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UNITED STATES AIR FORCE CENTER FOR  
**UNCONVENTIONAL  
WEAPONS STUDIES**

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## Featured Item

*"The New START Treaty: Central Limits and Key Provisions".* By Amy F. Woolf; published by the Congressional Research Service; October 5, 2017

<https://fas.org/sgp/crs/nuke/R41219.pdf>

The United States and Russia signed the New START Treaty on April 8, 2010. After more than 20 hearings, the U.S. Senate gave its advice and consent to ratification on December 22, 2010, by a vote of 71-26. Both houses of the Russian parliament—the Duma and Federation Council—approved the treaty in late January 2011, and it entered into force on February 5, 2011, after Secretary of State Clinton and Foreign Minister Lavrov exchanged the instruments of ratification.

New START provides the parties with 7 years to reduce their forces, and will remain in force for a total of 10 years. It limits each side to no more than 800 deployed and nondeployed land-based intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) and submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) launchers and deployed and nondeployed heavy bombers equipped to carry nuclear armaments. Within that total, each side can retain no more than 700 deployed ICBMs, deployed SLBMs, and deployed heavy bombers equipped to carry nuclear armaments. The treaty also limits each side to no more than 1,550 deployed warheads; those are the actual number of warheads on deployed ICBMs and SLBMs, and one warhead for each deployed heavy bomber.

New START contains detailed definitions and counting rules that will help the parties calculate the number of warheads that count under the treaty limits. Moreover, the delivery vehicles and their warheads will count under the treaty limits until they are converted or eliminated according to the provisions described in the treaty's Protocol. These provisions are far less demanding than those in the original START Treaty and will provide the United States and Russia with far more flexibility in determining how to reduce their forces to meet the treaty limits.

The monitoring and verification regime in the New START Treaty is less costly and complex than the regime in START. Like START, though, it contains detailed definitions of items limited by the treaty; provisions governing the use of national technical means (NTM) to gather data on each side's forces and activities; an extensive database that identifies the numbers, types, and locations of items limited by the treaty; provisions requiring notifications about items limited by the treaty; and inspections allowing the parties to confirm information shared during data exchanges.

New START does not limit current or planned U.S. missile defense programs. It does ban the conversion of ICBM and SLBM launchers to launchers for missile defense interceptors, but the United States never intended to pursue such conversions when deploying missile defense interceptors. Under New START, the United States can deploy conventional warheads on its ballistic missiles, but these will count under the treaty limit on nuclear warheads. The United States may deploy a small number of these systems during the time that New START is in force.

The Obama Administration and outside analysts argued that New START strengthens strategic stability and enhances U.S. national security. Critics, however, questioned whether the treaty serves U.S. national security interests, as Russia was likely to reduce its forces with or without an arms control agreement and because the United States and Russia no longer need arms control treaties to manage their relationship. While the Trump Administration has not offered an official assessment of the treaty, Secretary of State-designate Tillerson offered support during his confirmation hearings, noting that he supports "the long-standing bipartisan policy of engaging with Russia and other nuclear arms states to verifiably reduce nuclear stockpiles" and that it is important for the United States "to stay engaged with Russia [and] hold them accountable to commitments made under the New START."

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## US NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Defense One (Washington, DC)

### Air Force Wants to Get New Nuclear Weapons Faster

By Marcus Weisgerber

November 15, 2017

KIRTLAND AIR FORCE BASE, N.M.— Design work is barely underway for the U.S. Air Force’s new ICBMs and nuclear cruise missiles, and already the service’s top general is looking for ways to speed up the process.

Less than three months after the Pentagon awarded contracts to begin designing crucial cutting-edge components for the proposed weapons, Gen. David Goldfein said he’s “comfortable with the technology I’m seeing,” but “not as comfortable with the schedule.” The new ICBMs and cruise missile are expected to be battle-ready in the late 2020s — if Congress and the White House approve the acquisitions, whose cost is expected to approach \$100 billion.

“My sense is that we’re in a good place right now in terms of how we’re working with industry going forward,” the Air Force chief of staff said in an interview. “The question I’ll continue to have is: How to I move it left. How do we get this capability earlier. Because if you can actually get it faster, you can get it cheaper sometimes.”

In August, the Air Force chose Boeing and Northrop Grumman to work on the new ICBM, a project called the Ground-Based Strategic Deterrent. It is meant to replace the Minuteman IIIs that sit ready in silos spread across Montana, Wyoming, and North Dakota.

Over the next three years, the two companies will collectively build about 20 different prototypes of components for the new ICBM, according to officials at the Air Force Nuclear Weapons Center here who are overseeing the project. The Air Force will then evaluate the two firms’ work and — and, if Congress and the Pentagon give the go-ahead — choose one of them to build more than 400 new ICBMs.

When Goldfein asked officials here whether it would be possible to speed things up, Maj. Gen. Shaun Morris, the commander of the Air Force Nuclear Weapons Center, said, “We’re looking at that.”

As for the new cruise missile — called the Long-Range Standoff weapon — the Air Force has hired Lockheed Martin and Raytheon to develop technology and make parts over the next five years before choosing a winner. The missile is intended to replace the Air-Launched Cruise Missile, which is carried by the B-52 bomber.

Goldfein said the fundamental role of the two new nuclear weapons will not change significantly from their predecessors.

“What changes is the operating environment that they’re going to execute their missions in,” he said.

The Long-Range Standoff is being designed to fly in an anti-access, area-denial environment, the military term for a region where an enemy has air defenses that can detect, shoot down or electronically jam non-stealthy aircraft and weapons.

As for the new ICBM, it “will operate in an environment where cyber vulnerabilities are different than what the Minuteman faced [and] has far more congestion in space than what Minuteman faced,” Goldfein said.

Then there's the cost. Just last month, the Congressional Budget Office said it could cost \$1.2 trillion to operate, maintain and upgrade the Pentagon's nuclear forces over the next 30 years. That includes buying new stealth bombers, Navy submarines, and command-and-control infrastructure. The Pentagon has said the new ICBM could cost \$85 billion. The Air Force is planning to buy about 1,000 new nuclear cruise missile, estimating a price tag of about \$10 billion. Experts have questioned whether all of the new weapons are affordable.

The size of the nuclear force and new types of new nuclear weapons are being looked at as the Trump administration conducts a Nuclear Posture Review, which is expected to wrap up as soon as next month or early next year.

<http://www.defenseone.com/business/2017/11/us-air-force-wants-get-new-nuclear-weapons-faster/142551/?oref=d-topstory>

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ABC News (New York, NY)

### **Improvements Expected for Nuclear Missile System in Wyoming**

By Associated Press

November 12, 2017

The military is expected to spend between \$4 billion and \$5 billion over the next 10 to 20 years to modernize the intercontinental ballistic missile system at Wyoming's F.E. Warren Air Force Base.

The Casper Star-Tribune reports that the spending could more than quadruple the typical amount of construction spending in Cheyenne.

The upgrades include concrete pours for new missile silos and buildings to house improved communications systems for the ICBM network. They're part of a \$140 billion effort to replace the nation's aging Minuteman nuclear missiles.

Wyoming's congressional delegation and some policy makers view the project as needed to keep America safe. Others see it as a risky gambit that could push the world closer to nuclear war.

<http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/improvements-expected-nuclear-missile-system-wyoming-51102653>

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National Defense (Arlington, VA)

### **Exclusive: Interview with Gen. Robin Rand, Head of Air Force Global Strike Command**

By Stew Magnuson

November 14, 2017

SHREVEPORT, La. — When the Air Force chief of staff told Gen. Robin Rand that he was going to lead Global Strike Command and that this job would include oversight of NC3, he didn't immediately know what the acronym meant.



"I didn't know how to spell NC3. I didn't tell him that. ... Now I dream about it," he said Nov. 14 in a speech at the Air Force Global Strike Command Innovation and Technology Symposium, sponsored by the National Defense Industrial Association.

He dreams about nuclear command, control and communications now because parts of the system of systems that allows the president to send orders to nuclear forces have become outdated, he said at the event in Shreveport, Louisiana. Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2014 was a turning point, he said.

"This is a very difficult challenge we have as we have allowed this system of systems to atrophy," he said. In April, the command established the Nuclear Command, Control and Communications Center at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, to serve as a single point of contact and to advocate for modernization of the system.

"A resurgent Russia made us look at some things differently and served as a wake-up call," Rand told National Defense in an exclusive interview after the speech. The interview has been edited for brevity and clarity.

Q. You mentioned in your speech the nuclear command and control were not up to standards. Can you expand on that a little bit?

A. NC3 weapon systems is made up of multiple different types of weapon systems, everything from [military satellite communications systems] to the command post terminals ... There are a huge number — 107 different systems to get our hands around. And I will be honest with you, the system atrophied for a lot of different reasons. We have been gainfully employed in a lot of areas, doing a lot of things. I think frankly we — I want to be careful because I don't want to overstate it — maybe let our guard down going back to when the Cold War ended. Our focus shifted to some other areas. We kind of had a wake-up call back in 2014, 2015. And we had to figure out really what was the status of these different pieces that make up NC3, and that is what we have been doing. And some of it we need to replace. Some of that we need to continue to invest and sustain it. And this is a work in progress.

But this is important because this is the ability for the president to communicate anywhere, anytime potentially on our nation's worst day. ... We call it the nuclear command and control and communications but we can throw out the word "nuclear" because it could be for any kind of cataclysmic situation. Whether it is a 9-11 kind of event, his ability to communicate quickly and clearly is critical. It is a big focus. The Air Force is not where we want to be, but we are a lot better off than we were because we have made it a weapon system. And we have it under Air Force Global Strike and we are doing the things I think to address this. And there is more to it than just the Air Force. There is the Navy and the Department of Defense, but we have the bulk of that.

Q. And 107 different systems, that is a lot. Is there anything you want to highlight?

A. I don't really want to highlight any one thing. .... It's 107 different things but we have bundled it into 13 different categories. There is just some need for some modernization.

Q. Are these software or hardware issues?

A. It's a combination of both. Our ability to do extremely high frequency — advanced EHF. We have what we call Global ASNT, replacing the radios we have in our command posts. These are the things we are working closely with Space Command.

Q. Two major development programs being discussed at the symposium are the ground-based strategic deterrent and the B-21 bomber. Obviously, you get updates on their progress. Are you happy so far with the development timeline they are on?

A. I wouldn't say happy. I am grateful that we are now very serious about pursuing the acquisition for the replacement of the Minuteman III. I am grateful that we have source selected already and we are proceeding to build the bomber, but I don't call it "just in time" — I call it "late to need." But it beats the alternative, and the alternative is if we didn't have anything on the drawing board. There is a commitment in the Department of Defense to proceed with the long-range stand off [LRSO cruise missile] and the procurement of a new UH-1N replacement, the helicopter that is important for the security of our missile fields. Those are four programs that we are moving out on and I am grateful for that because they are overdue.

Q. What are the consequences if there is any schedule slippages due to technology development or budget reasons?

A. These are important for deterrence. Remember the whole premise to deter is the people you are trying to deter have to believe that you have the capability that they can't stop. And you have to have the ability — [to show] that the weapons you use are reliable. We get to control that. The enemy gets a vote on the survivable piece. Then you have to have the will. It gets to a point with anything that it becomes harder and harder with reliability, but our guys and gals are pretty ingenious in that area. But I am more concerned about what the enemy is being able to do — and continue to do — that I think will continue to make legacy systems less capable. Those are the consequences. That is obviously why we need to modernize.

Q. There are two elements of that. There is the technology development and the budget. Are you concerned about one more than the other?

A. Here is what I do: I articulate what it is as a force we need. We help articulate the requirements for the things we need. We spend a lot of time on that. And then we try to articulate the consequences of what will happen if these things don't get procured. I give my best military advice. I have stated that it is very important that we stay on track with the systems. We have an air-launched cruise missile system that will be 40 years old in 2020 — 50 years old before we potentially field LRSO. I think by any stretch of the imagination that is a long time. And so we're not making this up. Others will decide on the [nuclear] triad, but if we're going to have a triad there is a time in every system you have to reacquire and replace. Otherwise, we would still be flying B-17s from World War II, right? ... We are not being greedy in our requirements. We have gotten good use out of the systems we have but to some degree they all need to be replaced because of the survivability and reliability angle.

Q. What are some technology requirements that you need industry to fulfill?

A. It is really important that we get the B-21 on time, on cost. I am engaging frequently with Northrop Grumman to make sure we have a good relationship and that we are teamed well. We are continuing to message that hard. We still have to make sure we are doing things with the B-52. The B-52 is going to continue to be a workhorse for decades. We have made substantial improvements to the B-52 and we have to continue to do that. I am very, very passionate about trying to re-engine the B-52 and I want to make sure that we replace the current radar we have with a new radar. We are working that. ... These are requirements that we have vetted. The B-1 and the B-2, we are continuing to do the right things with those two platforms to keep them worthy and be able to do the things we need to do.

Q. And the reports you are getting from Northrop Grumman on the B-21, they seem to be on track?

A. At this stage of the journey — and it is still in its infancy stage — I am thrilled. I believe ... we have the opportunity with the B-21 to be a benchmark acquisition program with us and Northrop. And I say that because we have been partners for the last 30 years on stealth, low observable [technologies], so we already have a track record. And we have the benefit to draw the lessons

learned on what went well and didn't go so well with the B-2 and apply those to this. We also have the benefit of learning from the F-22 and the F-35. And I think there is really a neat opportunity that we can be on time and on cost and deliver this incredibly lethal platform that we are going to need to get us well into the 21st century.

