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RIA Novosti
23 June 2009

Moscow Hopes N. Korea Stops Nuclear Tests, Starts Talks - Lavrov

VIENNA, June 23 (RIA Novosti) - Moscow hopes international talks on Korea's nuclear problem will be resumed shortly and is waiting for Pyongyang to confirm that it will stop all nuclear tests, the Russian foreign minister said on Tuesday.

"We are concerned by the deadlock that has evolved, primarily due to North Korea's unacceptable actions," Sergei Lavrov said.

He said the UN Security Council had tightened sanctions on North Korea not to punish it but to encourage the impoverished communist state to return to the negotiating table and fulfill its obligations.

He added, however, that the talks could only be resumed "after North Korea confirmed that it will conduct no more nuclear tests."

Moscow said on Monday it supported the idea of five-party talks on the nuclear issue to determine further steps in dealing with the current crisis.

The concept of five-party talks, which would exclude North Korea, has gained ground following a meeting between South Korean President Lee Myung-bak and his U.S. counterpart Barack Obama last week.

The South Korean leader had suggested that a new framework for dialogue may be needed to draw the North back to the negotiation table.

The six-nation talks involving North and South Korea, Russia, Japan, China and the United States, were launched in 2003 after Pyongyang withdrew from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT).

Under deals reached in 2007, the North began disabling a nuclear reactor and other facilities at Yongbyon under international supervision, in exchange for economic aid and political incentives, which included deliveries of fuel oil to Pyongyang.

However, in December last year, a round of six-nation talks ended in deadlock after the U.S. demanded that nuclear inspectors be allowed to take samples from North Korean facilities out of the country for further analysis.

The UN has recently imposed new sanctions on North Korea that ban the import and export of nuclear material, missiles and all other weapons, with the exception of small arms. It has authorized the world's navies to enforce the ban. The sanctions came in response to the North Korean nuclear test on May 25.

On June 13, the reclusive communist state released a statement threatening "resolute military action" if the United States and its allies tried to isolate it, vowing to "weaponize" plutonium, and warning it would consider attempts to blockade it an "act of war."

The Russian Foreign Ministry reiterated on Monday that there was no alternative to a diplomatic solution to the crisis, but said Moscow viewed the latest threats from Pyongyang as an open challenge to the international community.

<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20090623/155330292.html>

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China View
23 June 2009

U.S. Is To Blame for Nuclear Crisis: DPRK Newspaper

PYONGYANG, June 23 (Xinhua) -- The United States' hostile policy against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) is to blame for the crisis being brewed on the Korean peninsula, a commentary carried by the official Rodong Sinmun daily newspaper said on Tuesday.

The DPRK "has to be fully prepared to deal with any circumstances," as the U.S. "is wielding the stick," the commentary said, referring to DPRK's nuclear programs.

The nuclear deterrence of the DPRK is no threat to anyone, it noted, adding that "If the DPRK had no nuclear weapons, it would be choked off by the U.S."

The article accused the U.S. of "systematically beefing up its force in South Korea" and "still deploying more than 1,000 pieces of nuclear weapons."

The DPRK's official media have recently launched a propaganda campaign to agitate the people and demonstrate the DPRK's "unshakable will".

The U.N. Security Council on June 12 unanimously approved wider sanctions against the DPRK over its May 25 nuclear test. The resolution banned all weapons exports from the DPRK and most arms imports into the country. It authorized U.N. member states to inspect DPRK's sea, air and land cargo, requiring them to seize and destroy any goods transported in violation of the sanctions.

The DPRK has declared an opposition to the U.N. resolution and vowed to beef up its nuclear arsenal.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-06/23/content_11588314.htm

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Global Security Newswire
June 24, 2009

China Acknowledges "Concern" on North Korea

China today acknowledged that North Korea's persistence in developing nuclear arms is a matter of "serious concern," but reaffirmed its position that the issue would be best addressed through diplomacy, Reuters reported (see *GSN*, June 22).

"For the regional security of northeast Asia, the North Korean nuclear issue is not only a serious concern for the United States and neighboring South Korea and Japan, but also for China," Lt. Gen. Ma Xiaotian at a press conference following a meeting with U.S. defense officials.

"We hope and encourage the relevant parties to take positive steps and more stabilizing measures to control developments on the Korean Peninsula," he added, "to address the issues through diplomatic negotiations, consultations and dialogue" (Chris Buckley, Reuters, June 24).

China also urged the United States and its allies not to be overzealous when enforcing the U.N. trade sanctions against Pyongyang, Kyodo News reported.

The comments come as a U.S. Naval destroyer is stalking a North Korean cargo ship suspected of carrying weapons of some kind down China's eastern coast.

"China will strictly adhere to the U.N. Security Council's resolution, but at the same time any relevant cargo inspections should be based on sufficient evidence and the right reasons," said Qin Gang, a spokesman for China's Foreign Ministry, adding that the matter of monitoring North Korea's exports is a "complex and sensitive issue" (Kyodo News/Breitbart.com, June 23).

The North Korean vessel reportedly on its way to Myanmar might not prove the best test case for enforcement of ramped-up trade sanctions imposed in the wake of the regime's May 25 nuclear test, the *Korea Herald* reported.

"It seems unlikely for the ship to be actually carrying weapons or related material, especially now that the 'shadow process' has been splashed all over the media," said a top-level South Korean Foreign Ministry official.

The official said that most successful instances of enforcement should occur out of the public spotlight (Kim Ji-hyun, *Korea Herald* I, June 25).

South Korea is moving to buy military equipment to cope with potential aggression from the North, AFP reported today.

Defense officials want to buy a \$4.7 million system to guard against the electromagnetic pulse created by a nuclear explosion, which could potentially disable Seoul's communications and defense capabilities, according to the South Korean newspaper *Chosun Ilbo*.

Seoul also plans to shell out \$50 million for "bunker-buster" bombs, which could enable the South Korea to eliminate its neighbor's underground nuclear sites or command installations. The South had not planned on adding bunker busters for another four years. It is also looking to invest heavily in spy planes, missiles and missile radars (Agence France-Presse/*Khaleej Times*, June 24).

South Korean and Russian officials are meeting today in Moscow to discuss how to deal with Pyongyang's recent behavior, the *Korea Herald* reported.

Russia has been reluctant to allow punitive sanctions against North Korea, and has consistently advocated for negotiation over isolation. However, it expressed more annoyance than usual at Pyongyang's latest flurry of provocations, especially last month's underground nuclear test.

"We did see some progress on convening five-nation talks," said top South Korean nuclear negotiator Wi Sung-lac before heading to Russia, referring to nuclear talks that would address the North's program without participation from Pyongyang. "This and the implementation of the latest United Nations Security Council resolution as well as the solution for the North Korean nuclear issue will be on the agenda."

The idea for five-nation talks has been talked about publicly but not officially arranged, with China yet to express its support. Officials from all nations have stressed that five-way talks on North Korea would not mean they have given up on diplomacy with Pyongyang (Kim Ji-hyun, *Korea Herald* II, June 24).

http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20090624_4084.php

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Yonhap News
24 June 2009

N. Korea Condemns U.S. 'Hostile' Policy on Eve of War Anniversary

SEOUL, June 24 (Yonhap) -- North Korea on Wednesday accused the United States of trying to incite a second war against it and said there can be no peace on the peninsula as long as Washington keeps its hostile policy.

The criticism by the North's state media came on the eve of the 59th anniversary of the outbreak of the 1950-53 Korean War. Such accusations are routinely issued in memory of the tragedy.

"More than half a century has passed since the Korean War, but the Korean people still have vivid memories of the crimes of the U.S. imperialists who provoked the war," the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said.

Citing U.S. data on troops and military equipment dispatched to South Korea in 1949 shortly before the war, the KCNA claimed the conflict was initiated by the U.S., driven by its "ambition for world domination." North Korea initiated the war after the U.S. and the Soviet Union divided the Korean Peninsula after the end of World War II.

The North Korean media claimed that new U.N. sanctions over the country's May 25 nuclear test are part of a U.S. scheme to incite a second Korean war.

The U.N. Security Council adopted Resolution 1874 earlier this month, banning all 192 U.N. members from weapons trade with North Korea and restricting financial transactions that could be used to boost Pyongyang's military force.

"This is another ugly product of the U.S.-led international offensive aimed to disarm and economically stifle our republic so as to rupture the ideology and system that the Korean people has chosen," the KCNA said.

State media reported on various anecdotes of civilian massacres the North accuses the U.S. soldiers of committing. Students and farmers held various rallies to "vow revenge," they said.

