutron bomb would make nuclear warfare more acceptable and that, in turn, could lead to full-scale nuclear retaliation.

Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev called the neutron bomb the ultimate capitalist weapon, built "to kill a man in such a way that his suit will not be stained with blood, in order to appropriate the suit."

Cohen relentlessly promoted the weapon throughout his career, arguing his case before presidents, members of Congress and scientific bodies. Presidents John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson and Jimmy Carter rejected it, arguing that it would upset the existing balance of power and test-ban moratoriums.

In 1981, however, President Ronald Reagan ordered 700 neutron warheads built to oppose the massive Soviet tank force that had been strategically positioned in Eastern Europe. He viewed the bomb as the only tactical weapon that could effectively stop the tanks without also destroying much of the continent. The weapons were later dismantled in the face of widespread protests and the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

France, China, Russia and Israel are also thought to have produced neutron weapons, but it is not known if they still have any.

Samuel Theodore Cohen was born in Brooklyn, N.Y., on Jan. 25, 1921, to Austrian Jews who migrated to the U.S. by way of Britain. When he was 4, the family moved to Los Angeles, where his father worked as a carpenter on movie sets. Young Samuel suffered allergies, eye problems and other ailments, and his mother put him on a rigidly controlled diet, regular purges and daily ice-water showers to toughen him up, and fed him so much carrot juice that his skin was often yellow.

A brilliant student, he studied physics at the University of California, Los Angeles, receiving a bachelor's degree in 1943. After joining the Army, he was posted to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for advanced training in physics and math, then selected for work on the Manhattan Project. Although he never received a doctoral degree, he calculated neutron densities on Fat Man, the bomb that was dropped on Nagasaki, Japan.

After WWII, he joined the RAND Corp. in Santa Monica in Southern California and spent most of his career there. He said the inspiration for the neutron bomb was a 1951 visit to Seoul, South Korea, which had been largely destroyed in the Korean War. In his memoir, he wrote: "If we are going to go on fighting these damned fool wars in the future, shelling and bombing cities to smithereens and wrecking the lives of their inhabitants, might there be some kind of nuclear weapon that could avoid all this?"

He designed the neutron bomb using pencil, paper and a slide rule given to him by his father for his 15th birthday.

Cohen is survived by his wife of 50 years, the former Margaret Munnemann; two sons, Paul and Thomas, both of Los Angeles; a daughter, Carla Nagler of Santa Fe, N.M.; and three grandchildren.

<http://www.kansascity.com/2010/12/01/2491159/samuel-t-cohen-inventor-of-the.html>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

OPINION

New World Arrangement Vs Missile Defense

1 December 2010

By RIA Novosti political commentator Dmitry Kosyrev

"I'd like to speak plainly about the choice we face in the next ten years: either we reach an agreement on missile defense and create a meaningful joint mechanism for cooperation, or if we fail to do so, a new round of the arms race will begin, and we will have to make decisions on the deployment of new strike weapons," President Dmitry Medvedev said in his annual address to the Federal Assembly.

If this quote were taken out of the context and backdated a couple of eras, it would have seemed routine. Every lieutenant knows this obvious truth: without effective confidence-building measures, we will have to rely on a balance of fear to maintain stability. At the very least, this fear helped us get through the latter half of the 20th century without a global nuclear war.

But now the context is different. A careful reading of what Medvedev said about foreign policy in his address reveals its central theme - the formation of a new system of international relations, which Medvedev calls a "modernization partnership."

This is not a balance of fear. It's not about whether Moscow likes a unipolar world, or whether Russia is liked in the world and by whom. It seems that the mentality underpinning Russia's foreign policy has been purged of these questions, which were vital to our interests and global policy just a short while ago.

Russia is now interested in something quite different - a "modernization partnership with Germany and France" and, slightly less important, "the huge potential for increasing the role of innovation in our cooperation" with China, India, Brazil, the South Korea, Singapore, Japan, Canada, Finland, Ukraine, Kazakhstan and other countries. As for the United States and the European Union as a whole, Medvedev sees cooperation with them as merely a "considerable reserve that will help us reach" these modernization goals.

In this context, missile defense seems like small but annoying obstacle to cooperation. It will be good if we can reach an agreement with NATO on joint missile defense - something NATO itself is pushing for. If not, we'll have to deploy these vague "new strike systems," which we will have to develop. Note that these systems are not presented as the alternative to a modernization partnership. They will be deployed but nothing more. It seems like an awful waste of money.

How is this worldview any different than idealism, or at least realistic idealism? Primarily because relations between Russia and the United States in particular, and between Russia and the West in general have long ceased to play a vital role in global politics. And while I believe strategic offensive arms are an important issue, the pending ratification of the Russian-American New START Treaty is an important, but not seminal, event in global politics. President Obama's Republican opponents claim that New START was his only foreign policy achievement - a treaty Republicans believe that both sides can do without. Maybe they are wrong, but this is an interesting sign.

So, what is the dominant mood in global politics today? The answer is clear - total uncertainty about the current world order and what it will be like tomorrow. Let's take just one example of the numerous examples out there, an article from the American magazine Foreign Policy entitled "How's That New World Order Working Out?" The ideas raised in this article are echoed in many similar publications.