Q. Where do you personally stand on the manned versus unmanned issue for the B-21?

A. It doesn't matter where I stand. Initially it is going to be a manned bomber.

Q. Do you see any goodness in an unmanned version?

A. Of course, manpower is not cheap, but I also see a lot of goodness in it being manned. That is the decision and where we are at. That is something that will be debated after I am long gone. ... I am radically agnostic on the issue.

<http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/articles/2017/11/14/global-strike-command-tackles-atrophying-nuclear-command-control-systems>

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Defense One (Washington, DC)

## **A Short-Staffed US Air Force Wants Robots to Do More Human Jobs**

By Marcus Weisgerber

November 8, 2017

*The service's top general says new systems, from bombs to buildings, must be able to think, share, and learn.*

KIRTLAND AIR FORCE BASE, N.M. — Filling the fuel tank of a B-2 stealth bomber is a group effort; the task involves pilots, maintainers, logisticians — not to mention fuel specialists. Gen. David Goldfein wants to know: can the Air Force give some of that work to machines, as airlines do?

"How do we take best practices from industry and automate parts of our flight line that right now are fairly manpower-intensive?" the Air Force chief of staff said in a recent interview. "If I have airmen doing things that can be automated, then I think we got to pursue it."

Goldfein's quest for what he calls "smart flight lines" reflects both his desire to accomplish everyday tasks more efficiently and a stark realization that his service simply does not have enough people to do all its jobs.

During a six-day trip to four Air Force bases last month, Goldfein often sounded more like a wandering digital-age philosopher than a fighter pilot. He asked questions of about everyone he encountered — from teenage airmen who fix planes to wing commanders building new nuclear weapons — about how they are fitting robotics and automation technology into their plans.

"We're too small for what the nation requires," he said. "So there's a part of this which means we have to grow, but we also have to be good stewards as well and look at the highest priority missions and look at how we're using airmen today and find ways to repurpose airmen against the highest priorities."

Goldfein is searching for new types of technology that could help prepare planes for battle.

"Our bases are part of our weapon system because we launch from land," he said, alluding to a mission in January when two B-2s took off from Whiteman Air Force Base in Missouri and flew a 34-hour round trip to drop bombs on Islamic State camps in Libya.



“How of that can be automated? How much of that can we start to really look into some creative robotic technology use?” Goldfein said. “I do think there are some investments we have to make in that regard.”

Air Force leaders have spent recent years lamenting that they have been short-staffed — a shortage in pilots and maintenance crews that fix planes being among the most taxed career fields. Goldfein notes that his service is eventually slated to grow, but he wants a cultural shift in thinking that seeks technology to do what jobs it can, freeing up airmen to fill roles that machines cannot.

Of particular interest, he said, is how the Air Force will store and transport its new nuclear weapons more safely and efficiently.

During a stop at Barksdale Air Force Base, home of the 2d Bomb Wing, Goldfein asked how robotics and automation were being incorporated into a new building that will hold new nuclear cruise missiles. The airmen replied that since the new missile is still in the early stages of development, they were designing the new building as if it would hold the current cruise missile carried by the B-52.

Here at Kirtland Air Force Base, Goldfein posed the question to a colonel who works with munition storage at the Air Force’s Nuclear Weapons Center. The colonel explained that tight schedule demands has led to a hesitance to pursue new types technology.

Goldfein countered that he wants to make sure that new facilities are not run like the current ones.

Since becoming the Air Force’s top general, Goldfein has pushed for airmen to think differently about the future of war. He has been on a personal crusade to make sure all of the Air Force’s planes, satellites, and other weapons can all talk to one another digitally. That would be a shift: much of the U.S. arsenal was built by defense firms that used proprietary standards, preventing the weapons from communicating electronically and requiring lots of time and money to modify them.

So when a company pitches new weapons, Goldfein asks three questions: Does it share? Does it connect? Does it learn?

He said his push for more open systems — ones that the Air Force can modify itself — is beginning to be heeded by defense firms. At the Air Force Association’s annual trade show in September, Goldfein “was impressed and intrigued with how many of our industry partners started their conversation with me [with]: ‘let me tell you how this connects. Let me tell you how this shares.’”

“[T]his is a big challenge for us to be able to change fundamentally the way we think from wars of attrition — sensor, weapons, platforms — to wars of cognition, which is networks that share and learn,” he said. “Making that cultural shift and translating that to an acquisition strategy is going to be a big lift. But the faster we do it, the faster we’ll improve our lethality as a joint team.”

<http://www.defenseone.com/technology/2017/11/air-force-wants-robots-do-more-human-jobs/142410/?oref=d-skybox>

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## US COUNTER-WMD

Homeland Preparedness News (Washington, DC)

### **Upcoming OPCW Conference of State Parties to Consider New Efforts to Eliminate Chemical Weapons Stockpiles**

By Aaron Martin

November 14, 2017

Progress in eliminating chemical weapons stockpiles and the appointment of a new director general will highlight the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons' (OPCW) upcoming 22nd Conference of the States Parties (CSP-22) scheduled from Nov. 27 to Dec. 1.

Hamid Ali Rao, the deputy director-general of OPCW, outlined the CPS-22 agenda for non-residential Permanent Representatives to the OPCW in a briefing held in the Netherlands on Friday.

In October, the OPCW Executive Council recommended Ambassador Fernando Arias, Spain's permanent representative to OPCW, to serve as the next director-general. The recommendation will be acted on during CSP-22, and the next director-general's term will commence on July 25.

Additional topics that will be covered at CSP-22 include threats posed by non-state actors, the capacity of OPCW's Africa Programme, international cooperation to advance the peaceful use of chemistry, and an update on a fact-finding mission regarding Syria's alleged use of chemical weapons.

"The secretariat has engaged with the Syrian Arab Republic in order to clarify all the outstanding issues identified in relation to its initial declaration and related submissions," Rao said. "Despite the high-level consultations with the Syrian authorities, the Secretariat has not been able to resolve the identified gaps, inconsistencies and discrepancies in the declaration of the Syrian Arab Republic."

During the briefing, Rao also provided an update on the progress of chemical demilitarization. He reported that 69,628 metric tonnes (MT) of chemical weapons had been destroyed under international verification, which represents 96.3 percent of all stocks declared to OPCW.

<https://homelandprepnews.com/stories/25256-upcoming-opcw-conference-state-parties-consider-new-efforts-eliminate-chemical-weapons-stockpiles/>

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The Frederick News-Post (Frederick, MD)

### **House Vote on National Defense Bill Seeks to Protect Fort Detrick Lab**

By Danielle E. Gaines

November 14, 2017

The U.S. House of Representatives approved a \$692 billion defense spending bill Tuesday evening that includes a provision to forestall the closing of a Fort Detrick laboratory.

The final version of the National Defense Authorization Act would require a thorough study of the National Biodefense Analysis and Countermeasures Center (NBACC) at Fort Detrick before the laboratory could be shuttered by the Trump administration.

The bill passed the House 356-70 on Tuesday afternoon. The Senate is expected to give final approval before the end of this year.

The bill will require a joint report from the departments of Homeland Security and Defense by March 1, 2018, on the functions of the NBACC, detailing the cost and impact if the facility is closed. The bill prevents any funds from being used to close or transfer the NBACC facility until the heads of the federal agencies that use the laboratory certify to Congress that doing so would not have a negative effect on the nation's biological defense capabilities.

The language is similar to amendments proposed earlier this year from Sens. Ben Cardin (D) and Chris Van Hollen (D) and U.S. Rep. John Delaney (D-6th).

NBACC was established in response to the anthrax attacks in 2001 with the goal to bolster criminal biochemical investigations and better understand the threat posed by deadly biological agents. The facility has since processed thousands of pieces of evidence in cases investigated by the FBI.

In May, NBACC was notified that the Department of Homeland Security intends to shutter the facility by September 2018.

During the federal budget process, lawmakers have pursued several amendments to protect the laboratory.

"NBACC is an essential piece of our homeland security and national defense portfolio," Delaney said in a press release Tuesday evening. "I don't understand why the Trump Administration wants to close the facility and it would be a huge mistake if they do. ... Throughout the appropriations and defense authorization process it has been clear that there is bipartisan support for NBACC, which is why we've been able to pass multiple amendments in support of the facility. This agreement puts the brakes on closing NBACC."

[https://www.fredericknewspost.com/news/politics\\_and\\_government/house-vote-on-national-defense-bill-seeks-to-protect-fort/article\\_4e77fb5b-53a4-590a-bb96-4475fdf47984.html](https://www.fredericknewspost.com/news/politics_and_government/house-vote-on-national-defense-bill-seeks-to-protect-fort/article_4e77fb5b-53a4-590a-bb96-4475fdf47984.html)

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United Press International (Washington, DC)

## **DHS to Conduct Biological Weapons Tests in Oklahoma Next Year**

By Ray Downs

November 14, 2017

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security said Monday it will conduct a biological weapons simulation test in a small Oklahoma town, which has unnerved many residents there.

The DHS will conduct the tests at the Chilocco Indian School in Newkirk, Okla., a town of about 2,200 people near the state's northern border with Kansas. Officials said the school will serve as the building for DHS' Hazards of Dynamic Outdoor Releases (HODOR) testing.

"The HODOR program supports DHS's strategic goals to detect and recover from biological attacks," the department said in a report about the planned testing -- which is scheduled for January and February, and again in June and July.

"To understand the true detection capabilities of the biological sensor, challenge tests with a material must be performed."

Officials said "all [testing] materials are considered nontoxic and nonhazardous," but not everyone is assured.

Rep. Ron Estes, R-Kan., told the Oklahoma Statesman he is "monitoring the situation closely."

"I have numerous questions regarding this proposed test," he said. "While it's important for our federal agencies to test their abilities in response to threats, we need to be 100 percent certain this test is safe for the residents of south-central Kansas."

Newkirk resident Brittney Smith said she doesn't believe the Homeland Security Department is being completely honest about the risks.

"I would like them to do the testing somewhere else and I think that I speak for a lot of the citizens when I say that," she said.

"Are we 100 percent sure this is safe?" resident Brian Hobbs asked. "Sometimes, they have unintended consequences, like Agent Orange [in Vietnam]."

Residents in nearby Ark City protested the planned tests last weekend -- saying winds could spread the chemicals to their areas.

"You have both people that think that it's not going to damage or bother us -- and then you have other people ... that have children, that live here, work here, grow their crops here, that in the long run are going to pay the price," a protester told KWCH-TV.

The DHS said no "significant adverse impacts to air quality resources are anticipated."

[https://www.upi.com/Top\\_News/US/2017/11/14/DHS-to-conduct-biological-weapons-tests-in-Oklahoma-next-year/4711510643820/](https://www.upi.com/Top_News/US/2017/11/14/DHS-to-conduct-biological-weapons-tests-in-Oklahoma-next-year/4711510643820/)

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Scout Warrior (Brentwood, TN)

## **US Missile Defense Interceptors Get New Command and Control**

By Kris Osborn

November 8, 2017

The Pentagon's next intercept test will incorporate new missile defense technology engineered to improve the likelihood that a Ground-Based Interceptor can succeed in destroying an approaching ICBM nuclear weapons attack.

Northrop Grumman is working with the Missile Defense Agency to refine new command and control systems able to exchange time-sensitive information with an interceptor kill vehicle to improve its ability to guide toward an attacking enemy ICBM.

The technology, which involves the integration of new components into data terminals and communications networks, is designed to increase reliability of the Pentagon's Ground-Based Midcourse Defense (GMD) system and expedite the process through which sensors and data locate ICBM targets, Mark Thornton, Director of Missile Defense Systems Operating Unit, Northrop Grumman, told Scout Warrior in an interview.

While a Ground-Based Interceptor (GBI) travels into space to discern and destroy an ICBM, sensors and communications technology are needed to connect with the interceptor prior to engagement. While many of the details, sensors or RF technologies involved are, not surprisingly, unavailable for public discussion, there are a number of substantial cutting-edge improvements emerging quickly.

“We are replacing the GMD coms network with upgrades and a compressed footprint. We are making changes rapidly to put new devices into the network,” Thornton explained.

Command and control upgrades to missile defense technology continue to emerge as a key priority in budget and spending deliberations, according to many senior Pentagon leaders.

Given the North Korea threat, missile defense upgrades are progressing at a crucial time for the Pentagon’s Ground-Based midcourse defense. Following the completion of current Pentagon review of nuclear weapons, policy and defenses, there is a distinct possibility that funding for missile defense technology will continue to climb.

In a recent appearance before the House Armed Services Committee, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said additional decisions about prioritized missile defense spending will be made at the conclusion of the ongoing strategy review.

Also testifying before HASC, Missile Defense Agency Commander Vice. Am. J.D. Syring specified that large portions of the more than a proposed \$7.9 billion 2018 MDA budget would be to support “integration of interceptors, sensors and the command, control, battle management and communications system” for missile defense.

As the industry deputy program manager for the GMD effort, Northrop is responsible for fire-control systems, command launch technology, command and control networks and a wide range of computer technology responsible for the launch of an interceptor.

Northrop is teamed with Raytheon, which makes the Exo-atmospheric kill vehicle and Boeing, which engineers the Ground-Based Interceptor.