The Rodong Sinmun, the North's main newspaper published by the Workers' Party, said a recent U.S. pledge to provide nuclear protection for South Korea is evidence of Washington's hostile policy toward the North. U.S. President Barack Obama promised "extended deterrence" for South Korea during his summit with President Lee Myung-bak earlier last week.

The paper added that as long as the U.S. does not terminate "its hostile policy and isolate-and-stifle maneuver against our republic, solid peace on the Korean Peninsula can never be achieved."

The U.S. has provided a so-called nuclear umbrella for South Korea since the war ended with an armistice. The fragile truce was never replaced by a peace treaty, leaving the Koreans in a technical state of war.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2009/06/24/62/0401000000AEN20090624007400315F.HTML>

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Associated Press (AP)
By JAE-SOON CHANG
25 June 2009

North Korea Vows to Enlarge Its Atomic Arsenal

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea vowed Thursday to enlarge its atomic arsenal and warned of a "fire shower of nuclear retaliation" in the event of a U.S. attack, as the regime marked the 1950 outbreak of the Korean War.

The anniversary came as the U.S. Navy followed a North Korean ship suspected of carrying weapons in violation of a U.N. resolution punishing Pyongyang's May 25 nuclear test, and as anticipation mounted that the North might test-fire short- or mid-range missiles in the coming days.

President Barack Obama extended U.S. economic sanctions against North Korea for another year Wednesday, saying the North's possession of "weapons-usable fissile material" and its proliferation risk "continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat" to the United States, according to the White House Web site.

According to the 2008 document outlining the restrictions, "all property and interests in property of North Korea or a North Korean national ... were blocked." The U.S. measures are on top of U.N. sanctions that bar member states from buying weapons from or selling them to North Korea. They also ban the sale of luxury goods to the isolated country and prohibit the provision of weapons-related technical training and financial transactions.

State-run newspapers in Pyongyang ran lengthy editorials accusing the U.S. of invading the country in 1950 and of looking for an opportunity to attack again. The editorials said those actions justified North Korea's development of atomic bombs to defend itself.

The North "will never give up its nuclear deterrent ... and will further strengthen it" as long as Washington remains hostile, Pyongyang's main Rodong Sinmun newspaper said.

In a separate commentary, the paper blasted a recent U.S. pledge to defend South Korea with its nuclear weapons, saying that amounted to "asking for the calamitous situation of having a fire shower of nuclear retaliation all over South Korea."

Historical evidence shows it was North Korea that started the Korean War by invading the South, but Pyongyang claims the U.S. was to blame. The totalitarian government apparently hopes to infuse North Koreans with fear of a fresh American attack to better control the hunger-stricken population.

The U.S. fought alongside the South, leading U.N. forces, during the war. The conflict ended in 1953 with a truce, not a peace treaty, leaving the peninsula divided and in a state of war. The U.S. has 28,500 troops in South Korea to protect against renewed hostilities.

The U.S. has repeatedly said it has no intention of attacking the North.

The new U.N. resolution seeks to clamp down on North Korea's trading of banned arms and weapons-related material by requiring U.N. member states to request inspections of ships carrying suspicious cargo.

North Korea has said it would consider any interception of its ships a declaration of war.

Adding to the tensions, North Korea has been holding two U.S. journalists since March. The reporters, Laura Ling and Euna Lee, were sentenced to 12 years of hard labor for illegal border crossing and hostile acts earlier this month.

Ling's husband, Iain Clayton, said Wednesday that his wife called him on Sunday night and she sounded scared. He also said Ling's medical condition has deteriorated and Lee has developed a medical problem. Ling reportedly suffers from an ulcer.

The Kang Nam — the ship the U.S. is tracking — is the first North Korean ship to be followed under the resolution. It left the North Korean port of Nampo a week ago and is believed bound for Myanmar, South Korean and U.S. officials said.

A senior U.S. defense official said Wednesday that the ship had already cleared the Taiwan Strait.

He said he didn't know how much range the Kang Nam has — whether or when it may need to stop at a port to refuel — but that the ship has in the past stopped in Hong Kong.

Another U.S. defense official said he tended to doubt reports that the Kang Nam was carrying nuclear-related equipment, saying the information officials had received seemed to indicate the cargo was conventional munitions.

The U.S. officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were discussing intelligence.

The U.S. and its allies have not decided whether to contact and request an inspection of the ship, Pentagon press secretary Geoff Morrell said Wednesday.

Reports about possible missile launches from the North highlighted the tension on the Korean peninsula.

The North has designated a no-sail zone off its east coast from June 25 to July 10 for military drills.

A senior South Korean government official said the ban is believed connected to North Korean plans to fire short- or mid-range missiles. He spoke on condition of anonymity, citing department policy.

Meanwhile, South Korea is trying to organize talks among North Korea's five negotiating partners in six-nation nuclear talks — the U.S., China, Japan, South Korea and Russia — in an attempt to get Pyongyang back to the negotiating table.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5iURO8fOyWVOA0ytFlaAGuC9F7R9wD991L8J00>

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London Guardian

25 June 2009

North Korea Threatens Nuclear 'Fire Shower' If Attacked

Justin McCurry in Tokyo

North Korea today threatened to retaliate with a nuclear "fire shower" if it is attacked by the US and warned it would expand its nuclear arsenal, a month after it carried out a controlled nuclear explosion in defiance of the UN security council.

The regime used the 59th anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean war to step up its threats against the US, whose navy is tracking a North Korean vessel off the Chinese coast that is suspected of carrying weapons.

Earlier this month the UN banned all weapons exports from North Korea in response to the May 25 nuclear test, its second in three years.

The latest warning came as speculation mounted that Pyongyang is preparing to test launch short- and medium-range missiles.

North Korea has banned ships from the waters off its east coast until July 10 for "military exercises", but South Korean and US intelligence officials do not believe the tests will involve a long-range Taepodong-2 missile, which is theoretically capable of reaching Hawaii.

Yesterday President Barack Obama extended Washington's sanctions against North Korea for another year and warned that the regime's nuclear weapons programme posed "an unusual and extraordinary threat" to the US.

North Korea, which is thought to possess between five and seven nuclear bombs, recently restarted its main nuclear reactor, which is capable of reprocessing spent fuel rods used in the production of weapons-grade plutonium.

In Pyongyang the state-run media accused the US of provoking the Korean war – most historians agree the conflict was started by the North – and of looking for an excuse to launch another attack.

The Rodong Sinmun newspaper said the North had every right to defend itself in the face of what it called US hostility. The regime "will never give up its nuclear deterrent ... and will further strengthen it," it said.

The newspaper said a recent US pledge to use nuclear weapons to defend South Korea amounted to "asking for the calamitous situation of having a fire shower of nuclear retaliation all over South Korea".

The three-year Korean war ended in 1953 with a fragile truce and the creation of the most heavily fortified border in the world. Last month Pyongyang said it was no longer bound by the armistice after the South agreed to take part in US-led searches of vessels suspected of carrying weapons of mass destruction.

The ship now being tracked by a US navy destroyer has reportedly cleared the Taiwan Strait and is thought to be heading to Burma with a shipment of conventional munitions.

The US and its allies have yet to decide whether to intercept and search the ship, a move that North Korea said it would view as a declaration of war.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/jun/25/north-korea-nuclear-threat>

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Yonhap News
25 June 2009

N. Korea Says U.S. Nuclear Umbrella for South Justifies Own Nukes

By Kim Hyun

SEOUL, June 25 (Yonhap) -- U.S. nuclear protection for South Korea justifies North Korea running its own nuclear program, Pyongyang claimed Thursday, warning "fiery showers of nuclear retaliation" in case of any aggression against it.

Reacting to a South Korea-U.S. summit on June 16 in Washington, the Rodong Sinmun, the North's main newspaper published by the Workers' Party, denounced the leaders' joint statement as "a disgusting kiss between the master and his servant" and dismissed their talk of sanctions as "balderdash."

The joint statement reaffirmed the U.S. commitment in writing that it will provide an "extended deterrence" for South Korea against the threat of a nuclear attack by the North. It was the first such reassurance that came after the North's second nuclear test on May 25.

"The stipulation of 'extended deterrence' only justifies our cause to possess nuclear deterrence and in case anything happens, will only incur a ruthless situation in which the fiery showers of our nuclear protection will fall upon South Korea," the paper said in a statement carried by the official Korean Central News Agency.

The statement also rebuked South Korean President Lee Myung-bak's departure date for Washington, June 15, which marked the 9th anniversary of the first inter-Korean summit between then South Korean President Kim Dae-jung and North Korean leader Kim Jong-il.

It rebutted Lee's remarks at the summit that North Korea would no longer be rewarded for its belligerent behavior.