The author, Parag Khanna, writes that "the rising powers are reminding us that respect for hierarchy is no longer on anyone's agenda," and that "Brazil and Turkey - two of the world's most avidly internationalist emerging powers - joined together this May to announce they had stepped in to broker a nuclear-fuel swap deal with Iran..." These countries are not even permanent members of the UN Security Council. He goes on to say that, "A little over 20 years ago, then U.S. President George H.W. Bush... proclaimed a 'new world order.'" It was supposed to be a U.S.-dominated international system, but where is it now? Khanna writes that "the G20 has hardly lived up to its billing as the new 'steering committee for the world,'" and that "the Security Council has long ceased to be legitimate or effective."

He writes: "The closest thing we have to multilateral governance happens on a regional level, and it is far more promising, whether the deeply entrenched and supranational European Union, the rejuvenated Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or the nascent African Union." Khanna believes that "with each passing year, deal-making at Davos and the Clinton Global Initiative become more important than the glacial advance of empty declarations at international summits. These and other venues are the places where the 'new new world order' is being built. And it's happening from the bottom up rather than the top down." It's still not clear what this "new new world order" will look like.

There are counterarguments to be made (this is exactly what the author wants), but on the whole, the symptoms are familiar.

To get back to missile defense, many people in Moscow wonder who this project is meant to defend us from. Is NATO sure that Iran will not only be capable but willing to launch strikes at Europe? For what purpose?

The issue of a Russian-Western missile defense alliance will be a kind of litmus test of how quickly we'll be able to overcome the inertia of past fears and mistrust. The majority of people in Russia and the West do not yet realize that the old world order is long gone. Treaties on strategic arms reductions belong to the era of George H.W. Bush, although the declarations affirming that we are no longer enemies were signed during his son's presidency. How will these Augean stables be cleaned? An interesting question. But, judging by Medvedev's latest address, Moscow truly wants to let bygones be bygones.

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

OPINION

Russia Fears a New Arms Race, Strengthens Defenses

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RIA Novosti military commentator Ilya Kramnik

President Dmitry Medvedev caused a media sensation on November 30, 2010, when he used his third state of the nation address to comment on the Strategic Missile Forces, aerospace defense and Russia's attitude to the planned deployment of the U.S. ballistic missile shield in Europe. This offers an overview of what Russia's strategic forces and space defense will look like ten years from now.

Arms race or cooperation?

The president said that the failure to reach any agreement on missile defense risked provoking a new spiral of the arms race.

"I'd like to speak plainly about the choice we face in the next ten years: either we reach an agreement on missile defense and create a meaningful joint mechanism for cooperation, or, if we fail to do so, a new spiral of the arms race will begin, and we will have to make decisions on the deployment of new strike weapons," Medvedev said.

It is not the first time that this possibility and Russia's potential reaction have been discussed. The Obama administration has greatly modified George Bush's plans for a U.S. ballistic missile shield in Europe, which will be no longer designed to intercept intercontinental ballistic missiles.

But presidents come and go, while technology grows ever more sophisticated - or deadly. Obama's decision could still be reviewed by his successor.

If that were to happen, Russia would have two options.

It could deploy tactical missiles in its western regions which would be targeted on the U.S. ballistic missile shield in Eastern Europe. Russia has everything it needs to play out this scenario, including the Iskander-M systems (SS-26 Stone) equipped with two solid-propellant single-stage guided missiles of "quasi-ballistic" capability. These missiles have a range of 400 km (250 miles) and can reportedly carry conventional and nuclear warheads: enough to form a robust counterweight to the U.S. missile shield.

Russia's other option would be to withdraw from the START-3 treaty, a course of action stipulated in a special statement made during the treaty's signing last spring. Incidentally, the treaty has not yet been ratified. This course of action, however, would be prohibitively expensive, as it would involve a quantitative growth in strategic nuclear forces in addition to a new round of the nuclear arms race.

All things considered, any form of new confrontation would be counterproductive for both sides.

Aerospace defense and the Strategic Missile Forces

Medvedev's call to create in Russia a unified strategic command combining its air, missile and space defenses was no less news-worthy.

"Next year we must combine the existing air defense and missile defense networks, early warning systems and aerospace monitoring systems under a unified strategic command." This will form the basis of Russia's strategic defense, he continued. It will protect Moscow, the Central Industrial Region and the Supreme Command.

To be complemented, later, with new-generation air defense systems capable of intercepting ballistic missiles, the unified strategic command will protect selected regions, including the Strategic Missile Forces' launch sites, from both air and space attacks.

This rearming of the Strategic Missile Force will continue throughout the next decade. Soviet-made missiles, which are becoming obsolete, will be replaced with the RS-24 Yars, a MIRVed version of the Topol-M missile capable of carrying four warheads. The production of single-warhead Topol-M missiles will be discontinued.

Russia currently has about 70 silo-based and mobile Topol-M missile systems.

Within a decade this Strategic Missile Forces should boast up to 100 Yars systems. Alongside the remaining Topols, they will be able to carry about 500 nuclear warheads.

The other charges permitted under the new START treaty, which cuts the total to 1,550 for each side, will be carried by naval forces (about 1,000) and the Russian air force's long-range aviation (approximately 100).

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