Reducing the hardware footprint and accelerating processing speeds of GMD command and control systems is a key element of these upgrades. In total, modern computing technology has enabled Northrop engineers to compress nine racks of servers into a single rack.

“You can do a lot more in a single box these days than you could do in a single system. There is more processing power and capability in smaller packages than when we built the system years ago. The machines that run the core of our system were the size of a refrigerator,” Thornton said.

Having fewer hardware components on a GMD system - achieved through compression, smaller computing and data consolidation – is fundamental to improving the reliability of a Ground-Based Interceptor as it ignites and is guided into space.

Northrop engineers are in the process conducting a wide range of simulation exercises and ground tests to prepare the new components for an upcoming MDA intercept test.

The precise timing of the next test is not yet specified, however it is likely to be of great significance given that a Pentagon GBI succeeded in destroying an incoming ICBM target in space for the first time – just within the last few months.

<https://scout.com/military/warrior/Article/US-Missile-Defense-Interceptors-Get-New-Command-and-Control-110178039>

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## US ARMS CONTROL

The Daily Princetonian (Princeton, NJ)

### Nuclear Weapons Programs Carry Massive Risks, Experts Say at U. Panel

By Benjamin Ball

November 13, 2017

A panel of three experts discussed the necessity of eliminating nuclear arsenals across the world Monday afternoon at the Woodrow Wilson School.

“Merely shrinking these [nuclear] arsenals down from the current level of 15,000 in the world isn’t going to protect us from potential disaster,” said Bruce Blair. “The only reliable answer to this problem is to eliminate all nuclear weapons.” Blair is a former U.S. nuclear missile launch control officer and winner of a MacArthur Foundation “Genius” Fellowship for his work on nuclear arms control.

The other two panelists were Sharon Weiner, an associate professor at American University, who held White House responsibility for nuclear weapon budgets during the Obama Administration, and Ambassador Elayne Whyte Gómez, who led the negotiations of the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in 2017.

Blair specifically focused on the myriad of risks and errors possible in the possession of nuclear weapons, citing a number of close calls by the United States. He also noted that a decision by the U.S. to take nuclear action does not need the Secretary of Defense’s consent.

“There is no one in the chain of command that has the authority to stop the president [from launching a nuclear weapon],” Blair explained. “Under the current protocol, the president has the unilateral power to order a first strike without apparent cause. The president has carte blanche; he is, as we sometimes like to say, the nuclear monarch.”

To add to the risks highlighted by Blair, Weiner focused on the economic impact of nuclear war. Specifically, Weiner discussed the severe economic drain a modernization of nuclear weapons could potentially cause.

“The bad news is that a child born today will be at retirement by the time the current modernization program is beginning to wind down,” Weiner said. “That [modernization] program is estimated right now to cost 1.2 trillion dollars over the next thirty years.”

Weiner noted that 1.2 trillion dollars was a low estimate of the cost, as the program would still continue after thirty years. As such, cost estimates fail to take into account new missile silos and the infrastructure which must be built around new, modernized weapons.

“We’re only at the beginning for all of the programs,” said Weiner. “So before we get further into this process, the time is now to cancel these things.”

Echoing Weiner, Gómez explained that in order for progress to happen in winding down nuclear programs, it is essential to change the norms and assumptions both leaders and citizens hold regarding nuclear weapons. According to Gómez, citizens of the world need to think of nuclear weapons less as a source of security to their individual nation or states but more as a unilateral, global risk -- a risk not worth taking.

"I truly believe that human progress is the result of the constant challenging of ideas and beliefs through scientific observation and problem solving," said Gómez. "We have to exert our agency and our responsibility to ourselves and our children and future generations and do something about it."

The talk, entitled "A Perpetual Menace: Nuclear Weapons Today, Tomorrow, Forever?" was held in Robertson Hall Bowl 016 on Monday, Nov. 13 at 4:30 p.m.

<http://www.dailyprincetonian.com/article/2017/11/lecture-on-eliminating-nuclear-arsenals>

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Stanford University News (Stanford, CA)

## **Why Nuclear Deterrence Can Work on North Korea**

By Clifton B. Parker

November 14, 2017

The same logic that kept a nuclear war from breaking out between the United States and former Soviet Union is the best strategy to now pursue with North Korea, several scholars said Tuesday at Stanford.

The panel, convened at Stanford's Center for International Security and Cooperation (CISAC), included political scientist Scott D. Sagan of CISAC; political scientist Mira Rapp-Hooper of Yale University; and political scientist Vipin Narang of MIT. The moderator was James D. Fearon, a political scientist at the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies. The event was titled "Can the U.S. Deter a Nuclear North Korea" and held in the William J. Perry Conference Room in Encina Hall.

### **Nuclear decision-making**

The discussion revolved around whether North Korea will have the ability to strike the U.S. with nuclear warheads, and can the U.S. depend on a deterrence strategy like it did during the Cold War?

Deterrence theory holds that nuclear weapons are intended to deter other states from attacking with their nuclear weapons, through the promise of retaliation and possibly mutually assured destruction

Sagan, who recently wrote an essay in Foreign Affairs magazine on the North Korea nuclear crisis, said he has come to decide deterrence is the best approach to the issue.

"I am not one who gladly listens to the siren song of nuclear deterrence," he said, noting that while he is a self-described dove on disarmament issues, he is more hawkish on allowing countries to obtain nuclear weapons, which deterrence implies. "I accept deterrence reluctantly."

In North Korea, he said, no military alternatives exist to solve the problem. For example, even if a decapitation strike were successful – and several U.S. attempts have failed in the past with regard to Saddam Hussein and Muammar Gaddafi – there's no way to know if North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has already given his generals the green light to unleash nuclear or powerful conventional attacks in the case of his demise.

For Sagan, deterrence is a more complicated issue today than during the Cold War when the U.S. and U.S.S.R. were rational actors with thousands of nuclear weapons. He is especially concerned with the rhetoric and the preventive war suggestions emanating from the Trump Administration.

Senior U.S. military leaders, Sagan said, have a duty not to follow “impaired-decision making” that might come from the president. He invoked the prospect of using the Cabinet and the 25th Amendment to halt such an order and remove the president from office. Currently, he believes the nuclear decision process is problematic, as the president alone can directly order the Strategic Air Command to launch nuclear weapons.

Sagan advises that a revised nuclear chain of command should include both the U.S. Secretary of Defense and the U.S. Attorney General. A U.S. Senate hearing, led by Sen. Bob Corker, is actually studying the nuclear authorization process due to concerns with Trump's rhetoric and escalation of the North Korean issue.

“We need more checks on how we decide to use nuclear weapons,” said Sagan, who studies nuclear strategy, ethics and war, public opinion about the use of force, and nuclear non-proliferation and arms control.

He noted that U.S. National Security Advisor H.R McMaster recently criticized his predecessor, Susan Rice, for saying the U.S. could “tolerate” nuclear weapons in North Korea the same way we tolerated nuclear weapons in the Soviet Union.

He quoted McMaster: “A regime that poses a continuous threat to the its neighbors in the region and now may pose a threat, direct threat, to the United States with weapons of mass destruction? A regime that imprisons and murders anyone who seems to oppose that regime, including members of his own family, using sarin nerve gas in a public airport?”

But Sagan said we have long tolerated such authoritarian regimes that have nuclear weapons.

Stumbling accidentally into war with North Korea also seems like a rising risk. On Sept. 27, several U.S. service members and their families received a fraudulent “noncombatant evacuation operation” order via text and social media, he said. The fake notices were quickly reported up the chain of command and the U.S. issued a statement denouncing their validity – the perpetrators have not been found. But Sagan says it illustrates how easy it is to create a situation where North Korea felt a U.S. invasion and attack is imminent – and as a result, could choose to unleash a nuclear first strike.

‘Western fantasy’

Narang, who was once a CISAC visiting assistant professor, studies nuclear proliferation and strategy, South Asian security, and general security studies.

“Deterrence is your friend,” he said in explaining why it can work with North Korea. If the U.S. believes North Korea seeks to preserve its regime – a status quo intention – then deterrence theory works much like it did with the former Soviet Union.

On the other hand, if the U.S. believes North Korea has darker motives, such as reunifying the Korean peninsula through an invasion, then that perspective could lead to a U.S. first strike. Also, the existing U.S. demand of rolling back North Korea’s nuclear program – “denuclearization” – is a “Western fantasy.” They will not give up nuclear weapons, he said.

He said the U.S. does not like to be deterred from making a first strike – as in preventive war – but that is what it must accept if it decides to follow the deterrence course. North Korea, once it possesses an ICBM capable of hitting the U.S. mainland, would pose such a deterrence in the balance of power between the two countries.

“The good news is that deterrence can work, coupled with coercive diplomacy,” Narang said. “We know how to play this game.”

He believes Jong-un is a rational actor, though a cruel dictator. “There’s nothing to suggest he’s crazy.” Ultimately, he said, an effective deterrence policy depends on clarity, consistency, coherence and communications.

#### U.S. nuclear shield, alliances

An expert on security in the Asia-Pacific region and alliance politics, Rapp-Hooper talked about the U.S. relationships, especially with Japan and South Korea, and the “nuclear shield” over these countries that those agreements offer. As a result, neither country has developed nuclear weapons.

This dynamic, however, could change if a North Korean missile could reach the U.S., said Rapp-Hooper, who earned a bachelor’s degree in history at Stanford.

“North Korea is eroding U.S. security guarantees over time,” she said, adding that once those missiles are capable of hitting a U.S. city, would the U.S. government still protect Seoul from attack and let an American city be hit?

The Korean situation, Rapp-Hooper said, is much different than Europe in the Cold War, when such an American nuclear shield existed against a Soviet invasion. Many different U.S. agreements exist now than during that time; no U.S. nuclear weapons are forwardly deployed in northeast Asia, like in Europe then; and the unilateral threats coming from the Trump Administration are unprecedented in nuclear diplomacy.

On the latter point, she called it the “Trump multiplier” effect. “That’s the most exacerbating thing of all,” she said, noting that elements of the White staff are pushing a “better-use-it-now” or preventive attack approach, whereas Secretary of Defense James Mattis and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson see North Korea as more concerned with preserving its regime.

Sagan also pointed out how President Trump’s speech at the United Nations in September led to a realization among the North Koreans that they had no choice but to continue to develop nuclear weapons.

That’s when the president said, “Rocket Man is on a suicide mission for himself and for his regime,” Sagan noted.

He then recalled Kim Jong Un’s response to Trump’s speech, quoting the North Korean leader: “His remarks which described the U.S. option through straightforward expression of his will have convinced me, rather than frightening or stopping me, that the path I chose is correct and that it is the one I have to follow to the last.”

<https://cisac.fsi.stanford.edu/news/why-nuclear-deterrence-can-work-north-korea>

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Sputnik International (Moscow)

### **End of Cooperation with Russia Weakens Protection Against Nuclear Terror**

Author Not Attributed

November 15, 2017

WASHINGTON (Sputnik) — The chill in relations between the United States and Russia increases the risk that nuclear materials will fall into the hands of terrorists and hostile nations, National Security Council Senior Director for Weapons of Mass Destruction and Counter Proliferation Christopher Ford told the Hudson Institute.

"Russia's withdrawal from almost all aspects of bilateral cooperation in securing nuclear material could result in a reduction in security at certain facilities within Russia's vast and expansive nuclear complex," Ford stated on Tuesday. "Moscow will need to commit significant financial and human resources to maintain adequate security with its nuclear infrastructure."

Russia's decision to boycott the fourth nuclear summit hosted by former President Barack Obama in 2016 illustrated the absence of cooperation on nuclear issues with the United States, a cornerstone of cooperation with Moscow since the final days of the Cold War.

Without Russia, the United States continues to work bilaterally and multilaterally with other governments and with the private sector to minimize access to nuclear and radiological materials, Ford said.

Terrorist threats exist in global networks and sensitive nuclear or radiological material acquired anywhere could be used against US interests either at home or abroad, Ford added.

<https://sputniknews.com/world/201711151059104605-russia-us-nuclear-weapons-terror/>

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Reuters (London)

## **Iran Sticks to Key Limits of Nuclear Deal: U.N. Watchdog Report**

By Shadia Nasralla

November 13, 2017

VIENNA (Reuters) - Iran has remained within the main limits on its nuclear activity set by its 2015 deal with six world powers, the U.N. atomic watchdog said in its first report since U.S. President Donald Trump decertified Iranian compliance with the terms.

Iran undertook to curb its uranium enrichment program in return for relief from international sanctions that crippled its economy, and U.N. nuclear inspectors have repeatedly verified Tehran's adherence to the key aspects of the accord.

Trump has called the agreement between Iran, the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Russia, China and the European Union "the worst deal ever" and he disavowed Iran's compliance last month. His decision did not constitute a U.S. exit from the accord but raised concern about its staying power.

Trump's move, at odds with the commitment of the other parties to the deal, meant the U.S. Congress must decide by mid-December whether to reimpose economic sanctions lifted under the accord, reached under his predecessor Barack Obama.

If Congress reimposes the sanctions, the United States would in effect be in violation of the deal and it would likely fall apart. If lawmakers do nothing, the deal remains in place.

In response, Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has said Tehran will stick to the nuclear accord as long as the other signatories respected it, but would "shred" the deal if Washington pulled out.

If the deal unravels, it would strengthen hardline opponents of Hassan Rouhani, Iran's pragmatist president who opened up diplomatic channels to Western powers to enable nuclear diplomacy after years of worsening confrontation.