"Everybody knows well that such balderdash can never cut ice with the DPRK. It is a mockery and insult to the DPRK to raise a hue and cry over the small 'reward.' The DPRK neither wishes to receive such despicable 'reward' nor requires it," it said.

DPRK stands for Democratic People's Republic of Korea, North Korea's official name.

"The DPRK's nuclear deterrent has nothing to do with somebody's 'recognition,' and its only purpose is to prevent any aggressor from deliberately provoking it," the paper said.

Concerning Lee's proposal to hold denuclearization talks minus North Korea, the paper said "one must know that the six-party talks are like crying over spilt milk and their pressure for 'dismantlement' of nukes went bust long ago."

North Korea pulled out of the six-party talks involving the two Koreas, the U.S., China, Japan and Russia aimed at ending its nuclear program soon after the U.N. Security Council condemned its long-range rocket launch in early April.

"The U.S. and its puppet are sadly mistaken if they calculate their foolish trumpeting would help pressurize the DPRK. If the American master and his servant Lee, both political greenhorns, would like to say something about the DPRK, it is better for them to study more about it," the paper said.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2009/06/25/16/0401000000AEN20090625003200315F.HTML>

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Pravda
23 June 2009

Russia Launches First Nuclear Submarine Since USSR's Collapse

Russia's strategic nuclear-powered Yury Dolgoruki submarine has finally been launched. It is the first submarine, which Russia made after the collapse of the USSR. Russian shipbuilders can be both proud and ashamed of the new cruiser: the works on the submarine began 16 years ago.

The construction of the nuclear cruiser was very slow due to the lack of finance. When the submarine was finally assembled, it turned out that the Bulava rocket was not ready for it. Officials of Russia's Defense Ministry say that the new rocket would be passed into service in 2009 or in 2010.

The Yury Dolgoruki can submerge at the depth of 400 meters. The cruising capacity makes up 90 days. The submarine is 160 meters long and 13.5 meters wide. The sub is equipped with torpedoes and cruise missiles. It also has six torpedo launchers and shoulder-fired air defense systems. The submarine can fire Bulava missiles from 12 launching silos, but all of them are empty for the time being.

Yury Dolgoruki is the first SSBN submarine of the Borei class that is being built for the Russian Navy. Named after the founder of Moscow Yury Dolgoruki, it was laid down on 2 November 1996 and was first planned to enter service in 2001.

However, the SS-N-28 missile that the Borei class was supposed to carry was abandoned after several failed tests, and the submarine was redesigned for the Bulava missile. Based on the Russian Topol-M (SS-27) ICBM the Bulava missile is smaller than the original SS-N-28, and in the 2007 START treaty data exchange it was reported that all Borei-class submarines would carry 16 missiles instead of 12, as originally intended.

The submarine was rolled out of its construction hall into a launch dock on 15 April 2007 in Severodvinsk, when it was about 82% complete. The Russian Government has allocated nearly 5 billion rubles, or 40% of the Navy's 2007 weapons budget, for the completion of the submarine.

<http://english.pravda.ru/russia/economics/23-06-2009/107838-submarine-0>

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RIA Novosti
25 June 2009

Russia to Lay Down 2nd Graney Class Nuclear Sub in July

MOSCOW, June 25 (RIA Novosti) - Russia will start construction of a second Project 885 Yasen (Graney) class nuclear-powered multipurpose attack submarine in July, a shipbuilding industry official said on Thursday.

Project 855 Yasen (Graney) class nuclear submarines combine the ability to launch a variety of long-range cruise missiles (up to 3,100 miles) with nuclear warheads, and effectively engage hostile submarines and surface warships.

"A second Yasen class nuclear submarine will be laid down on July 24 at the Sevmash shipyard on the eve of Russian Navy Day," said Vladimir Pyalov, general director of the Malakhit design bureau.

Pyalov said the new sub would be named Kazan.

Work on the first submarine in the series - the Severodvinsk - started in 1992, and the vessel had been scheduled to be commissioned before 1998. However, the construction was significantly delayed for financial reasons, and work had been suspended until 2001.

In 2003 Sevmash reportedly received extra funding to accelerate the completion of the Severodvinsk. Since then, the construction cost of the submarine had to be adjusted, and in 2008 financing totaled 4 billion rubles (\$146 mln).

Pyalov confirmed on Thursday that the Severodvinsk would be commissioned by the Russian Navy in 2010.

"The Sevmash shipyard will float out the Severodvinsk submarine in December this year, and after a series of sea trials it will join the Russian navy in 2010," the official said.

The submarine's armament includes 24 cruise missiles, including the 3M51 Alfa SLCM, the SS-NX-26 Oniks SLCM or the SS-N-21 Granat/Sampson SLCM. It will also have eight torpedo tubes as well as mines and anti-ship missiles such as SS-N-16 Stallion.

Russia's Navy commander, Adm. Vladimir Vysotsky, said in July last year that the construction of new-generation nuclear-powered ballistic missile and attack submarines is a top priority for the Russian Navy's development.

Under the Russian State Arms Procurement Program for 2007-2015, the Navy will receive several dozen surface ships and submarines, including five Project 955 Borey nuclear-powered strategic ballistic missile submarines equipped with new Bulava ballistic missiles, two Project 885 Yasen nuclear-powered multipurpose submarines, six Project 677 Lada diesel-electric submarines, three Project 22350 frigates and five Project 20380 corvettes.

http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20090625/155349485.html

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RIA Novosti
26 June 2009

Typhoon Class Submarines to Remain in Service with Russian Navy

ST. PETERSBURG, June 26 (RIA Novosti) - The world's largest Typhoon-class submarines will remain in service with the Russian Navy, the Navy commander said on Friday.

The Typhoon-class submarine is a nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine that entered service with the Soviet Navy in the 1980s. Three of the six vessels built remain commissioned.

"We will keep these submarines in service," Adm. Vladimir Vysotsky said.

The Dmitry Donskoy submarine has been modernized as a test platform for Russia's new Bulava missile.

Two other vessels, the Arkhangelsk and the Severstal, remain in reserve at a naval base in Severodvinsk in north Russia awaiting overhaul. They will most likely be modernized to carry new-generation sea-based cruise missiles to match the U.S. Ohio-class submarines.

The Typhoons will be replaced in the future with the new Borey-class nuclear-powered strategic submarines, which will be equipped with Bulava sea-based ballistic missiles.

http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20090626/155362076.html

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Computer World

June 23, 2009

Defense Secretary Gates Approves Creation of U.S. Cyber Command

(Computerworld) Defense Secretary Robert Gates today approved the creation of a unified U.S. Cyber Command to oversee the protection of military networks against cyber threats.

In a memorandum issued to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gates said he intends to recommend to the president that the new command be led by the director of the National Security Agency (NSA) Lt. Gen. Keith Alexander.

Gates directed the commander of the U.S. Strategic Command, Gen. Kevin Chilton, to develop implementation plans for Cybercom, as the new unified command will be called.

The plans are due by Sept. 1 and need to include the new command's mission, roles and responsibilities, reporting structures and accountability measures, Gates said.

The new command will most likely be headquartered in Fort Meade, Md., and will reach initial operating capabilities by October, and full operating capability by October 2010, Gates said in his memo.

The "subordinate unified" cyber command will operate under U.S. Strategic Command for military cyberspace operations.

Gates also ordered the undersecretary of defense for policy to develop policies and strategies for a comprehensive approach to the Defense Department's cyberspace operations.

The proposal to create the new command has been expected for some time and is part of an effort to address growing threats to Defense Department and Pentagon networks from foreign and domestic threats. As part of its mission, Cybercom is also expected to develop a range of offensive cyber warfare capabilities.

The proposal for Cybercom is part of a broader effort by the Obama administration to bolster federal and military cybersecurity capabilities. It comes a few weeks after President Obama announced the creation of a White House cyber security coordinator role and plans to develop a comprehensive national strategy for protecting U.S. interests in cyberspace.

That effort is largely targeted at protecting U.S. civilian government and critical infrastructure targets in cyberspace, while the new command's mission is to do the same for DoD networks.

Alan Paller, director of research at SANS Institute, a security training and certification body, said the move to create a unified cybercommand across the Defense Department is a "spectacular idea."

Melding both defensive and offensive missions under the same command will allow for better threat preparedness, he said. A unified command also increases the "potential for interoperability and both process sharing and real time information sharing among the services," Paller said.

He said the only downside is the possibility that the cybercommand will "so militarize the Information Assurance Division of NSA" that it could harm the public-private partnerships that are important for security.

http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&taxonomyName=networking_and_internet&articleId=9134744&taxonomyId=16&intsrc=kc_top

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London Guardian

24 June 2009

Pentagon Creates 'Cyber Command' for Waging Online Warfare

America has confirmed that it will be creating a new Pentagon "cyber command" to bring together the country's various hi-tech military units under one roof.

