



## **USAF Center for Unconventional Weapons Studies**

### **(CUWS) Outreach Journal**

CUWS Outreach Journal 1260

21 April 2017

**Save the Date!** The U.S. Air Force Center for Unconventional Weapons Studies will host the 1st Annual Deterrence Education & Research Symposium at Maxwell Air Force Base, from 11 - 13 July 2017.



The U.S. Air Force has identified deterrence as a strategic vector in its 2015 Strategic Master Plan, to include developing new capabilities for nuclear and non-nuclear deterrence of adversarial actors. Given new types of strategic threats, we need to improve these strengths through focused investments, partnerships, and education. This symposium allows a forum for the Air Force to make those partnerships and investments with its academic and government partners and continue to improve the focus of its education and research programs.

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Defense News (United States)

#### **The Nuclear Posture Review is underway. Here's what to look for**

By Aaron Mehta

17 April 2017

The Pentagon on Monday officially kicked off its Nuclear Posture Review, or NPR, a major strategic undertaking that will set the Trump administration's nuclear policy.

The announcement confirmed that Gen. Paul Selva, the vice chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, and Deputy Secretary of Defense Bob Work will be in charge of the review. The NPR represents one of 11 major reviews Work is undertaking, at a time when his expected successor, Boeing executive Patrick Shanahan, is awaiting a confirmation hearing.

The start of the NPR is not a surprise, as U.S. President Donald Trump issued an executive order on Jan. 27 to create the review. But the formal start of the review means those seeking to influence the future of America's nuclear arsenal, estimated to cost at least \$400 billion over the next decade, now have a time frame to state their case.

Here are the basic facts of the NPR:

**What it is:** The NPR is exactly as it sounds — a major look at all aspects of America's military nuclear capabilities. The last NPR was conducted in 2010 by the Obama administration, at a time when geopolitics of the world were different.

It also will look at the technology involved, as the Pentagon is prepared to revamp the entirety of its nuclear arsenal. Over the coming decades, the Department of Defense will build new nuclear-capable submarines, bombers and intercontinental ballistic missiles, as well as the command and control structure to support their use.

The review will serve as a way for the Trump team to decide for itself if the path set forward from the Obama administration is the right one to continue, or if there are alternatives.

**Who is involved:** While the review will be run by Selva and Work (and eventually his successor), the services will have input. Expect stakeholders like Frank Klotz of the National Nuclear Security Administration to also have a say.

But the big question is to what extent the State Department will be involved. Those individuals were included in the 2010 review at a high level, but given the lack of political appointees at State and the way the DoD has generally been seen as more powerful under the current White House, how much say the nonproliferation community will have in the NPR is up in the air.

**Timeline:** The Pentagon has pledged to finish the NPR by the "end of the year," according to the news release, but the conclusion could come more quickly. During an April 4 hearing in front of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Gen. John Hyten, the head of U.S. Strategic Command, said the administration had set a six-month timeline for the review.

**What will change and what won't:** Inherently, there are two key areas at which an NPR looks — policy and capability.

In terms of policy, the question is how the U.S. is postured to meet nuclear threats. This will likely be the area with the most change from the 2010 review because of how the world has changed through Russia's annexation of Ukrainian territory and its subsequent modernization of nuclear

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capabilities, China's aggressiveness in the South China Sea, and increased missile testing from North Korea.

"We'll look at Russia, China, North Korea and Iran in particular to make sure we understand what those threats are. Iran is in compliance with the [Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action] right now, which is keeping that nuclear capability down, but they still have aggressive missile programs that we need to look at," Hyten said. "So we will look across that spectrum of the threat and we'll look at what Russia is doing in terms of violation of the [Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces] Treaty. And then we'll look at military options in order to respond to what we see in the threat."

The second part is capability, and whether the plan to refurbish the nuclear triad is still the right way forward. Unlike the policy part of the review, there isn't much expectation from nuclear experts that the NPR will divert from the agreed-upon modernization plan.

While "it's important to remember the new administration will take a look at the entire threat posture, the entire modernization plan," Hyten was quick to note, the "the secretary of defense, the Air Force leadership and the Navy leadership have all pledged support to modernizing the triad."