Iran's stock of low-enriched uranium as of Nov. 5 was 96.7 kg (213.2 pounds), well below a 202.8-kg limit set by the deal, and the level of enrichment did not exceed a maximum 3.67 percent cap, said the confidential International Atomic Energy Agency report sent to IAEA member states and seen by Reuters.

Iran's stock of so-called heavy water, a moderator used in a type of reactor that can produce plutonium, a potential nuclear bomb fuel, stood at 114.4 metric tonnes, below a 130-tonne limit agreed by the parties to the deal.

The 3.67 percent enrichment and 202-kg stockpile limit on uranium, and the 130-tonne cap on heavy water, aim to ensure that Iran does not amass enough material of sufficient fissile purity to produce a nuclear bomb. Such a device requires uranium to be refined to around 90 percent purity.

IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano told Reuters in September he would welcome clarification from the powers on how the agency should monitor Iran's implementation of the so-called Section T of the nuclear pact that deals with certain technologies that could be used to develop an atom bomb.

Russia had been critical of the agency's monitoring of Section T provisions, but Monday's report said the IAEA had verified Iran's commitment to the section.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-iran-nuclear/iran-sticks-to-key-limits-of-nuclear-deal-u-n-watchdog-report-idUSKBN1DD1RS?il=0>

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## ASIA/PACIFIC

Washington Post (Washington, DC)

### Three Reasons Why Japan Will Likely Continue to Reject Nuclear Weapons

By Mike Mochizuki

November 6, 2017

President Trump is visiting Tokyo on Monday at a time of renewed national security debates within Japan. North Korea's recent missile launches and nuclear tests have again prompted discussion in Tokyo on Japan's policy against becoming a nuclear state.

Although Japan has long had the technical ability to develop nuclear weapons — its “nuclear hedge” — it has refrained from doing so. Japan instead remains firmly committed to its 1967 Three Non-Nuclear Principles of not developing, not possessing and not introducing nuclear weapons.

This is not the first time that Japan has reexamined those principles. Similar debates transpired after China's hydrogen bomb test in 1967, the Soviet Union's deployment of medium-range nuclear missiles in Siberia during the 1980s and North Korea's first nuclear test in 2006.

Is this time different? Reacting to North Korea's threatening behavior, former Japanese defense minister Shigeru Ishiba stated in September that Japan should at least debate the decision not to permit the introduction of nuclear weapons on Japanese territory. Ishiba implied that Tokyo should consider asking Washington to deploy tactical nuclear weapons in Japan.

This latest debate is likely to end in the same way as previous debates, however. Japan will continue to adhere to its Three Non-Nuclear Principles and forswear nuclear weapons. Here are three reasons for that:

### 1) Staying non-nuclear is part of Japan's national identity

The Three Non-Nuclear Principles are a clear part of Japan's national identity, not simply a policy preference. Repeated polls indicate overwhelming popular support for the three principles in Japan. A 2014 Asahi newspaper poll revealed that support for the principles had risen to 82 percent, compared with 78 percent in a 1988 poll. Despite growing concerns about North Korea's nuclear program and China's military power during this period, Japanese support for remaining non-nuclear actually increased.

Even after the provocative North Korean missile launches over Japan in August and September, a Fuji News Network poll showed that nearly 80 percent of the Japanese population remained opposed to Japan becoming a nuclear weapons state. And nearly 69 percent opposed having the United States bring nuclear weapons into Japan.

The legacy of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings leave many Japanese convinced that their country has a moral responsibility to promote global nuclear disarmament — as well as to forgo nuclear weapons of its own. The 2011 Fukushima nuclear plant disaster has reinforced this view.

In fact, increasing numbers of Japanese believe that the U.S. “nuclear umbrella” is unnecessary for Japanese security. A June 2010 NHK survey revealed that 20.8 percent felt that U.S. nuclear deterrence is necessary for Japan's security in both the present and future, while 34.8 percent believed it unnecessary. The June 2015 NHK poll showed that only 10.3 percent thought the U.S. nuclear umbrella is necessary for both the present and the future — 48.9 percent responded that it is unnecessary now and later.

### 2) Powerful players in Japanese politics can block nuclear acquisition

In addition to public opposition to nuclear weapons, Japan has significant “veto players” — crucial political or economic actors that are likely to block efforts to develop nuclear weapons.

Japan has a robust nuclear energy industry. But public acceptance of nuclear energy in the 1950s resulted from a fundamental political bargain: nuclear energy, but no nuclear weapons.

As security scholar Jacques Hymans argues, the development of nuclear energy in Japan boosted the number of Japanese government agencies and private-sector actors that are committed to the peaceful use of nuclear power — and can serve as a formidable opposition to any political move toward acquiring nuclear weapons. These veto players include powerful economic ministries, regulatory commissions, industrial groups and prefectural governments.

The international nonproliferation regime and public opposition to nuclear weapons give these veto players leverage in Japan's policy process. The International Atomic Energy Agency has closely monitored Japan's reprocessing programs, for instance. Japan's nuclear energy program is also tied to bilateral agreements and multilateral bodies such as the Nuclear Suppliers Group that embody nonproliferation principles.

### 3) Japan has good national security reasons to stay non-nuclear

There's also a realist security calculation to consider. North Korean nuclearization is alarming, but it does not pose such an acute danger that Japanese leaders will be motivated to pay the high political costs necessary to weaken, much less revoke, the Three Non-Nuclear Principles.

North Korea acquiring the ability to deliver a nuclear weapon against the United States may weaken the protective U.S. nuclear umbrella somewhat, but U.S. nuclear and conventional military capabilities should be adequate to deter a North Korean nuclear attack on Japan.

During the 2016 presidential campaign, Donald Trump criticized several U.S. alliances and mused that it might be desirable for Japan to develop nuclear weapons. But after assuming office, President Trump and his foreign policy team have repeatedly confirmed the U.S. defense commitment to Japan. The continuing presence of U.S. military forces in Japan, South Korea and the Western Pacific makes this commitment credible to deter potential aggressors and to reassure Japan.

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/11/06/japan-is-likely-to-retain-its-non-nuclear-principles-heres-why/?utm\\_term=.5750b5e0f375](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/11/06/japan-is-likely-to-retain-its-non-nuclear-principles-heres-why/?utm_term=.5750b5e0f375)

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Reuters (London)

### **North Korea Nuclear Arsenal Too Developed to Destroy Quickly, Says Moon**

By Christine Kim

November 14, 2017

SEOUL (Reuters) - South Korean President Moon Jae-in said on Tuesday it would not be easy for reclusive North Korea to destroy its nuclear arsenal quickly, even if wanted to, given its weapons programs were so developed.

North Korea is under heavy international pressure to end its weapons programs, pursued in defiance of U.N. Security Council resolutions. But it has vowed never to give up its nuclear arsenal.

Speaking to reporters in the Philippines, Moon said that if North Korea agreed to hold talks, negotiations could be held with all options open.

"If talks begin to resolve the North Korea nuclear issue, I feel it will be realistically difficult for North Korea to completely destroy its nuclear capabilities when their nuclear and missile arsenal are at a developed stage," Moon said in a briefing.

"If so, North Korea's nuclear program should be suspended, and negotiations could go on to pursue complete denuclearization."

Moon's remarks were made available by the presidential Blue House.

Last week, the North said it did not oppose dialogue, but would "never put the issue related to the supreme interests of the DPRK and security of its people on the bargaining table".

"We are not interested in such dialogue and negotiations in the least," the North's official news agency said, referring to the country by its official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The North defends the programs as a necessary defense against U.S. plans to invade. The United States, which has 28,500 troops in South Korea, a legacy of the 1950-53 Korean war, denies any such intention.

U.S. President Donald Trump has traded insults and threats with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un as North Korea races toward its goal of developing a nuclear-tipped missile capable of reaching the United States.

Trump threatened in his maiden U.N. address to "totally destroy" North Korea if the United States was threatened and has said the time for talking, the policy of previous U.S. administrations, is over.

Moon reiterated his stance that now was the time to increase pressure on North Korea so that it would come to talks.

He said differences in understanding between South Korea and China, North Korea's lone major ally, regarding the deployment of the U.S. Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system on South Korean soil had not been resolved.

"China has not said it has changed its stance to agree to THAAD and still says THAAD infringes on its security. We have, in turn, explained THAAD is not aimed at China but only toward curbing North Korea's nuclear and missile provocations," he said.

Last month, South Korea and China agreed to end a year-long standoff over THAAD which had seen South Korean companies doing business in China suffer from retaliation against the system's deployment.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-missiles-southkorea/north-korea-nuclear-arsenal-too-developed-to-destroy-quickly-says-moon-idUSKBN1DE1BY>

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The Japan Times (Tokyo, Japan)

### **ASEAN Plus Three Leaders Condemn North Korean Nukes as Abe Urges More Pressure**

Author Not Attributed

November 14, 2017

MANILA – Asian leaders expressed mounting concern about North Korea's nuclear weapons and missile development during a Tuesday meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Japan, China and South Korea, with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe urging members to refrain from a return to talks with the isolated country.

According to a Japanese government spokesman, Abe told the other ASEAN Plus Three leaders that approaching Pyongyang for talks now would result in nothing meaningful, and that pressure must instead be applied until the North seeks dialogue on the basis that it will change its policies.

According to a draft of a joint statement seen by Kyodo News, the ASEAN Plus Three members were to urge North Korea to "stop provocative and threatening actions, thereby creating conditions conducive for dialogue."

They were expected to call on North Korea to immediately comply with all relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions and reiterate their support for the "complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful manner."

The Japanese spokesman said there was discussion at the summit of the serious nature of the threat from North Korea, but refrained from going into further detail.

China, which exerts a strong influence on some ASEAN members, has advocated direct dialogue with North Korea, while Japan has called instead for pressure to be raised to the maximum possible extent in line with the policy of U.S. President Donald Trump.

The leaders did not discuss the South China Sea, where China and some ASEAN members have overlapping territorial disputes, according to the spokesman.

In their opening remarks, the leaders stressed the importance of economic cooperation, looking back on the Asian currency crisis in 1997 that prompted the start of the 20-year-old dialogue framework.

“Financial cooperation between the ASEAN Plus Three — to boost predictability in regional and world economies, lessen vulnerability, and maintain and strengthen the system of free trade — is ever more significant amid concerns about the rise of protectionism and insularity,” Abe said.

Chairing the summit, Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte urged his fellow leaders to “continue nurturing peaceful co-existence, particularly within ASEAN Plus Three, where we consider ourselves as one and a family.”

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang said recent improvements in his country’s relations with Japan and South Korea have presented new opportunities for the ASEAN Plus Three, while South Korean President Moon Jae-in called for continued solidarity to combat the challenges of aging populations and climate change.

Abe told the meeting that Japan is preparing to hold a long-postponed trilateral summit with Li and Moon in the near future, the spokesman said.

He said the leaders also discussed the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership trade agreement, currently under negotiation between the ASEAN Plus Three nations as well as Australia, India and New Zealand, but refrained from revealing details.

According to the draft statement, the leaders will urge RCEP participants to “further intensify efforts toward a swift conclusion of a modern, high-quality, and mutually beneficial economic partnership agreement.”

Later in the day, leaders kicked off a meeting of the East Asia Summit in the Philippine capital, where they were expected to again condemn North Korea’s nuclear weapons development and urge all countries to fully implement U.N. sanctions.

Aside from the rising nuclear threat posed by North Korea, leaders attending the meeting were to focus on China’s assertive claims in the South China Sea, though they have yet to finalize the language concerning disputes in the waterway, according to a draft chairman’s statement set to be issued after the meeting.

The leaders were expected to condemn North Korea’s “ongoing development of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear and chemical weapons, and ballistic missile technologies” in violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions, according to the draft.

“We strongly urged the DPRK to immediately and fully comply with all relevant ... Security Council resolutions and underlined that all EAS members are committed to full and thorough implementation of (Security Council) resolutions on North Korea and urged all States to do the same,” it read.

U.N. Security Council resolutions ban imports of coal, textiles and seafood from North Korea, as well as limiting exports of crude oil and petroleum products to the country. The sanctions also include calls on U.N. members not to grant work permits for North Korean laborers.

The participants in the 18-nation summit, including Abe and Li, will demand that Pyongyang “abandon its nuclear and ballistic missile programs in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner,” the draft said.

Trump skipped the meeting after it was delayed.



The leaders will also urge North Korea to address “humanitarian concerns of the international community, including the abductions issue,” the draft said in reference to the isolated country’s abduction of Japanese nationals in the 1970s and 1980s.

While Trump and Abe are expected to push China to do more in reining in North Korea, Li is likely to call on the United States and other parties involved to resolve the issue peacefully through dialogue and negotiation.

China accounts for about 90 percent of North Korea’s total trade and is a major supplier of oil to the country, prompting some critics to label Beijing as an economic enabler of Pyongyang’s weapons programs.

China opposes North Korea’s nuclear weapons development, but fears strong economic pressure could trigger a collapse, resulting in the loss of a strategic buffer zone against South Korea, a U.S. ally.

There may also be calls for China and ASEAN to work toward what some U.S. officials say is “a meaningful, binding, results-oriented code of conduct” to defuse tensions in the South China Sea.

On Monday, Li and the ASEAN leaders agreed to start consultations on the text of the code. An ASEAN diplomatic source said the two sides plan to start such talks in March in Vietnam.