US defence secretary Robert Gates ordered the formation of the group earlier today, following a period of debate over the best way to defend the country from attacks over the internet.

The command - which will unite a string of organisations run by the army, navy, air force - plans to tie them together into a single, coherent group that is able to both defend the United States from information warfare and strike out at hostile nations if necessary.

The Department of Defence said that the group is set to begin operating later this year, and plans to be fully operation by October 2010.

The move comes amid growing concern over the possibility of and the threat of cyber-espionage - including perceived attacks from inside China and Russia.

In recent months a series of leaks have revealed security breaches – including the US electricity grid and the theft of documents detailing the \$300bn Joint Strike Fighter project. Though it is usually impossible to trace the perpetrators of such actions, US officials have said they suspect that such attacks are sponsored by a foreign state as part of an ongoing espionage campaign.

Last week Gates's deputy, William Lynn, said that cyber warfare is now one of the biggest challenges to the US military.

"Once the province of nations, the ability to destroy via cyber means now also rests in the hands of small groups and individuals: from terrorist groups to organized crime, hackers to industrial spies to foreign intelligence services," he said in a speech to the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

"This is not some future threat. The cyber threat is here today; it is here now."

According to reports, the front runner to take control of the new organisation is General Keith Alexander, currently the director of the National Security Agency, which has run an extended campaign to take control of the nation's cyberdefences.

Last month President Obama publicly committed to creating a new White House role to oversee the civil aspect of cyberdefence - treating the country's digital networks as a "strategic national asset" for the first time.

"Protecting this infrastructure will be a national security priority," he said at the time. "We will deter, prevent, detect and defend against attacks and recover quickly."

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/blog/2009/jun/24/usa-defence>

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Security Focus
June 24, 2009

Pentagon Signs Off on Cyber Command

Robert Lemos

The U.S. Secretary of Defense ordered the military to create a unified command to act as the nation's central hub for cyber capabilities and commanded the Pentagon to develop a policy framework for cyberspace operations.

The director of the National Security Agency will lead the new organization, dubbed the U.S. Cyber Command (USCYBERCOMM), stated Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates in a memo released on Tuesday. A new deputy commander position will also be created and will be filled with a military officer with the rank of Lieutenant General or Vice Admiral. The joint military groups responsible for network operations, defense and attack — the Joint Task Force-Global Network Operations (JTF-GNO) and the Joint Functional Component Command-Network Warfare (JFCC-NW) — will be incorporated into the new command, the memo stated.

"Our increasing dependency on cyberspace, alongside a growing array of cyber threats and vulnerabilities, adds a new element of risk to our national security," Gates wrote in the memo. "To address this risk effectively and to secure freedom of action in cyberspace, the Department of Defense requires a command that possesses the required technical capability and remains focused on the integration of cyberspace operations."

The U.S. announced it would create a cyber command earlier this year, after putting the Air Force's plans for such a group on hold last August. In May, top military officials argued for a single joint command and told the media that a cyber attack could merit a more conventional, kinetic, response. Last month, the Obama administration released a cybersecurity review that called for the creation of a White House office that would help create the nation's cyber policy.

The U.S. Cyber Command will be established by this October and be fully operational by October 2010. It will be likely headquartered with the NSA in Fort Meade, Maryland.

<http://www.securityfocus.com/brief/978>

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China View
24 June 2009

Pentagon: New Cyber Command Focuses on Military Network

WASHINGTON, June 24 (Xinhua) -- The new cyber command that the U.S. Defense Department just officially approved to create will focus on the military networks, said the Pentagon on Wednesday.

"This is not some sort of new and necessarily different authorities that have been granted," said Defense Department spokesman Geoff Morrell at a press briefing.

According to a memo signed by Defense Secretary Robert Gates on Tuesday, the U.S. Strategic Command will start to draw a plan to establish the subcommand, which is the first of its kind in the country, and submit a proposal by this fall.

"This is about trying to figure out how we, within this department, within the United States military, can better coordinate the day-to-day defense, protection and operation of the department's computer networks," Morrell said.

He also noted that the creation of the cyber command is an internal reorganization to consolidate and streamline its cyber capabilities within a single command, not representing any attempt to "militarize" cyberspace or take over the responsibility for defending civilian networks, which is the responsibility of the Homeland Security Department.

"This is part of a holistic, government wide effort to better organize and situate ourselves to deal with this very real threat," he said. "And it is a complement to efforts that are taking place elsewhere within the United States government."

A report from the Pentagon website said that Gates reportedly plans to recommend Army Lt. Gen. Keith B. Alexander, director of the National Security Agency, to receive his fourth star and take on the additional responsibility of commanding the cyber command.

Initial indications are that the cyber command will have its headquarters at Fort Meade, Maryland, pending results of an environmental impact statement, it added.

However, details about the new U.S. Cyber Command are still unfolding.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-06/25/content_11596314.htm

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Global Security Newswire
June 23, 2009

Experts Debate Effect of Iranian Protests on Nuclear Policy

U.S. officials and experts disagreed on whether the large-scale protests ripping through Iran could encourage the nation to negotiate a halt to its disputed nuclear activities, the *Washington Times* reported today (see *GSN*, June 22).

The Obama administration yesterday defended its cautious tone on the Iranian demonstrations that followed President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's disputed re-election on June 12.

"Our long-term security interests haven't changed," White House spokesman Robert Gibbs said. "Our interests, as it relates to our grave concern about the help that's provided to terrorists, the grave concern that we have about the pursuit of a nuclear weapon, remain unchanged." U.S. efforts to engage Iran diplomatically are not "on hold," the State Department added.

Since taking office in 2005, Ahmadinejad has shown little interest in halting his nation's uranium enrichment program in exchange for political and economic benefits from the West. The United States and its allies suspect the

enrichment effort is geared toward generating nuclear-weapon material, but Tehran has insisted the program would only produce nuclear power plant fuel.

"The [Iranian] government's domestic political capital has been seriously eroded" by the recent protests, one high-level Obama administration official said. "That may lead to willingness on their part to engage more."

Independent analysts expressed doubts, however.

"I can understand the argument intellectually, but it seems very unlikely," said Suzanne Maloney, an Iran expert with the Brookings Institution. "When push comes to shove, it's not going to be that easy for us or for them" to break the nuclear stalemate.

U.S. President Barack Obama's administration "wants the best out of the situation, but I'm not sure they will get it," added Trita Parsi, head of the National Iranian American Council.

Iran has not responded to an Italian invitation to meet this week with high-level officials from the United States and other members of the Group of Eight industrialized nations.

"With three days to go, I still do not have a reply. I must consider that Iran has declined the invitation," said Italian Foreign Minister Franco Frattini. "Iran has lost an opportunity by not participating in the conference" (Nicholas Kravlev, *Washington Times*, June 23).

Russia, though, expressed optimism that Iran would soon agree to enter nuclear talks with the five permanent U.N. Security Council member states and Germany, Interfax reported yesterday.

"There are all the necessary conditions today to launch a negotiating process with Iranians" based on the six powers' offer of nuclear cooperation benefits, a Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman said. He added that the powers were still willing to halt moves toward new sanctions if Iran suspended the expansion of its nuclear program while the sides negotiated an agenda for future talks.

"We hope that Tehran's recent statements regarding its readiness to cooperate with the sextet will turn into practical steps, and Iran will take advantage of the existing opportunities and will give a concrete response to the sextet's proposal on talks without any further delays," he said.

"When trust in the peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear program is restored, it will be treated as similar programs of any other non-nuclear member of the [Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty]," the spokesman added (Interfax, June 22).

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was set to begin a tour of European nations today in an effort drum up support for new economic penalties against Iran, Agence France-Presse reported.

Netanyahu is expected to meet in Rome with Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi and then travel to Paris for talks with French President Nicolas Sarkozy and U.S. envoy George Mitchell.

"Above all, the prime minister is planning to bring up the Iranian dossier," a high-level Israeli official said. "With what is happening now in Iran, words and condemnations are not enough, the world must decide to take much harder measures to prevent the Iranian regime from acquiring nuclear arms" (Jean-Luc Renaudie, Agence France-Presse I/Google News, June 22).

Jerusalem and Tehran might be able to co-exist peacefully if Iran had new leadership, the Israeli leader yesterday told the German newspaper *Bild*.

"If the people were free to decide, then I have no doubt there would be a different government," he said, according to the Associated Press. "This is a theocratic, totalitarian and brutal state."