One potential aspect that could be weighed differently than in 2010 is the question of alternatives to nuclear power. Selva told an April 13 audience at an Air Force Association conference that it is time for the Pentagon to reevaluate the concept of prompt global strike, a conventional alternative to nuclear intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Asked whether that should be in the Pentagon, Selva said: "I don't know if it will be, but it's a good question. I don't know. I'll find out. We're just doing the terms of reference for it now so I'll make sure we include it, at least as a question of whether or not it should be in."

The biggest potential change, and one being watched closely by the nonproliferation community, is the new nuclear cruise missile, known as the Long Range Standoff weapon, or LRSO. The weapon is the farthest away from production of the major modernization programs and one that is heavily targeted by those who worry about the expansion of nuclear weapons.

However, Pentagon officials have remained firmly in support of the LRSO program, so even changes there are unlikely.

<http://www.defensenews.com/articles/the-nuclear-posture-review-is-underway-heres-what-to-look-for>

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RT (Russia)

## **Mattis orders reviews of US nuclear stockpile and policies**

17 April 2017

US Secretary of Defense James Mattis has ordered the military to start work on reviewing the US's overall nuclear weapons policy document that will guide the Trump administration's purchases, deployment and management of nuclear weapons.

"Today, Secretary Mattis directed the commencement of the review, [Nuclear Posture Review], which will be led by the deputy secretary of defense and the vice chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, and include interagency partners," Pentagon spokesperson Dana White said in a statement Monday.

"The process will culminate in a final report to the president by the end of the year."



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Before President Donald Trump took office, he tweeted that the US “must greatly strengthen and expand its nuclear capability until such times as the world comes to its senses regarding nukes.”

On January 27, in a national security presidential memorandum, Trump ordered a nuclear posture review (NPR) to “ensure the US nuclear deterrent is safe, secure, effective, reliable and appropriately tailored to deter 21st-century threats and reassure our allies.”

The NPR’s conclusions relate to the stockpile, supporting infrastructure and it meant to guide foreign as well as domestic policy.

The US retains about 4,000 nuclear warheads in service, with another 2,800 awaiting dismantlement. Decades of deferring modernization mean that some long-range bombers are more than 60 years old, certain command and control systems are still run on floppy disks and some intercontinental ballistic missile silos have fallen into disrepair, according to Defense One.

The Pentagon is preparing to spend billions of dollars over the next 15 years to develop and procure the new B-21 bomber, a new fleet of nuclear submarines, and a new design for intercontinental ballistic missiles, as well as new command and control capabilities as well as new cruise missiles, according to Defense News.

The last NPR was completed under the Obama administration in 2010.

Greg Mello, executive director of the Los Alamos Study Group, and a leading expert on nuclear weapons, said about the Obama administration’s NPR that it carefully left open the possibility of nuclear use (either as reprisal or preemptive first strike, as present doctrine allows) “in the event of planned or actual biological attacks that exceed some unspecified threat or danger threshold.”

Melo said “the US government continues to reserve the right to be the first to use nuclear weapons.” Under the Non-proliferation Treaty, which the US signed during the Johnson administration, and ratified by the Senate and is the law of the land, includes Article VI, which calls for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

“That was the agreement, these other countries would not develop nuclear weapons and the nuclear powers would move to elimination. We are violating that,” former Secretary of Defense McNamara told the Institute of Public Accuracy in 2005.

<https://www.rt.com/usa/385096-mattis-orders-nuclear-weapons-reviews/>

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Breaking Defense (United States)

### **New Nuclear C2 Should be Distributed & Multi-Domain: STRATCOM Deputy**

By Sydney J. Freedberg Jr.

05 April 2017

Just like the individual ICBMs, bombers, and submarines it oversees, the nation’s nuclear command-and-control architecture is aging Cold War tech that needs replacement. But if we just build newer versions of today’s command posts, communications networks, satellites, and so on, we’ll miss a major opportunity. Instead, the deputy chief of Strategic Command said here today, the US could create a system that’s both more survivable and more seamless, one that can integrate operations around the world, with allies, and across the domains of land, sea, air, space, and cyber.

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Strategic Command is “very much in lockstep” with initiatives like the Army’s Multi-Domain Battle concept and the Air Force’s Multi-Domain Command and Control, said Vice Adm. Charles Richard, although NC2 will remain a separate system. STRATCOM’s also “very supportive” of Air Force Global Strike Command’s newly launched NC2 effort, he said.