However, Duterte, who chairs the East Asia Summit, has signaled a reluctance to side against Beijing over the South China Sea issue.

“Today, China is the No. 1 economic powerhouse. And we have to be friends,” Duterte told a business forum Sunday. (There are) “other hotheads who would like us to confront China and the rest of the world for so many issues. The South China Sea is better left untouched.”

China has overlapping territorial claims with Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Vietnam and Taiwan in the South China Sea, a strategic waterway through which over one-third of global trade passes.

China’s unilateral construction and militarization of outposts in disputed areas of the South China Sea have drawn international condemnation. Beijing has also refused to comply with last year’s international tribunal ruling that invalidated the country’s claims across almost the entire sea.

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/11/14/national/politics-diplomacy/asean-plus-three-leaders-share-concerns-north-korea/>

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Raidió Teilifís Éireann (Dublin, Ireland)

## **N Korea Warns US Naval Drills with S Korea Could Lead to Nuclear War**

Author Not Attributed

November 14, 2017

North Korea has warned that the deployment of three US aircraft carriers in joint navy drills with South Korea is fueling tensions that could lead to nuclear war.

North Korea’s UN Ambassador Ja Song Nam said in a letter to UN Secretary-General António Guterres that this was “the worst ever situation prevailing in and around the Korean peninsula.”

The first such deployment of three US carriers since 2007 “is making it impossible to predict when nuclear war breaks out due to the US nuclear war equipment” taking up a “strike posture,” wrote the ambassador.

The four-day exercise in the western Pacific involving the USS Ronald Reagan, USS Nimitz and USS Theodore Roosevelt began on Saturday and included seven South Korean vessels including three destroyers.

The ambassador said the United States had reactivated round-the-clock sorties by B-52 strategic bombers and was making frequent flights of B-1B and B-2 bombers in the air space of South Korea.

"The large scale nuclear war exercises and blackmails... make one conclude that the option we have taken was the right one and we should go along the way to the last," wrote Ja.

North Korea conducted its sixth nuclear test this year and test-fired a series of advanced missiles, including intercontinental ballistic missiles.

In response, the United States led a push at the Security Council to impose tougher sanctions, such as export bans, to deny Pyongyang of hard currency revenue to build up its military programs.

The North Korean ambassador accused the council of "turning a blind eye to the nuclear war exercises of the United States who is hell bent on bringing a catastrophic disaster to humanity."

The exercises come on the heels of President Donald Trump's visits to Tokyo, Seoul and Beijing this week, which were dominated by the question of how to counter Pyongyang's nuclear weapons threat.

[https://www.rte.ie/news/2017/1114/919845-north\\_korea/](https://www.rte.ie/news/2017/1114/919845-north_korea/)

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## EUROPE/RUSSIA

Reuters (London)

### **Turkey, France and Italy to Strengthen Cooperation on Missile Defense: Sources**

Author Not Attributed

November 8, 2017

ISTANBUL (Reuters) - Turkey signed a letter of intent with France and Italy on Wednesday to strengthen cooperation on joint defense projects including air and missile defense systems, Turkish defense ministry sources said.

As a first step, the Franco-Italian EUROSAM consortium and Turkish companies will look into a system based on the SAMP-T missile system produced by EUROSAM and determine the common needs of the three countries, the sources said.

NATO member Turkey says it plans to buy Russian S-400 surface-to-air missiles, a decision which has been seen in some Western capitals as a snub to the alliance, given tensions with Moscow over Ukraine and Syria.

The Russian deal also raises concern because the weapons cannot be integrated into NATO defense.

"That deal has not been consummated. There are no S-400s in Turkey as we speak," U.S. Air Force General Tod Walters, head of NATO Allied Air Command, told Reuters in Berlin.

He said he would continue to press Turkish air force officials to buy weapons that could work together with NATO systems, which the S-400 could not.

"We obviously have systems in the region now that possess that capability and demonstrate a high, high degree of interoperability," Wolters said.

Raytheon, which builds the Patriot missile defense system, had also put in offer before Turkey chose the S-400.

Turkey has continued talks with the EUROSAM consortium, which came in second in the tender.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg last month said Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan had told him that Ankara was discussing buying air defense systems from France and Italy in addition to the S-400s.

The defense ministry sources said Turkey, France and Italy would strengthen cooperation on joint production of military electronic systems, software and simulation systems and warfare equipments, as well as air and missile defense systems.

The letter of intent was signed in Brussels, where Turkey's Defence Minister Nurettin Canikli was attending a meeting of NATO defense ministers.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-turkey-defence/turkey-france-and-italy-to-strengthen-cooperation-on-missile-defense-sources-idUSKBN1D829I>

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Sputnik International (Moscow)

## **Kremlin Unaware of Letter Saying DPRK Was Ready to Conduct Nuclear Strike on US**

Author Not Attributed

November 11, 2017

*The letter that the North Korean delegation has submitted through Russian upper house speaker Valentina Matvienko to Russian President Vladimir Putin, said Pyongyang was prepared to conduct a nuclear strike against the United States, a source familiar with the talks told Sputnik.*

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said on Saturday he was unaware of a letter that was sent from North Korean leader Kim Jong Un to Vladimir Putin.

The development comes shortly after the source close to the October talks told Sputnik that Washington changed its stance on the North Korean issue after it had been informed about the content of the letter.

The letter, Valentina Matvienko has said, was handed over to her by the North Korean delegation at the Inter-Parliamentary Union assembly that was held earlier in October.

The news about the possible nuclear strike against the US comes as Vladimir Putin said at a press-conference on Saturday that Russia and China have the same view on the DPRK crisis, saying that both Moscow and Beijing call for dialogue. The president has also said that it was essential to "first of all, halt the rhetoric, then halt all the manifestations of aggression from all the sides, and sitting down at the negotiating table eventually" to find solution to the unfolding crisis.

The North Korean issue was on US President Donald Trump's agenda on his visit to the Asian countries, his longest foreign trip since the inauguration. Prior to the tour, that includes visits to countries including Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Vietnam and China, Trump said he hoped that Vladimir Putin would help resolve the North Korean crisis.

The situation on the Korean Peninsula has worsened sharply in the recent months as Pyongyang conducted its sixth nuclear test in violation of UN Security Council resolutions.

<https://sputniknews.com/asia/201711111059014168-dprk-russia-nuclear-strike-us/>

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Mehr News Agency (Tehran, Iran)

## **France Raises Prospect of New Sanctions on Iran over Missile Program**

Author Not Attributed

November 13, 2017

France's foreign ministry suggested on Monday that new sanctions could be imposed on Iran if needed over its missile program.

Iran rejected on Sunday a call by French President Emmanuel Macron for talks on Tehran's missiles, saying they were defensive and unrelated to a nuclear agreement with world powers.

"As you know, the European Union has already placed sanctions on Iranian entities involved in the ballistic program," foreign ministry spokeswoman Agnes Romatet-Espagne said.

She was responding when asked to clarify comments made by Macron during a trip to the United Arab Emirates last week about the prospects of possible sanctions with regard to those activities, Reuters reported.

"If needed, new sanctions could be taken," she said.

The United States accused Iran on Tuesday of supplying Yemen's Houthi with a missile that was fired into Saudi Arabia in July and called for the United Nations to hold Tehran accountable for violating two UN Security Council resolutions.

Saudi Arabia and its allies accuse Iran of supplying missiles and other weapons to the Houthis, saying the arms were not present in Yemen before conflict broke out there in 2015. Iran denies the charges and blames the conflict on Riyadh.

French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian will be in the Saudi capital later this week and intends to travel to Iran before the end of the month.

"The political dialogue between France and Iran is active and makes it possible to address all topics, including strategic and regional issues," Romatet-Espagne said. "Mr Le Drian will have a firm dialogue when he goes to Iran."

<https://en.mehrnews.com/news/129412/France-raises-prospect-of-new-sanctions-on-Iran-over-missile>

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The Diplomat (Tokyo, Japan)

## **Russia's Upgraded Supersonic Strategic Bomber to Make Debut Flight in 2018**

By Franz-Stefan Gady

November 13, 2017

The Tupolev Tu-160M2 long-range supersonic strategic bomber will reportedly perform its maiden flight in February 2018, a Russian defense industry source told TASS news agency on November 9.

“The plane with the factory number 804 based on Soviet aircraft breakthroughs will be rolled out of the final assembly workshop of the Kazan Aviation Enterprise and delivered to the flight testing station in November this year. The plane is expected to perform its debut flight from the enterprise’s aerodrome in February next year,” the source said.

It “will be the first combat aircraft capable of performing the same assignments, which operational 16 Tu-160 planes do,” he added. “The 804th plane will be subsequently upgraded to the Tu-160M2 variant. While ostensibly an improved variant of the Soviet-era Tu-160, the Tu160M2 is a new bomber in all but name, according to the Russian Aerospace Force.

The Tu-160 first entered service in 1987. It remains the airborne component of Russia’s nuclear triad. While the Russia Aerospace Force operates 16 Tu-160s, about half are not airworthy and remain grounded.

In 2015, Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered the upgrade of Russia’s Tu-160 force due to delays in the next-generation strategic stealth bomber project, dubbed PAK DA (an acronym for “Prospective Aviation Complex for Long-Range Aviation”). The Russian Aerospace Force intends to procure at least 50 new Tu-160M2s at a rate of three aircraft per year beginning in 2023 when serial production is scheduled to kick off.

The Tu-160M2 will reportedly be an entire new bomber aside from the airframe, as I explained previously:

The bomber will presumably be fitted with new avionics, sensors, displays, and communications systems, as well as new operating software.

(...)

Given the bomber’s limited stealth capability, it will presumably be armed with long-range standoff cruise missiles such as the Kh-101/Kh-102 (nuclear variant) air-launched cruise missile with an estimated range of 2,700 to 5,000 kilometers. The Tu-160M2 will likely carry the missiles internally on a rotary launcher.

As I reported last month, the new bomber will be fitted with a more powerful engine, increasing the aircraft’s operational range and maneuverability. The Russian aircraft industry began testing a non-afterburning variant of the Kuznetsov NK-32 engine, purportedly the largest and most powerful turbofan jet engine ever fitted on a bomber, in October. “NK-32 series 2 has improved performance, and its range of flight will be increased by at least 1,000 km, compared with existing engines,” Russian Deputy Defense Minister Yuriy Borisov announced in 2015.

The upgrade of its strategic bomber force, including the Tu-160M2, remains a top priority for the Russian government. “We’ll continue discussing today how tasks are being solved to develop the



fleet of Tu-160 and Tu-95MS strategic bombers. These planes are an important component of the country's nuclear potential," Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu said in August.

<https://thediplomat.com/2017/11/russias-upgraded-supersonic-strategic-bomber-to-make-debut-flight-in-2018/>

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## MIDDLE EAST

Reuters (London)

### **Russia, U.S. Stalemate Over Syria Chemical Weapons Inquiry**

By Michelle Nichols

November 13, 2017

UNITED NATIONS (Reuters) - Russia said on Monday it was talking to the United States about the U.N. Security Council renewing an international inquiry into chemical weapons attacks in Syria, but Washington countered that Moscow had refused to engage on a U.S.-drafted resolution.

The mandate for the joint inquiry by the U.N. and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), which has found the Syrian government used the banned nerve agent sarin in an April 4 attack, expires on Friday.

Russia vetoed an initial U.S. bid to renew the joint investigation on Oct. 24, saying it wanted to wait for the release of the latest investigation's report two days later. It has since proposed its own rival draft resolution.

"We are talking to the U.S., it's not over yet," Russian U.N. Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia told reporters on Monday.

The inquiry's report found the Syrian government was responsible for the April 4 attack using sarin in the opposition-held town of Khan Sheikhoun, killing dozens of people. The Syrian government has denied using chemical weapons.

"Russia has refused to engage on our draft resolution – which the vast majority of council members agree is the most viable text – in spite of our multiple attempts to consider Russian concerns," a spokesman for the U.S. mission to the United Nations said on Monday.

A resolution needs nine votes in favor and no vetoes by Russia, China, the United States, Britain and France to pass. The council unanimously created the inquiry, known as the Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM), in 2015 and renewed it in 2016.

"It is important that the JIM is renewed but on an updated mandate because the systemic errors that we saw with the recent report should be corrected and that's the aim of our resolution," Nebenzia said.

He added that if the mandate of the inquiry was not renewed, "It may send a bad signal, but the way the investigation has been conducted sends an even worse signal."

The JIM previously found that Syrian government forces were responsible for three chlorine gas attacks in 2014 and 2015 and that Islamic State militants used mustard gas.

“The draft text Russia put forward without any negotiation is unhelpful, has no support, and cannot be taken seriously,” said the spokesman for the U.S. mission.

Syria agreed to destroy its chemical weapons in 2013 under a deal brokered by Russia and the United States.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-syria-chemicalweapons/russia-u-s-stalemate-over-syria-chemical-weapons-inquiry-idUSKBN1DE07Z>

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Tehran Times (Tehran, Iran)

## **France Does Not Get Past EU to Pressure Iran**

Author Not Attributed

November 14, 2017

TEHRAN – The European Union has said no to Paris which in recent days waged an impressive campaign in favor of posing new restrictions on Iran despite the 2015 nuclear deal.

On Monday evening, EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini said the 28-nation bloc does not have any plan to make a change in its agreement, along with world powers, with Iran.

“First of all, let me say that we did not discuss today nor last week, nor do I foresee any discussion in the future about further sanctions from the European Union side on Iran,” she said.