Israeli wants an Iranian government that does not seek nuclear weapons or support international terrorism, Netanyahu said (Associated Press/*Taiwan News*, June 22).

Meanwhile, the son of deposed Iranian monarch Mohammad Reza Pahlavi warned that Iran might eventually trigger a nuclear war if its government suppressed the election demonstrators, AFP reported.

"Their defeat will encourage extremism from the shores of the Levant to the energy jugular of the world," Reza Pahlavi said in Washington. "At worst, fanatical tyrants who know that the future is against them may end their present course on their terms: a nuclear holocaust" (Agence France-Presse II/Google News, June 22).

http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20090623_9634.php

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The Citizen – Tanzania

23 June 2009

Al-Qaeda Threat to Peace in East Africa Region

By Citizen Correspondent, Nairobi

An Al-Qaeda force fighting alongside Somali extremists against the transitional government has sent ripples through regional capitals.

Commanded by a Kenyan, the group, called Al-Muhajirun, has 180 well-trained and battle-hardened fighters, some who have seen action in Afghanistan, Pakistan and possibly Iraq.

Al-Shabaab, the Somali militant group which has threatened to annex Kenyan territory, is not itself considered a serious threat to Kenya, a ministry of Internal Security official told the Nation, "not in the conventional sense" and because its main concerns are domestic.

But Al-Qaeda, whose dream is to create a Taliban-type super-state running from Mozambique to the north, has the potential to destabilise East Africa.

Al-Muhajirun has also internationalised the conflict and brought some of the most dangerous terrorists in the world to East Africa's front door, said the official, who can not be named because of government secrecy laws.

"The extent to which Kenyans are being exposed to these kinds of terrorist things is a major concern," said a senior police officer who asked not to be named so as to comment freely.

The emergence of a large and well-trained and armed group reflects a dynamic which could have disastrous consequences for Kenya's future security.

The group is headed by Kenyan Saleh Nabhan, an old Al-Qaeda hand, and many of its members are Kenyan, some of them young people who have been recruited, turned into radicals and sent to fight in the Somali "jihad", said a regional conflict and peace expert, who declined to be named because of his work with the security services.

Security and defence bosses are concerned that Somalia could become East Africa's Afghanistan, a country that attracts extremists who are trained in terrorism but who return to their own countries to set up Al-Qaeda networks.

They fear that the war in Somalia will spawn a new breed of war-hardened Al-Qaeda terrorists.

The other members of Al-Muhajirun are Ugandans, Americans, Europeans and Saudis. Others are from other parts of the Middle East and Asia, said the Internal Security official, who is privy to intelligence reports.

A Mr Abu Mansur al-Meriki, a US citizen, is Nabhan's deputy in the Al-Muhajirun chain of command.

On Saturday, the Speaker of the Somali Transitional Federal Parliament, Sheikh Aden Mohamed Nur, also known as Sheikh Aden Madobe, issued an urgent appeal for Yemen, Kenya, Djibouti and Ethiopia to send forces in Somalia within 24 hours to fight off an invasion by Al-Qaeda jihadists and save the fledgling government.

Speaking at a press conference at Villa Somalia, the State House in Mogadishu, Sheikh Madobe said the Transitional Federal Government was fighting against "international jihadists who have come to Somalia from all the five continents of the globe".

He claimed that a "general" from Pakistan was now in Somalia and directing the Al-Qaeda. He did not name him but said he was operating out of Bakara market, the biggest trading centre in Mogadishu and around Sana'a, a strategic junction in north Mogadishu.

"This terror will pass on to the rest of the world, especially to neighbouring countries, if not confronted," he warned.

On Thursday, suspected terrorists killed Somali National Security minister Omar Hashi Aden and 24 others. A day before, Mogadishu's police chief was killed during a fight with insurgents.

On Sunday, Foreign Affairs minister Moses Wetang'ula said the government would not respond to statements made by the insurgents.

However, he assured the public that Kenya's national and strategic interests would be protected at all costs.

Nominated MP Sheikh Mohamed Dor dismissed threats from the Al-Shabaab group and said Kenya and other regional countries had a duty to intervene in Somalia to restore peace.

"Al-Shabaab should not issue threats, especially against Kenya, that has hosted a lot of Somali leaders," he said on the phone.

Sheikh Dor warned that the escalating situation in Somalia will affect its neighbours and urged members of the African Union or Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (Igad) to move in and restore order.

Ethiopia, which fought and routed the extremists in 2006, rejected the call for armed intervention and government spokesman Bereket Simon told the Nation in Addis Ababa that Ethiopia would not deploy its armed forces in Somalia without "a clear and approved mandate by the international community".

"Any further action from Ethiopia will be done according to the international community's reaction," said Mr Simon.

Mr Simon, a minister in the Ethiopian government, said helping Somalia was not the responsibility of neighbouring countries, alone but of the international community.

There has been heightened diplomatic activity in Addis Ababa, with Western diplomats reportedly trying to get Ethiopia, an influential nation in the region because of its huge military, to intervene again in Somalia.

The view in Addis Ababa is that the insurgency in Somalia is largely supported by Eritrea and some Arab states. Eritrea, Ethiopia's bitter enemy, is reported to have put thousands of troops on alert, possibly with the intention of sending them in to back up the extremists should Ethiopia respond to the call for help.

Ethiopian withdrew its troops from Somalia early this year after a tough, two-year campaign.

Defence assistant minister David Musila declined to comment on the deployment on grounds that such matters cannot be discussed in public. But he echoed Mr Wetang'ula's statement and said Kenya's national interests will be protected.

"It is not in our normal tradition to discuss matters on national security publicly," he said.

There has been some speculation that some form of military action was in the offing, possibly under AU or Igad auspices.

But Kenya, which has a relatively large and influential Somali population of its own, has been reluctant to play the aggressor in Somalia and might not attack unless attacked.

But Kenyan security officials appeared to support the Ethiopian position that a multi-lateral, rather than unilateral approach, is the only hope for Somalia.

<http://thecitizen.co.tz/newe.php?id=13339>

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Reuters.com
Jun 22, 2009

Somali Islamists Order Teenagers' Hands, Legs Cut Off

MOGADISHU, June 22 (Reuters) - Somalia's al Shabaab insurgents in a Mogadishu stronghold sentenced four teenagers on Monday to each have a hand and a leg amputated as punishment for robbery.

It would be the first such amputation carried out by the Islamist rebels, who follow strict sharia law in the parts of south Somalia they control.

Al Shabaab -- whose ranks are swelled by foreign jihadists and is seen by Western security services as a proxy for al Qaeda in Somalia -- has carried out executions, floggings and single-limb amputations before, mainly in south Kismayu port.

It is battling the government of President Sheikh Sharif Ahmed for control of Mogadishu and is fighting a government-allied moderate Islamist militia in the provinces.

"Today, the Islamic court sentences these four men who carried out robberies to have their opposite hand and leg amputated," said Sheikh Abdul Haq, judge of the sharia court in the al Shabaab-held Suqa Holaha area of the Somali capital.

"They robbed mobile phones and people's belongings."

The judge did not say when the sentence would be carried out at the hearing, attended by hundreds of residents. Shackled and silent, the teenagers were led away into custody.

Al Shabaab's strict practices have shocked many Somalis, who are traditionally moderate Muslims, though residents give the insurgents credit for restoring order to regions they control.

International rights group Amnesty International condemned the sentence, saying the men had no lawyer and were not allowed to appeal.

"We are appealing to al Shabaab not to carry out these cruel, inhuman and degrading punishments," said Tawanda Hondora, Africa deputy director of the group. "These sentences were ordered by a sham al Shabaab court with no due process."

RESCUE SOMALI PEOPLE

In the latest cycle in 18 years of violence in Somalia, a two-and-a-half year Islamist insurgency has killed more than 18,000 civilians, uprooted 1 million people, allowed piracy to flourish offshore and spread security fears round the region.

Somalia's government, which controls little more than a few blocks of Mogadishu, declared a state of emergency at the weekend and appealed for foreign intervention, including from Somalia's neighbours.

But international powers are reluctant to do more than beef up an existing 4,300-strong African Union (AU) peacekeeping force. Though lauded by Somalis for setting up a much-needed hospital at their base, the AU has been unable to stem the violence and its patrols have become a target for insurgents.

A minister, the Mogadishu police chief and one legislator were killed last week.

"The Somali government decided to save the country from terrorists invading the country and imposed a state of emergency," Ahmed told reporters at the hilltop presidential palace in Mogadishu on Monday.

"We are asking the world community to rescue Somali people ... We have been trying to solve everything with talks but we realised that they (the rebels) don't want peace but violence."