Why is the nuclear force so interested in new concepts? Deterrence has evolved from the two-player chess game of the Cold War to a multi-player, multi-board monstrosity like the 3D chess from Star Trek, Richard told the Sea-Air-Space conference here today, and our command-and-control must evolve to keep up. The existing NC2 architecture was shaped by fundamental design choices “that made sense in the ‘60s and ‘70s,” he said. Today, US forces must “integrate timing and tempo of operations, in real time, across multiple domains and theaters, in synergy with allies and partners... Whoever does this first will win.”

Nuclear weapons are necessary but not sufficient. “ICBMs, strategic bombers, nuclear-capable submarines are still the backbone of our deterrence, but integrating them into the nuclear command and control, space, cyber, missile defense, electronic warfare, and conventional capabilities completes today’s strategic forces,” Richard said. “That integration not only has to occur in every domain — air, land, sea, space, and cyber — it must occur in every theater — in Europe, in the Pacific, in the Middle East — and it has to occur inside every partnership that we have, (between) combatant commands, allies, and partners.”

At the most basic level, as NC2 hardware ages, “you have a straightforward need to recapitalize that,” Richard told me and another reporter. “In the same way I need a new bomber or I need a new submarine, I will need a new terminal, I will need a new satellite on orbit.” When you make that case to Congress, though, “It’s hard to visualize,” he lamented. “It’s pretty simple to say, ‘I have a bomber, I need a new bomber,’ but when you start talking about circuits and stuff — the list of things that’s easy to take for granted in this mission set is large.”

What’s even harder to get across, however, is how this unavoidable impending overhaul also creates an opportunity to rethink the entire system. “It’s kind of hard for everybody to think through how I want to establish command relationships, who works for who with what authorities,” Richard said. “Once you figure that out, then you build these systems...to follow that.”

Today’s NC2 architecture was shaped by fundamental design choices “that made sense in the ‘60s and ‘70s,” Richard said. “I would see us headed into a much more distributed world in terms of the architecture that we use for command and control. (New technology) gives you more options to do something that would be far more survivable” against both physical and cyber attack.

We can also do a much better job of sharing data — intelligence, targets, orders — between different forces. Today, servicemembers from different organizations sit side by side in vast operations centers, conveying vital information by voice or by hand because their computers aren’t compatible. Commanders must pull complex information together in their heads because there’s no one screen that shows everything they need. In fact, said Richard, “we would need to think through what is the right way to even show you the picture.” There’s no agreed-on schema for displaying, say, the range of enemy anti-aircraft weapons, the effects of friendly radar jamming, and the positions of ground forces on a single, intelligible map.

Those are problems that people across the Defense Department are trying to solve. The efforts range from the Army’s Multi-Domain Battle initiative, to the Air Force’s Multi-Domain Command & Control task force, to the newly renamed National Space Defense Center (formerly JICSPDC), to

Joint Chiefs chairman Gen. Joseph Dunford’s proposed reorganization of the Joint Staff. “Nuclear command and control will always be special,” Vice Adm. Richard said, and NC2 will be separate



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from the Air Force MDC2, but the nuclear force can still benefit from this rising tide of innovation across the military.

[http://breakingdefense.com/2017/04/new-nuclear-c2-should-be-distributed-multi-domain-stratcom-deputy/?utm\\_source=hs\\_email&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_content=49960271&hsenc=p2ANqtz-9IV7-Hfx0E0oPnapYEWDX31cxifRsw7S8E13kXVigAceFxUGtjheztF1FN2ShSIgKRkFKFfq-HlrE3kh](http://breakingdefense.com/2017/04/new-nuclear-c2-should-be-distributed-multi-domain-stratcom-deputy/?utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&utm_content=49960271&hsenc=p2ANqtz-9IV7-Hfx0E0oPnapYEWDX31cxifRsw7S8E13kXVigAceFxUGtjheztF1FN2ShSIgKRkFKFfq-HlrE3kh)  
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Global Research (Canada)

### **US Conducts Successful Field Test Of New B61-12 Nuclear Bomb**

By Tyler Durden

15 April 2017

In a well-timed statement, just as tensions over North Korea's nuclear program and potential US airstrikes run wild, the NNSA said that in conjunction with the US Air Force, it had completed the first qualification flight test of B61-12 gravity nuclear bomb on March 14 at the Tonopah Test Range in Nevada.

In the press release, the NNSA said that the "non-nuclear assembly test" was dropped from an F-16 based at Nellis Air Force Base and was intended to evaluate "both the weapon's non-nuclear functions as well as the aircraft's capability to deliver the weapon."