Mogherini made the remarks in a press conference following the EU’s Foreign Affairs Council meeting as a reporter said French Foreign Minister Jean Yves Le Drian had on the same day had said Paris supports putting sanctions on Iran over its ballistic missile tests.

“This is not part of our current discussions. And, as you know, we have lifted all our nuclear-related sanctions on Iran in compliance with our own commitments with the JCPOA. Ballistic missiles are not in the scope of the JCPOA; and it is extremely important that we keep that outside of the JCPOA. This is a discussion and a proposal that was never raised at our table in these recent months and I don’t foresee this to happen in the near future,” Mogherini stressed.

French President Emmanuel Macron took anti-Iran positions during his last week visits to the UAE and Saudi Kingdom.

Macron seized the opportunity to sing in unison with Arab states in accusing Iran of being responsible for a missile that had been launched on Riyadh from the Yemeni territory a while back. He then moved swiftly to call for sanctions on Iran for its missile program.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi on Monday said Macron’s understanding of the Iranian missile program were “not accurate”.

“We want France to pay closer attention to regional issues, as there are many enemies here [in the region] trying to affect Iran’s relations with European countries, especially France,” Qassemi said.

The Foreign Ministry official went on to express hope that Macron’s upcoming visit to Tehran could be a step to reduce misunderstandings.

<http://www.tehrantimes.com/news/418492/France-does-not-get-past-EU-to-pressure-Iran>

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The Jerusalem Post (Jerusalem, Israel)

## **Report: Saudi Document Lays Out Plans for Peace with Israel**

By Yasser Okbi/Maariv

November 14, 2017

*Foreign Ministry paper allegedly offers peace with the Jewish state in exchange for US pressure on Iran.*

Lebanese newspaper Al-Akhbar exposed Tuesday morning "The secret document of the Saudi Foreign Ministry," that it claims includes a road map towards rejuvenating the 2002 Saudi Peace Initiative and hints at meetings and understandings between Israeli and Saudi officials.

The document, claims the paper, proves everything that has been leaked over the last few months since US President Donald Trump's visit to the region in May. According to the leaks, Washington aims to mediate a peace agreement between Israel and the oil-rich kingdom. The document, said to be signed by Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir, also allegedly confirms mutual visits by senior officials including the rumored visit of the Saudi Crown Prince to Tel Aviv.

According to the Lebanese paper, which is aligned with Hezbollah and has a history of fabrications, the document also includes "the compromises Riyadh will offer to end the Palestinian issue," and in addition, "Riyadh's efforts to gain support against Iran and Hezbollah."

"Saudi Arabia's rapprochement with Israel involves a risk to the Muslim peoples of the Kingdom, because the Palestinian cause represents a spiritual and historical and religious heritage," reads the report claiming to quote the document. "The Kingdom will not take this risk unless it feels the United States' sincere approach to Iran, which is destabilizing the region by sponsoring terrorism, its sectarian policies and interfering in the affairs of others."

A key demand of the Saudis, according to the report, is the dismantling of Israel's alleged nuclear weapons capabilities.

"Any rapprochement between the Kingdom and Israel depends on the parity of the relationship between the two countries. At the military level, Israel is the only country possessing nuclear weapons in the Middle East, which gives it superiority in the regional balance of power. Accordingly, the Kingdom should be allowed to possess such deterrent elements or Israel must demilitarize."

The report stipulates that "Saudi Arabia will harness its diplomatic capabilities and political relations with the Palestinian Authority and with Arab and Islamic countries to facilitate finding reasonable, acceptable and innovative solutions to the disputed issues contained in the Arab peace initiative presented by Saudi Arabia, and through the adoption of innovative solutions by the United States."

Among the guidelines Riyadh is reportedly proposing are: the subordination of the city of Jerusalem to international sovereignty, the permanent settlement of Palestinian refugees in the West Bank or their naturalization by other Muslim states and the holding of a major summit to launch a final peace agreement.

In exchange, the report says, Saudi Arabia will demand Washington ratchet up US and international sanctions against Iran for its ballistic missile program and its sponsorship of terrorism around the world and revisit the P5+1 nuclear agreement to make sure it is strictly enforced. The document also demands "intensive intelligence cooperation in the fight against organized crime and drug trafficking supported by Iran and Hezbollah."

The Saudi peace initiative, also known as the Arab peace initiative, has been referenced over the last 15 years as a possible basis for peace between Israel and the Palestinians. Since Trump announced his plans to forge a wider regional peace agreement, which he dubbed "the ultimate deal," it has resurfaced as a platform on which to pave a path forward. Recent reports have surfaced that the administration team tasked with finding a solution has moved on from the listening and learning mode and has begun proposing a path ahead.

There have also been reports, though they have been denied, that Saudi Arabia is pressuring Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas into accept Trump's peace terms, most recently on an emergency visit Abbas was called to pay to the kingdom earlier this month.

There is no way to verify the content of the document reported by AL-Akhbar. Hezbollah, the Lebanese proxy of Iran, has reasons to try to discredit Saudi Arabia by painting it as capitulating to the US and Israel.

<http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Report-Saudi-document-lays-out-plans-for-peace-with-Israel-514200>

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JerusalemOnline (Ramat-Gan, Israel)

## **Syria Says Israeli Nuclear Weapons Program is Endangering the Middle East**

By Avital Zippel

November 11, 2017

During a Friday speech at the UN General Assembly, Syrian Ambassador Bashar Jaafari attacked Israel's nuclear weapons program and claimed the world is turning a blind eye to its existence in the effort to rid the region of weapons of mass destruction.

Syrian Ambassador to the UN Bashar Jaafari accused the West of providing Israel with nuclear technology during a speech at the UN General Assembly on Friday. He claimed that the Western countries are operating to keep Israel out of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Jaafari said that the West is providing Israel with nuclear technology and even mentioned the German submarines, which can be equipped with nuclear warheads. He stressed the importance of the global battle against nuclear warfare and insisted that Israel should be included, adding that Jerusalem's unconventional weapons are breaching international treaties.

The Syrian UN ambassador mentioned that in 2003, Syria issued a proposal to the UN Security Council regarding nuclear disarmament in the Middle East but was met with resistance from the US, which threatened to veto it. He said that this demonstrates that the West's commitment to rid the Middle East of nuclear weapons is a lie.

Jaafari claimed that Israel is refusing to cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and continues to develop its nuclear capabilities without any international supervision.

<http://www.jerusalemonline.com/news/middle-east/israel-and-the-middle-east/syria-israeli-nuclear-weapons-endangering-the-middle-east-32338>

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## INDIA/PAKISTAN

The International News (Karachi, Pakistan)

### **Path to Peace Between Pakistan, India Passes Through Kashmir: Gen Zubair**

Author Not Attributed

November 14, 2017

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Zubair Mahmood Hayat on Tuesday said Kashmir issues still remains a flash point for a nuclear war between Pakistan and India.

Speaking at an international Conference, the CJCSC said the path to relations between Islamabad and New Delhi passes through Kashmir. "There is no bypass," said he.

Criticizing India's international ambitions, the general said New Delhi policies are becoming a cause of instability in South Asia.

He stressed the need to take into consideration strategic, economic and political affairs of South Asia.

He said the political and strategic issues in South Asia were intensifying disputes in the region, adding Pakistan would maintain strategic balance and equilibrium in the field of conventional weapons because imbalance always gives birth to disputes.

He said the struggle to become guarantor of peace in the region holds strategic significance.

Commenting on the situation in Afghanistan, he said the war stricken country was an important region between South Asia and Central Asia. He said Islamabad supports a peaceful Afghanistan.

He said South Asia is being destabilized through non-state elements while instability in Afghanistan was harmful for the region.

Pointing towards weak governance in Afghanistan and fragile peace process in the country, he said Pakistan was paying a heavy price for instability in Afghanistan.

Highlighting Kashmir issue, he said lasting peace was not possible in South Asia without resolving the issue of Kashmir. "Pakistan wants resolution of Kashmir and Afghan issues. We want similar progress on all the issues".

He said Pakistan was aware of its responsibilities without ignoring its defence. "Pakistan will maintain minimum nuclear capability considering the circumstances".

Commenting on rapidly growing extremism in India, General Zubair said India has turned into extremist state.

He said India continues its sub conventional war against Pakistan and New Delhi's Surgical strike mantra was an important example in this regard.

The Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee said India has committed over 1200 ceasefire violations in which 1000 Pakistani civilians and 300 soldiers lost their lives. "This Indian behavior can turn into a big war," he warned.

He also accused India of carrying out terror activities in Pakistan through Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan and Baloch separatists. He said Indian conspiracies against CPEC were also no secret, adding that New Delhi has allocated 500 million dollars to sabotage the CPEC.

He said India was rapidly increasing its missile defence technology, nuclear weapons and conventional weapons. He said India is also diverting Pakistan's share of its waters. "India is playing with fire and peace of South Asia," Geo News quoted him as saying.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/244215-Path-to-peace-between-Pakistan-India-passes-through-Kashmir-Gen-Zubair>

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The Korea Herald (Seoul, South Korea)

## **India, Pakistan are 'End State' for NK's Nuclear Ambition: Scholar**

By Yeo Jun-suk

November 13, 2017

With North Korea showing no signs of abating its relentless pursuit of nuclear weapons, the communist country's ultimate goal is to become a regional nuclear power like India and Pakistan, a security expert said Monday.

From North Korea's perspective, the ideal amount of nuclear arsenal to achieve such a status is as many as 120 weapons, similar to what Pakistan and India hold, and the North is seeking to achieve that goal before 2025, said Kwon Hyuk-chul, a security professor at Kookmin University.

"The estimate is what North Korea thinks is required for it to become a nuclear power in the region and maximize the nuclear arsenal's strategic values," the professor said at a security forum in Seoul.

"It is sufficient to serve the goal, yet is not too much to put unnecessary burden on Kim Jong-un (to develop or manage.)"

Taking into account various scenarios, top US nuclear expert David Albright estimated in his report last year that Pyongyang's nuclear weapons stockpile could continue to grow to as many as the 50-100 weapons before 2020.

Before North Korea can reach the "end state" in its nuclear ambition, South Korea and the US should come up with viable military options to stop the North, Kwon said.

Among those pre-emptive strike schemes, the most effective is to destroy the North's missile site, because it runs less risk for escalation into an all-out war than taking out nuclear facilities, the professor added.

"When US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis talked about military options that do not put Seoul at risk, I think this is the move viable option," said Kwon. "Compared to attacks on nuclear facilities, it carries less risk of drawing massive retaliation, but serious enough to undermine Kim Jong-un's nuclear ambition."

For South Korea to consider its own pre-emptive strike, the most important thing is to have prior consultation with the US and reach consensus across the political spectrum, said Shin Won-sik, former vice chairman of South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff.

When it comes to conducting a clandestine assassination scheme against Kim Jong-un and other leaders in the North, Shin said the plan is "cost effective," but it could provoke massive military conflict between the two Koreas.



“In terms of cost-benefit analysis, a decapitation plan is the most effective military option,” he said, referring to the title of the clandestine assassination plan. “But it involves the risk of escalating into an all-out war.”

Hosted by nonprofit think tank Hansun Foundation, the security forum dealt with South Korea’s military option against North Korea. The event was attended by security scholars and retired generals, such as Lee Sang-hee, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

<http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20171113001002>

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Greater Kashmir (Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir)

## **US Pressing India, Pakistan for Dialogue: Report**

Author Not Attributed

November 13, 2017

The US is quietly nudging Pakistan and India to re-engage as the Trump administration seeks to defuse tensions between the nuclear-armed neighbours, according to a media report on Monday.

America’s objective to normalise ties between the two South Asian rivals is part of its efforts to have a more focused approach on the Afghan endgame.

US secretary of State Rex Tillerson took up the issue with the leadership of both Pakistan and India during his recent visit to the two countries, the Express Tribune quoted government officials and diplomatic sources as saying.

“Behind the scenes, efforts appear to have started paying dividends since Tillerson’s visit, as there has been a noticeable reduction in violence along the Line of Control (LoC) in the disputed Kashmir region,” the paper said.

The border between the two nations has been the scene of bloody clashes between the armies of Pakistan and India for the last couple of years. The current year has been the worst in terms of ceasefire violations as well as civilian casualties.

Officials with the knowledge of the backdoor manoeuvres confirmed to the paper that the Trump administration wanted to see a lowering of tensions between the two neighbours.

A senior official, who requested not to be identified because he was not authorised to speak to the media, said Tillerson had informed Pakistan that the Trump administration was willing to encourage a rapprochement between Islamabad and New Delhi.

The surprise decision by Pakistan to allow a meeting between convicted Indian national KulbhushanJadhav and his wife was also being linked to the quiet efforts by the US. Pakistan, however, publically insisted that the offer was made purely on the humanitarian grounds.

The former Indian Navy officer was sentenced to death after a Field Court Martial on charges of espionage and involvement in terrorist activities.

Officials are reluctant to link Pakistan’s decision on Jadhav as well as the brief lull in LoC clashes to the US intervention.

They said it was too early to draw any such conclusions as the Trump Administration was still struggling to come up with a workable roadmap for Afghanistan and South Asia.

The official, nevertheless, made it clear that continued tensions between Pakistan and India would certainly undermine US efforts to bring some semblance of peace in Afghanistan.

Historically, Islamabad has not been averse to third-party intervention, but India has publically opposed such approaches.