Experts say several hundred foreign fighters are in Somalia.

"These are foreign fighters who have fought at least five wars -- in Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere -- who now want to take over Somalia as their own safe haven for their terrorist activities," Somali Prime Minister Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke told reporters in Nairobi.

"We are dealing with a threat that can engulf the whole region. We are calling on multilateral institutions and bilateral governments like Kenya to salvage the country."

Security alerts and rumours among expatriates of a planned attack in Nairobi have been rife and the Kenyan government has put its security services on alert.

http://www.reuters.com/article/homepageCrisis/idUSLM504695.CH_.2400

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Time.com

June 23, 2009

Rebel Threat Pressures Somalia's Neighbors

By ALEX PERRY

If there was any doubt as to the character of the state that threatens to emerge in Somalia should Islamist rebels overthrow its embattled government, it was dispelled Monday when a militia court sentenced four men accused of stealing three mobile phones and two AK-47s to the amputation of their right hand and left leg. The sentence, whose execution was postponed after the al Shabaab court decided the hot weather might cause the four men to bleed to

death, were condemned as "cruel, inhuman and degrading" by Amnesty International. The incident highlighted both the kind of neighbor Kenya and Ethiopia might soon face, and the question of whether either country should intervene to prevent such a calamity.

Pressure to do just that increased Monday when Somali President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed declared a state of emergency and African Union President Jean Ping backed calls for armed intervention, saying the Somali government "has the right to seek support from A.U. members states and the larger international community."

Kenyan Prime Minister Raila Odinga met his Somali counterpart, Omar Abdirashid Sharmarke, in the Kenyan capital Nairobi to discuss the seven-week onslaught by the Islamists that has killed hundreds, including several senior government figures, and displaced more than 100,000 — adding to the millions of Somalis already living as refugees and dependent on food aid. After the meeting, Omar said: "In this critical time of our history, I think you might help. We are dealing with a threat that can engulf the entire region. Our security forces need military assistance and we hope the world [will] do its part very urgently."

Odinga agreed the situation in Somalia was "really threatening" and needed "urgent international attention." If Mogadishu falls, the consequences will be very grievous," he said. He also appeared to refer obliquely to al Shabaab threats to attack Nairobi, saying, "Kenya has been affected by this obvious terror." Like Ethiopia, however, he stopped short of publicly committing troops. Reports from Somalia's western border with Ethiopia claimed Ethiopian troops had entered Somalia Monday, despite a statement from Addis Ababa that it would not enter the country without an international mandate. Ethiopia invaded Somalia in late 2006 to topple a previous Islamist government.

Despite the presence of up to 2,000 U.S. Special Forces troops in Djibouti, to Somalia's north, and an unprecedented international naval force involving more than 20 countries off the Somali coast to fight the piracy that has, in part, grown out of the chaos on land, non-African countries consistently reject the notion of intervening onshore. This is partly out of fear of the consequences: a U.N.-backed U.S. intervention in Somalia in 1993 cost 18 American lives in events later portrayed in the book and film *Black Hawk Down*.

Al Shabaab, originally the armed wing of the Islamic Courts Union — the government Ethiopia toppled in 2006-7 — also grew into something far more menacing during its resistance and eventual defeat of Ethiopians forces, attracting vocal support from Osama bin Laden, imposing the strictest Shari'a law and attracting hundreds of foreign jihadists from the Middle East, South Asia and the West to its ranks.

In addition, international troops are already deployed across Africa in hotspots such as Darfur and the Democratic Republic of Congo, as well as a long list of post-conflict zones. Over-stretched and under-motivated by lack of success in Darfur and Congo, the world is increasingly looking to a more confident and assertive Africa to solve its own problems. On Monday, Odinga appealed to the "IGAD [Intergovernmental Authority on Development in Eastern Africa], A.U., E.U., U.S.A., the U.N., all to combine forces" but acknowledged that despite similar appeals from the government in Mogadishu, "unfortunately, no country has come forward."

<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1906477,00.html>

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Washington Post

June 25, 2009

Somali Rebels Amputate Limbs, U.S. Sends Weapons

By Abdi Guled and Ibrahim Mohamed

Reuters

MOGADISHU (Reuters) - Washington has sent weapons to Somalia's government to thwart Islamist insurgents, who cut hands and feet off thieves on Thursday and paraded the severed limbs in the streets of Mogadishu.

Somalia's al Shabaab insurgents are seen as a proxy for al Qaeda and Western nations fear they could destabilize the region and provide safe havens for hardline Islamists from elsewhere.

When a moderate Islamist was elected president in January, there was hope he could end nearly two decades of bloodshed in Somalia by reconciling with hardliners who want to impose a strict version of Islamic law across the country.

But Osama bin Laden declared President Sheikh Sharif Ahmed an enemy in an audiotape released in March. He called on the insurgents to topple the government and for Muslims around the world to join their jihad.

A U.S. official said the United States had sent arms and ammunition to Somalia's government in a move signaling President Barack Obama's desire to shore up the "fragile" government and thwart the hardliners.

"The State Department is providing ... weapons and ammunition to try to help them deal with al Shabaab and other extremists," the official, who spoke on condition he not be identified, said, confirming a report in The Washington Post.

"The government is in a very fragile state," he said, adding the United States wants Eritrea to stop supporting the insurgents. The top U.S. diplomat for Africa, Johnnie Carson, hopes to visit Eritrea soon, U.S. officials said.

Eritrea denies arming and training the insurgents.

A U.S. official, and an international security source, said the United States was providing the weaponry in accordance with U.N. Security Council resolutions.

"It's confirmed. They received approval from the U.N. Security Council," the international security source said.

While the United Nations has had a long-standing arms embargo on Somalia, a May Security Council resolution urged member states to train and equip government security forces as long as a U.N. embargo monitoring committee had no objections.

Another foreign security source said weapons had come into Somalia for the government via Uganda, which provides half the 4,300 African Union troops protecting key sites in Mogadishu.

"The prospect of the government collapsing is sending alarm bells ringing in Western capitals, but whether this latest move will succeed remains to be seen," said Rashid Abdi, analyst at International Crisis Group.

"Going further than providing arms to actually sending in more foreign forces would be a mistake," he said. "The government would then play right into the hands of the militants, who would accuse them of accepting foreign meddling."

LIMBS ON TREES

Ethiopian troops intervened in late 2006 to topple an Islamist movement in Mogadishu, but the presence of troops from the neighboring nation acted more as a rebel rallying call.

The Ethiopian troops withdrew in January, but the Islamists now say they will keep on fighting until the African Union troops from Uganda and Burundi leave the country.

The al Shabaab group, which has foreign fighters in its ranks, stepped up attacks in early May. It now controls most of south Somalia and all but a few blocks of the capital Mogadishu.

The rebels used long knives to cut off a hand and a foot each from four young men in Mogadishu as punishment for theft, witnesses said. It was the first double amputation in Somalia.

The men screamed in pain, and some spectators vomited.

Al Shabaab later hung the severed limbs from trees and electricity polls.

"The horrific nature of such acts that were carried out in front of a crowd adds further injustice and dehumanizes these teenagers," rights group Amnesty International said.

Al Shabaab has carried out executions, floggings and single-limb amputations before, mainly in the southern port of Kismayu. Movies and soccer games are banned in areas it controls. and men and women cannot travel together on public transport.

Al Shabaab's strict practices have shocked many Somalis, who are traditionally moderate Muslims, although residents give the insurgents credit for restoring order to regions they control.

"We will punish like this everyone who carries out these acts," said al Shabaab official Sheikh Ali Mohamud Fidow.

STATE OF EMERGENCY

The government has launched a series of attacks this month to drive the rebels out of Mogadishu. It has failed to make headway and is relying on African Union troops to protect the presidential palace, airport and seaport.

Somalia's security minister, the Mogadishu police chief, and a legislator have all been killed this month. The insurgents are using more suicide car bombers and security sources say its roadside bombs have become more sophisticated.

The government has declared a state of emergency and called for foreign military intervention.

Somalia's neighbor Kenya ruled out any intervention on Thursday but has been beefing up security along its border.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi has not ruled out sending troops back to Somalia if the situation worsens, but said there were no plans for unilateral intervention for now.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/25/AR2009062501039.html>

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Lockheed Martin Press Release

23 June 2009

Lockheed Martin Installs Next Evolution of Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense System on Cruiser USS Lake Erie

MOORESTOWN, N.J., June 23rd, 2009 -- Lockheed Martin [NYSE: LMT] installed the latest evolution of the Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) System – which includes a new ballistic missile defense signal processor, Aegis BSP – on the cruiser USS Lake Erie (CG-70). Over the next year, USS Lake Erie will complete a series of tests, leading up to full certification of the system upgrade by the U.S. Navy in early 2011.