This test was the first of a series that will be conducted over the next three years to qualify the B61-12 for service. Three successful development flight tests were conducted in 2015.

"This demonstration of effective end-to-end system performance in a realistic ballistic flight environment marks another on-time achievement for the B61-12 Life Extension Program," said Brig. Gen. Michael Lutton, NNSA's principal assistant deputy administrator for military application. "The successful test provides critical qualification data to validate that the baseline design meets military requirements. It reflects the nation's continued commitment to our national security and that of our allies and partners."

The flight test included hardware designed by Sandia and Los Alamos national laboratories, manufactured by the Nuclear Security Enterprise plants, and mated to the tail-kit assembly section, designed by the Boeing Company under contract with the Air Force Nuclear Weapons Center.

The B61-12 consolidates and replaces four B61 bomb variants in the nation's nuclear arsenal. The first production unit is scheduled to be completed by March 2020.

The original B61 gravity bomb is the mainstay of the Air Force's nuclear arsenal and one of the legs of the so-called nuclear triad, along with the intercontinental ballistic missiles deployed from either ground-based silos or oceangoing submarines. The B61 nuclear gravity bomb, deployed from U.S. Air Force and NATO bases, has almost 50 years of service, "making it the oldest and most versatile weapon in the enduring U.S. stockpile." Numerous modifications have been made to improve the B61's safety, security, and reliability since the first B61 entered service in 1968, and four B61 variants remain in the stockpile: the 3, 4, 7, and 11. However, the aging weapon system requires a life extension to continue deterring potential adversaries and reassuring our allies and partners of our security commitments to them.

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The B61-12 LEP will refurbish, reuse, or replace all of the bomb's nuclear and non-nuclear components to extend the service life of the B61 by at least 20 years, "and to improve the bomb's safety, effectiveness, and security" according to the NNSA. The B61-12 first production unit will occur in FY 2020. The bomb will be approximately 12 feet long and weigh approximately 825 pounds. The bomb will be air-delivered in either ballistic gravity or guided drop modes, and is being certified for delivery on current strategic (B-2A) and dual capable aircraft (F-15E, F-16C/D & MLU, PA-200) as well as future aircraft platforms (F-35, B-21).

President Trump has endorsed the ambitious and expensive plan to modernize the US nuclear triad, begun under his predecessor.

The March test of the B61-12 was the first in a series to take place over the next three years, with the final design review due in September 2018 and the first production unit scheduled for completion by March 2020.

Once the bomb is authorized for use in 2020, the US plans to deploy some 180 of the B61-12 precision-guided thermonuclear bombs to five European countries as follows:

Belgium – 20;

Germany -20;

Italy – 70;

Netherlands – 20;

Turkey -50;

... although in light of recent developments, and this weekend's Turkish referendum which may grant Erdogan what are effectively dictatorial powers, it may consider reassessing the Turkish deployment.

<http://www.globalresearch.ca/us-conducts-successful-field-test-of-new-nuclear-bomb/5585110>

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Defense News (United States)

## **US nuclear modernization programs put at risk by yearlong continuing resolution**

By Valerie Insinna

18 April 2017

The U.S. Air Force's nuclear programs, including those for its new bomber and next-generation intercontinental ballistic missiles, would take a massive hit if Congress doesn't pass a budget this year, a top service official said Monday.

Lawmakers have until April 28 to either pass new spending bills or extend the current continuing resolution, which would keep weapons programs running at the same funding levels as 2016 and prevent any new ones from starting. But with time running out, the services are already preparing to seek "anomalies" — special permission from Congress that would allow programs to move around the CR's restrictions.

For Air Force acquisition, the impact would be deeply felt, especially in the realm of nuclear modernization. Late last month, Lt. Gen. Arnold Bunch, the Air Force's top uniformed acquisition official, told senators he would need 17 anomalies for nuclear programs alone, and 60 new acquisition programs would need congressional approval to start.

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“The reality of it is we would need a ton of anomalies,” he told Defense News in an exclusive interview on April 17. “Some of those are big programs, some of those are not big programs, but we would need a ton of anomalies — and that we are trying to avoid. We really need to get an [appropriations] bill passed. We really need to be able to move forward.”