The official said the Pakistani side had urged the US to use its influence over India for the resumption of dialogue after a number of terror attacks in India.

It is, however, not clear if the two sides would resume the full spectrum of talks, considering the timing.

Since Pakistan is also just a few months away from parliamentary elections, it is highly unlikely that structured dialogue would be restored. However, political leaders and officials may interact with each other as a result of US efforts in order to arrest any further slide in ties between Pakistan and India, the report said.

<http://www.greaterkashmir.com/news/front-page/us-pressing-india-pakistan-for-dialogue-report/265894.html>

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The Diplomat (Tokyo, Japan)

## **India's Air Force to Start Receiving Nuclear-Capable Cruise Missile in 2018**

By Franz Stefan-Gady

November 14, 2017

The Indian Air Force (IAF) is slated to receive its first air-launched nuclear-capable BrahMos-A supersonic cruise missiles in January 2018, BrahMos Aerospace Joint Venture Co-Director Alexander Maxichev told TASS news agency at the Dubai Airshow 2017 on November 13.

"The Indian Air Force has signed a contract on the delivery of air-launched BrahMos cruise missiles from January 2018. The missiles are designed to arm about 50 Su-30MKI fighter aircraft modified for their use," Maxichev said.

The deliveries will commence following the final tests of the missile against ground and naval targets. The test launches are expected to take place before the end of the year. The IAF has conducted several tests of the BrahMos-A in 2016 and 2017. So far, two of the service's Sukhoi Su-30 MKI multirole air superiority fighter jets have been converted to accommodate the new cruise missile.

The BrahMos is a joint venture between India's Defense Research Development Organization and Russian rocket design bureau NPO Mashinostroyeniya. The two-stage BrahMos missile—named after the Brahmaputra river in India and the Moskva river in Russia—is a derivative of the Russian P-800 Oniks over-the-horizon supersonic anti-ship cruise missile, which first entered service with the Indian Navy in 2006.

The missile "operates on a so-called fire and forget principle and can be dropped from 500 to 14,000 meters (1,640 to 46,000 feet), I explained elsewhere. "The missile's terminal altitude is as low as ten meters. (The ship-launched anti-ship version of the BrahMos can fly 3-4 meters above the sea to avoid detection.) The BrahMos is capable of traveling at speeds of up to Mach 3.0, making it one of the world's fastest cruise missiles."

The Indian military has already inducted ground and naval launched variants of the BrahMos cruise missile. The air-launched version is lighter (2.55 tons) than other variants and features additional rear fins for aerodynamic stability. The missile's range is estimated at around 290 kilometers (180 miles). (India recently also tested an extended-range variant of the missile.) With top speeds of Mach 2.8 to 3, the BrahMos is thought to be the world's fastest cruise missile currently in service.

The BrahMos-A can alternatively be fitted with a 200-kilogram conventional or 300-kilogram nuclear warhead. In order for the Su-30 MKI to carry the heavyweight cruise missile its undercarriage had to be reinforced. Furthermore, the aircraft will also need to be fitted with hardened electronic circuitry to withstand the electromagnetic pulses of a nuclear blast.

A first flight test of a Sukhoi Su-30 MKI with a BrahMos-A took place in June 2016.

Given the size and weight of the BrahMos, the Su-30 MKI will only be capable of carrying one missile in a transport launch canister. "For the IAF this is the first time that a heavyweight supersonic cruise missile will be integrated with a long-range multi-role air superiority fighter jet," I noted elsewhere.

The IAF will modify 50 Su-30MKI aircraft to carry the nuclear-capable cruise missile. The IAF new fleet of Dassault Rafale multirole fighter jets will also likely be retrofitted for the BrahMos-A. In total, the IAF is expected to receive 200 air-launched BrahMos-As in the coming years.

<https://thediplomat.com/2017/11/indias-air-force-to-start-receiving-nuclear-capable-cruise-missile-in-2018/>

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## COMMENTARY

Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists (Chicago, IL)

### What Should the US National Biodefense Strategy Look Like?

By Laura H. Kahn

November 8, 2017

Like many other countries, the United States faces a wide range of growing biosecurity threats, from pandemics to laboratory accidents to deliberate attacks by governments, militant groups, and even rogue individuals. Currently, a hodgepodge of federal agencies deals with these dangers, with no one person or entity effectively in charge of biosecurity. Back in 2004, a presidential directive assigned responsibility for coordinating operations against bioterror attacks to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). In theory, this made sense, but in practice, it didn't work out so well. In 2009, then-DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano took charge of the interagency response to the H1N1 influenza pandemic. The DHS had only limited success in coordinating interagency efforts, making last-minute changes to previously established plans and forcing the White House to take charge. In 2015, the Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense concluded that the United States still needed a single coordinated biodefense strategy.

Today, it looks like America may finally be getting one. In late 2016, Congress enacted the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2017, requiring four government agencies—the departments of Defense, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, and Agriculture—to jointly develop a national biodefense strategy and implementation plan. As of September 2017 that effort was underway, overseen by the National Security Council. As a strategy takes shape, now is a

good time to consider what a national biodefense strategy should look like, and what obstacles stand in the way.

What are the dangers? The Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense is a privately funded project—led by former Senators Joseph Lieberman and Tom Daschle, former New Jersey Governor Tom Ridge, and former Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala, among others—with the mission to assess the state of US biodefense efforts. Since its launch in 2014, it has issued several reports that give a good road map of what is needed for bio-defense and protecting the agricultural sector.

Biological threats are growing, according to the Panel's initial 2015 report. The State Department assessed that five countries (China, Iran, North Korea, Russia, and Syria) have been failing to comply with the Biological Weapons Convention. Meanwhile, advances in science and technology, including the gene-editing technique CRISPR, enable would-be bioterrorists to develop novel biological threats with potentially catastrophic effects. Failing to predict these risks leaves the United States vulnerable.

The United States faces other biological threats too. Dangers introduced by wildlife can wreak havoc on livestock, ultimately affecting the food supply. The US agriculture industry is one of the largest sectors of the country's economy, constituting about 5.5 percent of the gross domestic product. In October, the Blue Ribbon Study Panel issued a new report on the defense of animal agriculture. It found that a highly pathogenic strain of avian influenza, brought to the United States in December 2014 by migrating birds, cost the US economy a total of \$3.3 billion, including the cost of slaughtering more than 50 million birds on 232 farms across 21 states. That outbreak occurred naturally. A bioterrorist attack designed to inflict as much damage as possible could be much more catastrophic.

The piecemeal nature of the American healthcare system also has national security implications, which have been exacerbated by the Trump administration's efforts to undermine the Affordable Care Act. Having millions of people without access to healthcare while a deadly epidemic circulates through the population is akin to having only a few rooms of a house insured while a fire rages inside it.

What should be done? While the national biodefense strategy is bound to be broad in scope, a few strategies and approaches stand out as particularly important.

First, human-intelligence-based monitoring of rogue nations and militant groups that use bioweapons is critical. Nothing works better than eyes and ears on the ground. This highly dangerous work has to be done by intelligence professionals who place utmost trust in the US government to keep their work highly classified and provide protection in the event of discovery. The current administration does not appear to inspire that kind of confidence from the intelligence community.

Second, a national strategy must include a plan for disease surveillance of humans and animals, with a view to predicting the next naturally occurring epidemic. This kind of work is difficult, because there are so many viruses that could spill over from other mammals or birds into humans. Given limited resources, the government should be strategic regarding where it implements surveillance. Bats, rodents, and wild waterfowl are arguably the likeliest candidate species to harbor the next deadly pandemic pathogens.

Third, even the most secure laboratories are fallible, meaning that they pose risks stemming from accidents and lab-acquired infections. A US Army biodefense lab mistakenly shipped live anthrax to other labs for more than a decade. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) labs experienced a series of mishaps; in 2014, these accidents involved bird flu and anthrax. Since then, the CDC has made some

progress on lab safety, but there is still no federal oversight for laboratory-acquired infections. (The CDC does do surveillance of infections, but not of those acquired in laboratories.) The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, while it tallies injuries and chemical exposures, likewise does not monitor laboratory-acquired infections. In other words, this is a problem that has fallen through the bureaucratic cracks and must be corrected.

Fourth, any national biodefense agenda should include plans to review the lab-oversight body known as the Federal Select Agent Program, subject of a new GAO report. At high-containment laboratories, scientists work on the extremely dangerous pathogens—such as Ebola and anthrax—known as “select agents.” Currently the Federal Select Agent Program, which is jointly managed by the Departments of Agriculture and Health and Human Services, oversees laboratories’ handling of these pathogens. But the GAO report found that the program has problems, including not being independent of all the labs it oversees, and consequently being vulnerable to conflicts of interest. The report also found that the program may not have formally assessed the risk level of some of its activities, and that it had gaps in its workforce and training. In short, there is room for improvement in the system meant to protect us from select agents.

Fifth, a national biodefense strategy should include the investigation of large-scale wildlife die-offs. Such events—like when thousands of crows died during a New York city West Nile virus outbreak in 1999—provide important clues that something in the environment is amiss. Investigations require the kind of expertise normally housed within the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (part of the Department of the Interior.)

Finally, a national biodefense strategy must recognize that human, animal, and environmental health are linked, and take a “One Health” approach to biological threats. A threat to one component in this triad threatens them all. For that reason, animal and environmental health must be taken just as seriously as human health—which requires devoting personnel and resources to monitoring them, which requires sufficient funding for entities like the EPA and the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Obstacles to good biodefense. Another new GAO report, this one called “Federal Efforts to Develop Biological Threat Awareness,” suggests that efforts to plan and implement a national biodefense strategy are on track. The report details the intelligence-gathering capabilities of the Departments of Defense and Homeland Security, and the global disease surveillance and research on biological agents that are being conducted by the Departments of Health and Human Services and Agriculture. However, other developments are not so reassuring.

Currently, according to the GAO report, each of five departments—the four mentioned above, as well as the EPA—conduct their own intelligence, laboratory work, and analysis on bioterrorism and biowarfare, including on agricultural threats and environmental contamination. They have interagency agreements and working groups that share information with each other, but they do not conduct threat analyses collaboratively. Gaps remain in shared efforts across the entire federal government’s biodefense enterprise. The agencies are also missing out on opportunities for sharing resources and lowering costs. The Department of the Interior, which is not mentioned at all in the GAO report, should also be a part of biodefense efforts, as it oversees wildlife health through the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Most distressingly, the current administration appears willfully ignorant of scientific issues, while at the same time disinclined to fund critical scientific efforts. The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, which is intimately involved with biodefense issues, remains leaderless and understaffed. Meanwhile, Trump’s budget for fiscal year 2018 proposed significant cuts to the federal government’s biodefense efforts.

The cuts included eliminating funding for the National Biodefense and Countermeasures Center, which conducts threat characterization and analysis of potentially dangerous pathogens. Fortunately a bipartisan congressional amendment restored funding for the Center, but other biodefense efforts remain in peril. For instance, the proposed cuts could potentially jeopardize crucial disease surveillance work performed by the Laboratory Response Network. Established by a presidential directive and operational since 1999, the Network includes more than 150 state and local labs in public health, veterinary health, agriculture, food, and water testing, and provides extremely important surveillance against biological terrorism. It should remain a key part of the national biodefense strategy. Whether or not the Trump budget passes without further changes remains to be seen.

The National Security Council staff and leaders of the effort to draft a national biodefense strategy have an enormous opportunity to make a difference right now. The fact that we will soon have a coordinated strategy is a great reassurance. But planning mistakes or omissions could lead to grave dangers in the future. A comprehensive, One-Health-based strategy is essential for preparing for the next deadly biological threat.

<https://thebulletin.org/what-should-us-national-biodefense-strategy-look11268>

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Defense News (Washington, DC)

## **To Counter Weaponized Drones, US Needs Joint Public-Private Solutions**

By Fred Byus and Matthew Shaw

November 7, 2017

Multiple senior U.S. officials recently testified before Congress regarding the rising threat that weaponized UAVs pose to U.S. forces abroad.

Officials are now acknowledging that these same threats are likely — and perhaps imminent — to the U.S. homeland. But what makes these threats unique is they provide terrorists and extremists a cheap, commercially available, asymmetrical tool to inflict mass casualties.

While many Americans are aware of the threats from explosives made from everyday products, they are less aware of sophisticated chemical and biological weapons threats that could be delivered by UAVs.

These chemical and biological agents, many of which are just as easy to acquire, are far more deadly because they can be used by the same UAV platform to inflict mass casualties far beyond the original attack location and spread rapidly without detection. Given how adaptive and technologically sophisticated terrorists have become, it is imperative that our government and industry work together to drive innovative countermeasures that can be rapidly tested and fielded.

There are promising, recent developments.

The fiscal 2017 National Defense Authorization Act grants the Department of Defense the authority to test and field systems to counter unmanned aircraft in order to protect U.S. bases and facilities abroad and at home.

More encouraging are the House and Senate fiscal 2018 defense authorization bills, currently in conference, that direct the Department of Defense to expand its counter-drone testing capabilities in order to quickly field more innovative solutions. In addition, the Trump administration has



recently announced the enactment of a new strategy to counter enemy aerial drones that might be used against domestic targets; but the administration has so far kept details secret.

While these actions are constructive, more is needed in order to stay ahead of the threat to the homeland.

For example, multiple federal organizations — including the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Justice, the Federal Aviation Administration and the Federal Communication Commission — must continue discussions to develop a comprehensive policy authorizing the purchase and use of systems to combat terrorist UAVs.