The Aegis BMD 4.0.1 system represents the next incremental capability upgrade that has been the hallmark of Aegis and its “build a little, test a little, learn a lot” systems engineering philosophy. The upgrade’s new Aegis BSP processor improves the system's ability to detect, track and target complex ballistic missiles and their associated countermeasures. The addition of BMD 4.0.1 also integrates the new Standard Missile-3 Block IB missile in late 2010.

“The signal processor is a major technical advance for Aegis BMD before it merges with the Navy’s Aegis Modernization Program’s fully open architecture, multi-mission combat system,” said Orlando Carvalho, vice president and general manager of Lockheed Martin’s Surface/Sea-Based Missile Defense line of business. “The continued Aegis program emphasis on systems engineering excellence supports the Navy’s desire to expand BMD capability to additional cruisers and destroyers, and grow missile defense capability to pace the threat.”

While USS Lake Erie begins advanced testing with Aegis BMD 4.0.1 to support 2011 certification timeline, the other U.S. Navy Aegis BMD-capable ships are now installing the recently-certified Aegis BMD 3.6.1 version that adds the capability to defeat short-range ballistic missiles as they re-enter the atmosphere in their final (terminal) stage of flight to the existing exo-atmospheric capability. The ongoing develop-test-field process provides incremental enhancements that continue to build on each other and move new capability to the fleet faster. Three additional U.S. East Coast-based Aegis-equipped ships also will receive Aegis BMD 3.6.1 to perform ballistic missile defense by early 2010.

The Missile Defense Agency and the Navy are jointly developing Aegis BMD as part of the United States’ Ballistic Missile Defense System (BMDS). Currently, a total of 20 Aegis BMD-equipped warships – 18 in the U.S. Navy and two in the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force – have the certified capability to engage ballistic missiles and perform long-range surveillance and track missions.

The Aegis Weapon System is the world’s premier naval defense system and the sea-based element of the U.S. Ballistic Missile Defense System. Its precision SPY-1 radar and integrated command and controls system seamlessly guides the interceptor and uplinks target track information to the missile for terminal homing. Its ability to detect, track and engage targets ranging from sea-skimming cruise missiles to ballistic missiles in space is proven and unmatched. The Aegis BMD Weapon System also integrates with the BMDS, receiving track data from and providing track information to other BMDS elements.

The 91 Aegis-equipped ships currently in service around the globe have more than 950 years of at-sea operational experience and have launched more than 3,500 missiles in tests and real-world operations. In addition to the U.S. and Japan, Aegis is the maritime weapon system of choice for Australia, Norway, South Korea and Spain.

Lockheed Martin is a world leader in systems integration and the development of air and missile defense systems and technologies, including the first operational hit-to-kill missile defense system, Patriot Advanced Capability-3 (PAC-3). It also has considerable experience in interceptor systems, kill vehicles, battle management command, control and communications, precision pointing and tracking optics, as well as radar and other sensors that enable signal processing and data fusion. The company makes significant contributions to nearly all major U.S. Missile Defense Systems and participates in several global missile defense partnerships.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin is a global security company that employs about 146,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services. The corporation reported 2008 sales of \$42.7 billion.

http://www.lockheedmartin.com/news/press_releases/2009/062309_LM_AegisBMD_USSLakeErie.html

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Khaleej Times Online
23 June 2009

Poland Open to Part of US Missile Shield in Russia: Report

WARSAW - Poland is open to the possibility of installing parts of a controversial US missile shield in Russia, which has vehemently opposed the project, a newspaper reported Tuesday.

Polish Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski's comments in the Gazeta Wyborcza daily signaled potential room for compromise over the US missile shield.

Poland has agreed to install missile silos on its territory as part of the shield and has pushed for the accord to be implemented.

"We don't see anything wrong with it," Sikorski said when asked about the installation of parts of the US shield on Russian soil.

"It is better to have this shield and an American presence in Poland which does not provoke a reaction from Russia.

"From the beginning we have been counting on the fact that that United States will manage to convince the Russian side that the system is not directed against Russia."

Russia has strongly opposed the project, calling it a threat to its security.

Last week Russian media reported Washington and Moscow had inched closer on the US missile shield project and that Washington could install elements of the shield in Russia.

The reports were based on comments by US Defense Secretary Robert Gates to US senators. However, a spokesman for Gates told AFP his comments were misinterpreted.

In 2008, Poland and neighbouring Czech Republic signed preliminary agreements with then president George W. Bush's administration to install missile silos and radar bases respectively on their soil.

President Barack Obama's administration has asked for Poland to be patient while it reviews the project.

http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticleNew.asp?xfile=data/international/2009/June/international_June1884.xml§ion=international

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Associated Press (AP)
June 24, 2009

Swiss Order More Evidence Destroyed in Nuke Probe

By BRADLEY S. KLAPPER

GENEVA (AP) — The Swiss government on Wednesday ordered the quick destruction of about 100 pages of evidence linked to an investigation of three Swiss engineers suspected of smuggling nuclear weapons technology.

The Cabinet said the documents were "the most explosive" material in a file of more than 1,000 pages related to the case against the Tinner family, which is suspected of links to the nuclear smuggling network of Abdul Qadeer Khan — the creator of Pakistan's atomic bomb.

The documents are copies of files destroyed in 2007 under a previous order that led to protests from lawmakers and legal experts, who said the government undermined the prosecution in the smuggling case. The copies were found in prosecutors' archives last December.

Citing security concerns and its legal obligations under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, the Cabinet, or Federal Council, said that about 100 pages dealing with atomic weapons designs would be shredded shortly to keep them out of "the wrong hands." It didn't give a date for the destruction.

Less sensitive documents, such as those dealing with uranium enrichment, will be kept under high security at the Federal Justice Department, the government said. It added that investigators, prosecutors, courts and the Tinner family's lawyers can view them under tight restrictions, but they will be destroyed at the end of legal proceedings.

Urs Tinner, his brother Marco and their father Freidrich are suspected of supplying Khan's black market nuclear network with the technical know-how and equipment used to make gas centrifuges. Khan sold the centrifuges for secret nuclear weapons programs in countries that included Libya and Iran before his operation was disrupted in 2003.

Andreas Mueller, the magistrate who has been working for years to bring a case against the Tinnens, welcomed the government's decision to make most of the copies available to investigators.

He said the shredding of files had complicated an already complex case and made it harder to piece together a complete picture of the Tinnens' involvement in the Khan ring. Meanwhile, Switzerland's highest criminal court criticized the government for opting to destroy further evidence, and said it was disappointed not to be informed earlier.

Complicating the case further are claims by Urs Tinner, 43, that he supplied the CIA with information that led to the breakup of Khan's network. In a recent documentary, Tinner told Swiss TV he tipped off U.S. intelligence about a delivery of centrifuge parts meant for Libya.

The shipment was seized at the Italian port of Taranto in 2003, forcing Libya to admit and eventually renounce its efforts to acquire nuclear weapons.

Former Swiss Justice Minister Christoph Blocher said the government decided to destroy the original documents after he refused in 2007 an American request to hand over thousands of the files.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5inMovRBi1jLMHAr0DbwjDRGwrUowD9917MCG0>

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Epoch Times – Europe
24 June 2009

Belgium Takes a Leading Role to Ban Uranium Weapons

BRUSSELS—After being the first country to ban land mines and cluster bombs, on June 21, Belgium again distinguished itself by becoming the first country to ban uranium weapons.

On March the 7th, 2007, the Belgian Chamber Commission on National Defense voted unanimously in favor of banning the production, use, storage, trade and transport of ammunition and armor that contain depleted uranium, or any other industrially manufactured uranium.

On June the 21th 2009, after a stipulated two-year grace period, that law finally entered into force. The two years was used to promote the ban outside Belgium in the hopes of getting other countries to follow suit.

Uranium weapons are known to damage the central nervous system, trigger different types of cancers and they cause permanent damage to the genetic structure of all beings. They are also responsible for long term damage to nature and the environment. Moreover, the victims of these weapons are mainly civilian.

Author of the proposition, Dirk Van der Maelen (Flemish Socialist Party), is very happy with the outcome. He pointed out that when Belgium took the initiative to ban land mines and cluster bombs in 1995, the international

community soon followed. The result was the Ottawa Treaty, signed by 156 countries and the Oslo Treaty, signed by 94 countries.