The service plans on awarding contracts for two major nuclear programs this fiscal year: the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent, or GBSD, which will replace the Air Force’s Minuteman III ICBMs; and the Long Range Standoff (LRSO) weapon, an air-launched cruise missile that can be outfitted with a conventional or nuclear warhead. A yearlong CR would force the Air Force to defer those awards by a year, potentially delaying those programs overall, Bunch said.

If a contract award is delayed long enough, he hinted that the companies bidding on the program could have to go back to the drawing board and rework their proposals to reflect costs in the current market environment.

“You need to make sure you’ve got all your proposals up to date, costwise, and if we start delaying we could start running into problems with that,” he said.

The B-21 Raider recently completed its preliminary design review, but a yearlong CR could impact later milestones. The new bomber’s budget is classified, and thus it’s difficult to pinpoint exactly how much of a bump in funding the service would need to keep on schedule, but Bunch said the Raider would need a “serious” anomaly to keep its development on track, “or we would have to slow the program down, which we don’t want to do.”

Frustrated Selva to Congress: Give us a budget

Todd Harrison, a budget analyst at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said there’s a “good chance” that Congress may be able to pass a budget by the end of the month, given that the House and Senate have “prenegotiated” the defense appropriations bill and several other spending bills.

But even if lawmakers default to a yearlong CR, nuclear programs will be a top priority, he said.

“It is really in no one’s interest to pass a full-year CR for defense because of all the anomalies that would be needed for critical programs like the B-21 bomber and Columbia-class sub. Among nuclear modernization programs, those two are at the top of the list to be protected no matter what,” he said.

“Programs like GBSD and LRSO that were planned to start late this fiscal year anyway could be shifted by a few months without doing much harm, so I think they would be a lower priority if it came to it. But I don’t think that will happen.”

Outside of nuclear programs, a yearlong CR could prevent the Compass Call recapitalization program from moving forward, Bunch said. The Air Force has selected L-3 Communications to move technology from the legacy EC-130H onto a new airframe, but the company cannot make a final aircraft selection until the 2017 spending bill is passed.

A longterm CR could also inject additional risk into the service’s JSTARS recapitalization program, which will not be able to continue radar risk reduction efforts, he said.

<http://www.defensenews.com/articles/air-forces-nuclear-modernization-programs-put-at-risk-by-yearlong-continuing-resolution>

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IHS Jane's 360 (United States)

## **NRL seeks more capability for CT-Analyst**

By Geoff Fein

19 April 2017

The US Naval Research Laboratory (NRL) is looking to add more features to its CT-Analyst real-time 3-D model that tracks how hazardous airborne plumes might disperse in an urban setting.

Features could include adding more data about the character of a chemical, biological, or radiological release. For example, whether the chemical agent that has been released is lighter or heavier than air, Adam Moses, a computer scientist at the NRL, told Jane's.

"If it is lighter than air it could affect more people as it drops to the ground. Maybe it is raining that day or snowing, maybe there is more chaos in terms of the air circulation, something you expect in late summer or fall," Moses explained. "We try to model something that is general because first responders do not have the time to do the characterisation.

A screen shot from NRL's CT-Analyst depicting a plume dispersion across New York City, 30 minutes after an attack. (USN NRL)

A screen shot from NRL's CT-Analyst depicting a plume dispersion across New York City, 30 minutes after an attack. (USN NRL)

"But if you have better and better sensors able to give you more and more results you can rearrange the picture depending on sensor readings," he added.

Researchers would also like to expand CT-Analyst's ability to integrate into other modelling programs.

"The big problem is people are using a tool already. To learn something new is [a challenge] and to integrate it with their concept of operations is a problem," Moore said.

"If they can have [CT-Analyst] plug in to something they are already using it is a lot [easier for them]," he said.

Besides providing a 3-D model of how hazardous airborne plumes might disperse, CT-Analyst does it faster than many currently used systems.

"Most models wait to enter data on wind, buildings, or terrain. Then they run their calculations; but doing that causes you to wait minutes up to hours depending on the complexity of the calculation," Moses said.

"We have actually pre-computed [the data] so instead of waiting from time of the incident to actually do our modelling we pre-calculate the entire region," he said.

<http://www.janes.com/article/69647/nrl-seeks-more-capability-for-ct-analyst>

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Terror Wars

#### **New system to destroy chemical warfare agents announced**

By Richard Tomkins

17 April 2017

A mobile treatment system that destroys chemical warfare agents without producing hazardous waste has been announced by Southwest Research Institute.