Given today's restrictive regulations, it is possible for homeland defense organizations to acquire and operate UAV-detection devices just like they do for manned aircraft. However, significant hurdles currently exist for the operation of systems to counter enemy drones. Of course a delicate balance exists between protecting security and protecting freedoms, but we cannot wait for a catastrophic attack before adjusting that line slightly in the favor of security.

Simultaneously, there is great need for the U.S. military to share more data of enemy drone capabilities with industry so that industry can better design and test a full spectrum of solutions. These tests must also incorporate not just the technology of counter-drone systems, but the science of chemical and biological defenses.

Given how fast the enemy can attack and adapt to existing countermeasures, the government should not only expand its capabilities to defeat unmanned systems as well as chemical and biological threats, but it must ensure incentives that enable the rapid construction of prototypes for testing and fielding.

No one doubts the threat and the enemy's ability to innovate. The current challenge is deciding how to better integrate government and private sector into partnerships where incentive and innovation can be quickly leveraged to support our national security capabilities at home and abroad.

Security against terrorist drones rests not just on the business of innovation, but on the ability to test and field solutions that keep us a step ahead of threats. While many see these as difficult challenges, we believe it can be done.

<https://www.defensenews.com/opinion/commentary/2017/11/07/to-counter-weaponized-drones-us-needs-joint-public-private-solutions-commentary/>

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The Hill (Washington, DC)

## **Time to Revise Nuclear Launch Policy**

By Daryl G. Kimball and Kingston Reif

November 13, 2017

This week for the first time since 1976, Congress will hold a hearing on the “executive’s authority to use nuclear weapons.” The Nov. 14 Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing is a long-overdue conversation that should prompt changes in outdated Cold War-era policies that give the president sole authority to make decisions in a matter of minutes that could result in the deaths of hundreds of millions of people.

Continuing to vest such destructive power in the hands of one person is undemocratic, irresponsible, unnecessary and increasingly untenable.

Today, the United States and Russia each deploy massive strategic nuclear arsenals, approximately 1,550 bombs on each side. These arsenals are far in excess of what it would take to decimate the other and far more that is required to deter a nuclear attack.

Worse still, each side maintains a significant portion of its land and sea-based missile forces on a prompt launch posture to guard against a “disarming” first strike and retains the option to use nuclear weapons first.

As a result, today, there are roughly 800 U.S. nuclear warheads – all of which are far more powerful than the weapons that destroyed the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 – that can be launched within about 10 minutes of an order by the president and the president alone. Congress currently has no say in the matter.

Cavalier and reckless statements from President Donald Trump about nuclear weapons have heightened fears about a system that puts the authority to launch nuclear weapons in his hands alone.

Sen. Ed Markey (D-Mass.) and Rep. Ted Lieu (D-Calif.) reintroduced their "Restricting First Use of Nuclear Weapons Act of 2017" earlier this year. That bill would prohibit the president from launching a nuclear first strike without a declaration of war by Congress.

Defenders of the status quo argue that altering the current system would deprive the president the needed flexibility to respond quickly in a crisis, including by using nuclear weapons first in response to a non-nuclear attack, and undermine the credibility of deterrence.

But these claims ignore the fact that throughout the history of the nuclear age, there have been several incidents in which false signals of an attack have prompted U.S. and Russia officials to consider, in the dead of the night and under the pressure of time, launching nuclear weapons in retaliation.

The reality is that this “launch-under-attack” policy is unnecessary because U.S. nuclear forces and command-and-control systems could withstand even a massive attack. Given the size, accuracy, and diversity of U.S. forces, the remaining nuclear force would be more than sufficient to deliver a devastating blow to any nuclear aggressor.

In addition, retaining the option to use nuclear weapons first is unnecessarily risky. Given the overwhelming conventional military edge of the United States and its allies, there is no plausible circumstance that could justify—legally, morally, or militarily—the use of nuclear weapons to deal with a non-nuclear threat. Even if there were to be a conventional military conflict with Russia or North Korea, the first use of nuclear weapons would be counterproductive because it would likely trigger an uncontrollable and potentially suicidal nuclear exchange.

As then-Vice President Joe Biden put it earlier this year, “Given our non-nuclear capabilities and the nature of today’s threats—it’s hard to envision a plausible scenario in which the first use of nuclear weapons by the United States would be necessary. Or make sense.”

For these and other reasons, the Congress and the executive branch can and should take steps that move us away from today’s dangerous, quick launch posture and increase transparency about the enormous consequences of nuclear use. Congress should explore practical options such as:

Requiring that a decision to use nuclear weapons be made by more than one person. This could include the president, vice president, secretaries of state and defense, and perhaps one or more designated members of Congress, such as the speaker of the House or Senate majority leader.

Eliminating the requirement to launch intercontinental ballistic missiles under attack, which would increase the time available to consider the possible use of nuclear weapons in retaliation to a nuclear attack against the United States or its allies.

Demanding more information from the Pentagon on U.S. nuclear war plans, including targeting data, attack options, damage expectancy requirements, estimated civilian casualties, and more, which is currently not shared with members of Congress.

Declaring that the United States will not be the first to use nuclear weapons and that the sole purpose of nuclear weapons is to deter nuclear attack.

This week's Senate hearing should be the beginning and not the end of an overdue re-examination of nuclear decision making, and the prudence of putting the fate of millions in the hands of one person.

<http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/foreign-policy/360055-time-to-revise-nuclear-launch-policy>

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War on the Rocks (Washington, DC)

## **Low-Yield Nuclear Weapons Are Worth a New Look**

By John R. Harvey

November 10, 2017

In the 2010 review of U.S. nuclear posture, President Barack Obama's administration, based on advice from military commanders and the extant global threat environment, concluded that the United States could ensure effective nuclear deterrence without fielding new nuclear warheads or warheads with new military capabilities. But even while foreclosing such options for the Obama administration, the 2010 review made clear, as did the nuclear posture reviews of the two previous administrations, that the nation must retain a capability to develop and field such warheads if they are required in the future.

Recently, a Defense Science Board report has caused a bit of a dustup in national security circles. Among other things, it calls for exploration of nuclear warheads with less explosive force — in the range of a few kilotons compared to the multi-hundred kiloton warheads prevalent in today's arsenal. This recommendation is controversial in part because some see it as a repudiation of Obama's position. It has emerged from a realization that the global threat environment has evolved significantly since the 2010 review.

Since then, Russia has rejected the post-Cold War order as reflected by its illegal annexation of Crimea and efforts to destabilize other sovereign states. President Vladimir Putin has not subjected Ukraine to an all-out armored assault as the Soviets did in Hungary in 1956. Rather, he has sought to achieve his political ends by introducing covert forces employing so-called "gray operations" to incite or amplify instabilities and insurgencies among fringe elements in Eastern Ukraine. That, and the progress that North Korea's rogue regime has achieved in its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs, suggests that future major conflict involving the United States and its allies could play out very differently than previously thought.

This is not the Cold War scenario involving a massive global nuclear exchange. Rather, in a conventional conflict, an adversary could resort to limited nuclear use as part of a strategy to maximize gains or minimize losses. Some call this an "escalate to win" strategy. Limited use could

be intended to consolidate territorial gains from an initial conventional attack by making it more difficult for the United States to come to the defense of allies. Or it could be intended to end a losing conflict short of regime demise. The Trump administration's ongoing review of U.S. nuclear posture should explore options, including low-yield warheads, to counter this strategy.

Opponents argue that low-yield nuclear weapons blur the line between conventional and nuclear warfare, undermining deterrence by lowering the nuclear threshold and making nuclear war more likely. This assertion is not based in fact. In previous decades, the United States had thousands more tactical warheads than today, many with much lower yields. (By 1991, nearly all of these warheads had been retired from service and were subsequently dismantled.) The warheads were deployed at the height of the Cold War but never used even in intense regional conflicts such as Vietnam where U.S. use posed little risk of a nuclear response from Russia or China. There is no evidence that the mere possession of these weapons during the Cold War made the United States more likely to use them. Rather, these weapons were never used because nuclear deterrence worked.

Critics also argue that low-yield warheads are for warfighting, not deterrence, and once any nuclear weapon is used, escalation to a global holocaust cannot be controlled. Sen. Dianne Feinstein, responding to the Defense Science Board's report on low-yield nuclear weapons, argued, "There's one role — and only one role — for nuclear weapons, and that's deterrence. We cannot, must not, will not ever countenance their actual use."

Her statement, while well-meaning, reflects a fundamental misunderstanding. Deterrence is based on the enemy's belief that the United States has both the capability and the will to employ nuclear weapons in extremis when vital national interests are threatened. A "threat to use" has, therefore, always been a part of the deterrence equation that has prevented any use of nuclear weapons for over 70 years.

Would an initial limited nuclear exchange escalate uncontrollably? Many Americans, including some in the nuclear policy community, believe that it would. If our nuclear-armed adversaries shared this belief, then it might not be necessary to consider low-yield nuclear weapons since the fear of all-out nuclear war would deter all parties from even limited use. Several, however, including Russia, as seen in recent doctrinal changes, modernization efforts and military exercises related to limited-use options, seem to believe that nuclear escalation could indeed be controlled.

Policymakers like Feinstein must remember that it is not what the United States believes that matters for deterrence — after all, we are not deterring ourselves. It is all about what the adversary believes. Exploration of low-yield options, therefore, is about deterrence, not warfighting. Only with a failure to deter, because a potential response is not credible, does U.S. nuclear use come into play.

To deter limited nuclear use, the United States should ensure a nuclear posture, declaratory policy, and set of flexible capabilities to convey to adversaries that no advantage, only unacceptable consequences, would result. What adversaries do or do not consider a credible response will always be uncertain. Consider, however, a hypothetical Russian low-yield strike on a European port that killed few but seriously disrupted U.S. plans to reinforce a Baltic ally under assault. Would the Russians believe that the United States would retaliate with multi-hundred kiloton warheads, creating the potential for substantial casualties? Would U.S. response be more credible if it had a broader spectrum of nuclear strike options?

As a result of such concerns, the United States has retained a few hundred low-yield B61 bombs for delivery on strategic bombers and NATO fighter aircraft. Ongoing modernization programs involving the B61, the new cruise missile, the B-21 bomber, and F-35 nuclear capability will preserve such options for the future.

U.S. strategic land- and sea-based ballistic missiles, however, do not have low-yield warheads. If they did, the United States could strike anywhere in the world, with greatly reduced unintended casualties, within tens of minutes of a president's decision. This capability could be achieved with a small, relatively low-cost modification to existing warheads without requiring underground nuclear tests. It would help deter aggression by adversaries, for instance, by allowing the United States to place at risk, once located, mobile command posts highly valued by enemy leaders.

Finally, it's critical that the United States assure allies of its commitment to come to their defense, including with nuclear weapons. Like deterrence, assurance is in the eye of the beholder and allies today are ever more mindful of the dynamic threats in their regions. Some, like South Korea, have shown interest in exploring an increased U.S. regional nuclear presence — potentially, because of collateral damage concerns, involving lower-yield warheads.

The nuclear reviews of the three previous administrations concluded that force numbers and capabilities mattered and that these could be adjusted as adversary behaviors, target sets, and employment doctrines evolved. As part of its ongoing review of U.S. nuclear posture, the Trump team, unburdened by myths and fallacies, should explore options to strengthen deterrence and assurance, including fielding a low-yield warhead for strategic ballistic missiles.

<https://warontherocks.com/2017/11/low-yield-nuclear-weapons-worth-new-look/>

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## **ABOUT THE USAF CUWS**

The USAF Counterproliferation Center was established in 1998 at the direction of the Chief of Staff of the Air Force. Located at Maxwell AFB, this Center capitalizes on the resident expertise of Air University, while extending its reach far beyond - and influences a wide audience of leaders and policy makers. A memorandum of agreement between the Air Staff Director for Nuclear and Counterproliferation (then AF/XON), now AF/A5XP) and Air War College Commandant established the initial manpower and responsibilities of the Center. This included integrating counterproliferation awareness into the curriculum and ongoing research at the Air University; establishing an information repository to promote research on counterproliferation and nonproliferation issues; and directing research on the various topics associated with counterproliferation and nonproliferation.

The Secretary of Defense's Task Force on Nuclear Weapons Management released a report in 2008 that recommended "Air Force personnel connected to the nuclear mission be required to take a professional military education (PME) course on national, defense, and Air Force concepts for deterrence and defense." As a result, the Air Force Nuclear Weapons Center, in coordination with the AF/A10 and Air Force Global Strike Command, established a series of courses at Kirtland AFB to provide continuing education through the careers of those Air Force personnel working in or supporting the nuclear enterprise. This mission was transferred to the Counterproliferation Center in 2012, broadening its mandate to providing education and research to not just countering WMD but also nuclear deterrence.

In February 2014, the Center's name was changed to the Center for Unconventional Weapons Studies to reflect its broad coverage of unconventional weapons issues, both offensive and defensive, across the six joint operating concepts (deterrence operations, cooperative security, major combat operations, irregular warfare, stability operations, and homeland security). The term "unconventional weapons," currently defined as nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons, also includes the improvised use of chemical, biological, and radiological hazards.

The CUWS's military insignia displays the symbols of nuclear, biological, and chemical hazards. The arrows above the hazards represent the four aspects of counterproliferation - counterforce, active defense, passive defense, and consequence management.