Van der Maelen now hopes that this law will eventually result in another international treaty to free the world of these kinds of weapons. On his personal website he stated:

“The support for a ban of these kind of weapons is getting bigger. In Costa Rica, Japan, New Zealand and in a number of Scandinavian countries Chamber Commission members have now also entered a proposition to ban Uranium weapons. I hereby call to our Foreign Minister Karel De Gucht to search for allies and to use all diplomatic means to strive for an international treaty.”

The decision is the result of more than three years of hard work, direct action and lobbying by the Belgian Coalition Ban Uranium Weapons. The ICBUW is convinced that Belgium will soon be followed by other countries to ban the use of uranium weapons. The European Parliament has also repeatedly called for an international ban.

To put this new law in the spotlight, Chairman of the Chamber Commission Patrick Dewael, opened a photo exhibition about the human dramas caused by the use of uranium weapons. The exhibition shows black and white pictures taken by the famous Japanese photographer Naomi Toyoda, who documented the long term effects of the uranium weapons deployed in Iraq.

The director of the institute of cancer research from the city of Basra in Iraq gave a speech about how local civilians suffer from permanent damage caused by the use of these weapons. Van der Maelen and Ria Verjauw of ICBUW also spoke at the event.

<http://www.theepochtimes.com/n2/content/view/18574/>

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EUbusiness.com

24 June 2009

EU Seeks to Beef up *Defences* Against Dirty-Bomb Attacks

(BRUSSELS) - The European Commission unveiled Wednesday proposals to boost the continent's defences against the "most frightening scenario" of bio-terrorism or a dirty bomb attack.

"Terrorist groups acquiring weapons of mass destruction, including CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear) materials is the most frightening scenario," said EU Justice Commissioner Jacques Barrot.

The proposals, underpinned by an EU action plan, are aimed at preventing criminals from getting access to such materials, detecting them before they are misused and responding quickly and efficiently when an attack occurs.

They include steps to protect potentially dangerous materials and reduce any risk they might be lost, boost the exchange on data between the 27 nations on security issues and train emergency workers to save lives and limit damage.

It would tie nations into an exchange of best practice, harmonise the way they assess the risks, and raise awareness in countries that have not suffered the kind of attacks seen in Britain and Spain in 2005 and 2004.

An EU expert said the likelihood of such a strike is small, with the highest threat being posed by bio-terrorism.

"The risks are not that big because it's very difficult to prepare and weaponise these sorts of materials in most cases," he told reporters on condition of anonymity.

"The main risks that experts see is from biological attack," the expert said, referring to a US assessment of a 50 percent chance of a biological attack within the next five years.

But Barrot warned: "The seriousness of the potential consequences for our societies is such that we cannot be complacent."

In 1995, a sarin gas attack on a Tokyo underground railway killed 12 people and injured thousands. In a series of attacks in the United States in 2001, 17 people were exposed to deadly anthrax spores.

One of Europe's weak points remains the lack of stocks of vaccines, as the outbreaks of bird and swine flu in recent years have demonstrated, and no agreement has yet been reached between the 27 EU nations on stockpiling.

The expert said it was also important to develop an early warning system, and particularly one that would mobilise law enforcement agencies more effectively.

He also pointed out wide differences between national response plans in the event of any attack.

"Some member states are better prepared than others, that's quite clear. A member state that has had an experience with a terrorist attack is of course going to take the threat a little bit more seriously," he said.

The proposals involve more than 130 measures, many of them preparatory action, and the commission hopes they can be introduced over the next three years.

<http://www.eubusiness.com/news-eu/1245857522.94>

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Global Security Newswire
June 23, 2009

Pentagon Announces New Appointees

The U.S. Defense Department yesterday announced the addition of four new senior officials, three of whom will be working on chemical, biological and nuclear weapons issues (see *GSN*, Feb. 27).

Ashton Carter, Andrew Weber, Michael Nacht and Elizabeth King have been working at the Pentagon for weeks, after being confirmed by the Senate. They were formally welcomed yesterday by Defense Secretary Robert Gates.

Carter is the new defense undersecretary for acquisition, technology and logistics -- a post that involves issues relating to weapons of mass destruction, among other responsibilities.

Weber, serves as assistant defense secretary for nuclear, chemical and biological programs. As such he advises Gates and other Pentagon leaders on "all matters concerning the formulation of policy and plans for nuclear, chemical and biological defense programs," according to a DOD release.

Nacht is assistant defense secretary for global strategic affairs. He will be in charge of a new office working on policies for dealing with WMD, missile and other threats.

King, assistant defense secretary for legislative affairs, will act as a liaison to lawmakers and the executive branch (U.S. Defense Department release, June 22).

http://www.globalsecuritynewswire.org/gsn/nw_20090623_3719.php

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USA Today
June 24, 2009

A New North Korea Strategy

By Stephen J. Solarz and Michael O'Hanlon

The Obama administration has just completed some dogged and impressive diplomacy in tightening U.N. Security Council sanctions against North Korea in response to the latter's recent missile and nuclear tests. The limitations on financing North Korean imports and exports will be noticed quickly in Pyongyang; the provisions on voluntary inspections of North Korean ships are less likely to cause immediate impact but do send a message of what could follow further provocations.

Unfortunately, these tactical responses to North Korea's unacceptable behavior — however necessary and judicious — do not amount to a strategy for denuclearizing North Korea. To be sure, easy and effective strategies are not readily available. In fact, many observers have given up on the plausibility of ever persuading Pyongyang to relinquish its nuclear arsenal.

If there is hope of a more effective strategy, it must center on China, North Korea's only ally by treaty. Beijing has also become Pyongyang's major economic partner, accounting for three-quarters of trade with the impoverished country and providing its main supplies of petroleum. China enjoys unrivaled leverage in pressuring North Korea to desist from its recent provocations.

But how to rein in Pyongyang? It's a question that has bedeviled Presidents Clinton, Bush and now Obama. We have a fundamental problem. Like us, China is worried about a nuclear North Korea, concerned about the leadership succession process there and unhappy with the provocative actions of its troublesome ally. But it probably worries even more about the potential for North Korean collapse. It much prefers a buffer between its borders and American allies as well as U.S. military forces. And it abhors the idea of regional instability.

North Korea's choice

The only real hope of getting North Korea to relinquish its nuclear weapons is to apply such significant economic pressure that the regime is forced to make a choice between economic collapse and the verifiable dismantling of its nuclear weapons and facilities. Such pressure would need to be accompanied by an offer of full political and economic normalization if Pyongyang agreed to abandon its nuclear program. The only country capable of applying such pressure is China.

After consultations with Japan and South Korea, we should approach China to tell its leaders that our objective is not to bring down the North Korean regime but to change its policy. If the application of tough sanctions by Beijing led to a regime collapse, we'd undertake to give China guarantees that it would not be expected to accept large numbers of North Korean refugees. Rather, the United States would work with the international community to find other places for them. This would require some effort; the U.S. has been notoriously poor of late on such issues, including doing its share to resettle Iraqi refugees. At other moments in our history, we have been more generous.

Many of our allies could be asked to commit to help, too. That would include, of course, South Korea, which could be asked to take care of substantial numbers of its ethnic brethren from the North at least temporarily until the situation stabilized and refugees could go back to their home villages in a presumably then-reunified Korean Peninsula.

We could further offer to organize an international effort to share the financial costs of sheltering those refugees that did wind up in China and other countries.

The U.S. commitment

As for the future of U.S. troops, we should give the Chinese a commitment that even in the context of a regime collapse in the North, and the establishment of a unified Korea, U.S. troops would not move north of the 38th parallel except for the temporary purpose of stabilizing the peninsula and helping secure North Korea's nuclear weapons. We might also say that in such a context, we would be prepared to remove most U.S. troops from the peninsula because their presence there, once stability had been achieved, would no longer be as necessary (except to a lesser degree for broader regional purposes).

These would be incentives for China, designed to ease its worries about North Korean nuclear weapons. We should also, however, send a message that the world would be watching Beijing's handling of this problem for indications of how it intends to act as a great power of the 21st century.

Nuclear proliferation is widely recognized among the world's responsible powers as a matter requiring extremely urgent and serious attention. Were China to disagree, out of parochial interest in keeping a border region quiet, it would confirm the suspicions of some that Beijing takes little responsibility for shoring up the international economic and political order, instead profiting from that order for its own purposes as long as it can. This is not a message that Beijing wants to send, and we should be clear on the point.

There is no guarantee, of course, that such an approach would succeed in persuading China to do what only it can do regarding North Korea. But if these representations, most of them advantageous to Beijing, were sufficient to get China to agree to put real pressure on Pyongyang, it would be a small price to pay for securing Chinese support for what could be the only real hope of solving the nuclear problem in North Korea.

<http://blogs.usatoday.com/oped/2009/06/a-new-north-korea-strategy.html>

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