The system it helped develop comes in two configurations, one wet and one dry.

The dry pollution control process, suited for arid or remote regions, uses a Dedicated EGR engine thermal destruction device developed by Southwest Research Institute for the Agnostic Compact Demilitarization of Chemical Agents program of the U.S. Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. When chemicals are destroyed, exhaust gases pass through a fluidized bed where the combusted byproducts are captured.

SwRI said the used soil remains non-hazardous.

A wet pollution system, developed by a Canadian company, has a stand-alone plasma torch treatment device with a liquid scrubber system.

"It is in our national interest to have a field-operable unit that can safely dispose of chemical warfare agents and other dangerous chemicals on the front lines in a timely manner," said Darrel Johnston, a senior program manager in SwRI's Chemistry and Chemical Engineering Division. "We began development of the soil scrubber system in June 2016 and delivered a proof-of-concept system (to DARPA) in February 2017."

SwRI said the system is modular and fit into a large shipping container.

Both wet and dry configurations have undergone initial testing in Canada. The dry soil-based scrubber was interfaced with the Canadian company's plasma torch front end and proved more than 99.9999 percent effective in destroying simulated chemical weapon agents.

According to the Texas-based institute, the system is scheduled for testing with authentic chemical agents this summer.

[http://www.spacewar.com/reports/New\\_system\\_to\\_destroy\\_chemical\\_warfare\\_agents\\_announced\\_999.html](http://www.spacewar.com/reports/New_system_to_destroy_chemical_warfare_agents_announced_999.html)

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Space War (Australia)

#### **System to turn deadly chemicals into harmless dirt makes advances**

19 April 2017

A DARPA program that is developing a field-deployable system for onsite neutralization of bulk stores of chemical warfare agents (CWA) has successfully demonstrated a novel waterless soil-scrubbing technology that safely neutralized toxic chemicals simulating sarin, soman, and mustard agents. Created under the Agency's Agnostic Compact Demilitarization of Chemical Agents (ACDC) program, the technology demonstrated greater than 99.9999% removal of the simulants, without creating any hazardous waste by-products.

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The soil-scrubbing technology was tested in conjunction with the Tactical Plasma Arc Chemical Warfare Agents Destruction System (PACWADS), a thermal treatment system already under development for use by U.S. military Services. That system uses a high-temperature plasma torch to convert highly toxic chemicals into relatively benign components, and then uses a water-based capture process to eliminate the last traces of contaminants.

For the ACDC experiment, the PACWADS was modified to eliminate the water scrubber and connect instead to DARPA's soil-based scrubber system, which captured and converted the toxic CWA decomposition products and resulting acid gases into non-hazardous salts.

An ability to use local soil from the site where CWA stores have been discovered eliminates the logistical burden of supplying water to such sites, which are anticipated to be remote, and then having to transport resulting liquid wastes to a treatment facility. The soil used in the DARPA process remains non-hazardous and could be safely returned to the environment.

"We were very impressed with fast work by DARPA-supported researchers to develop the soil-based scrubber to test with the PACWADS," said Tyler McQuade, DARPA program manager. "These successful tests validated a critical component of the ACDC concept—a water-free, non-hazardous, soil-based process for onsite destruction of deadly chemicals. We now look forward to testing the ACDC scrubber with the PACWADS against actual chemical warfare agents in the coming months."

Following testing of the soil scrubber against actual CWA, which is anticipated for this spring or summer, DARPA plans to continue to develop a novel approach for the initial destruction process that would be simpler and more economical than the PACWADS torch. That system aims to use an internal combustion "reforming engine."

The engine is designed such that, as part of the destruction process, the organic molecules act as a fuel and efficiently generate recoverable energy that can be converted to electricity, eliminating the need for power sources in remote locations.

Ultimately, ACDC envisions the complete CWA destruction and soil-scrubbing system to fit in the back of a standard military vehicle.

The ACDC soil-scrubber was developed for DARPA by the Southwest Research Institute, San Antonio, Texas. The PACWADS was developed by PyroGenesis Canada, Inc., Montreal, Canada. The effectiveness of the ACDC soil scrubber and PACWADS was independently verified and validated by the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, Laurel, Maryland, and NRT Methodologies, Tooele, Utah.

[http://www.terradaily.com/reports/System\\_to\\_turn\\_deadly\\_chemicals\\_into\\_harmless\\_dirt\\_makes\\_advances\\_999.html](http://www.terradaily.com/reports/System_to_turn_deadly_chemicals_into_harmless_dirt_makes_advances_999.html)

Council on Foreign Relations (United States)

## **The Impact of the Iran Nuclear Agreement**

11 April 2017

### Introduction

Iran has dismantled much of its nuclear program and given international inspectors extensive access to sensitive sites under an agreement known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Under its terms, the United States, European Union, and United Nations have lifted sanctions that had crippled the Iranian economy, but more than year after the accord took effect, Iranians have yet to see the recovery that President Hassan Rouhani had promised. Meanwhile, as



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the Trump administration has vowed a more aggressive approach to Iran and the U.S. Congress considers levying new sanctions, international businesses, sensing uncertainty, have largely held back from investing in the country.

What are the terms of the JCPOA?

The JCPOA, which was signed in July 2015 and went into effect the following January, imposes restrictions on Iran's stockpiles of uranium and its ability to enrich it. The so-called P5+1—that is, the five permanent members of the UN Security Council (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and United States) and Germany—negotiated the agreement with Iran over nearly two years. During this period, the Obama administration said its intent was to set back Iran's nuclear program so that any decision to sprint toward producing fissile material for a weapon—an indicator known as “breakout times”—would take at least a year, up from just a few weeks.

Nuclear restrictions on Iran. To extend that breakout time, the agreement requires that uranium enrichment at Fordow and Natanz be restricted and a heavy-water reactor, at Arak, have its core rendered inoperable; its plutonium byproduct, the P5+1 countries feared, could have been reprocessed into weapons-grade material. These facilities are now being repurposed for research, industrial, or medical purposes, and subjected to inspections by monitors from the UN nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The accord imposes limits on the numbers and types of centrifuges Iran can operate, as well as the size of its caches of enriched uranium. (Mined uranium has less than 1 percent of the uranium-235 isotope, and centrifuges increase that isotope's concentration. Uranium enriched to 5 percent is used in nuclear power plants, and at 20 percent it can be used in research reactors or for medical purposes. High-enriched uranium, at some 90 percent, is used in nuclear weapons.) The JCPOA also aims to guard against the possibility that Iran could develop nuclear arms in secret at undeclared sites.

Many of the JCPOA's nuclear provisions have expiration dates. After ten years, for example, centrifuge restrictions will be lifted, and after fifteen years, so too will limits on the low-enriched uranium it can possess, as well as the IAEA's access to undeclared sites.

Monitoring and verification. Among the open-ended provisions, Iran is bound to implement and later ratify an “additional protocol” to its safeguards agreement with the IAEA, which gives IAEA inspectors unprecedented access to Iran's nuclear facilities. (As a signatory to the Nonproliferation Treaty, or NPT, Iran has committed to never pursue nuclear weapons, but it is entitled to pursue nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.) The agency's director-general issues quarterly reports to the IAEA Board of Governors and UN Security Council verifying Iran's implementation of its nuclear commitments.

The JCPOA established the Joint Commission, with the negotiating parties all represented, to monitor implementation of the agreement. That body, chaired by Federica Mogherini, the EU foreign policy chief, is charged with dispute resolution, and a majority vote of its members can gain IAEA inspectors access to undeclared sites they consider suspect. It also oversees the transfer of nuclear-related or dual-use materials.

Sanctions relief. In exchange for these limitations on its nuclear program and opening up access to international inspectors, the EU, UN, and United States all committed to lifting sanctions that they had imposed on Iran for its nuclear program. While the United States has only suspended extant nuclear sanctions, it pledged in the JCPOA to remove specified entities from sanctions lists and seek legislation to repeal the suspended sanctions within eight years, as long as the IAEA concludes that Iran's nuclear activities remain peaceful in nature.

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Still, other U.S. sanctions [PDF], some dating back to the hostage crisis in 1979, remain in effect. They cover matters such as ballistic missile production, support for U.S.-designated terrorist groups, and domestic human rights abuses. The United States has stopped enforcing its sanctions on oil exports, freeing Iran to trade on international markets again, but restrictions on financial transactions remain in place. Many banks and other companies, including foreign subsidiaries of U.S. businesses, are wary of doing business in Iran for fear of incurring fines or being barred from dealing on Wall Street. A major exception to U.S. primary sanctions allows Boeing to sell aircraft to Iranian airlines.

New Security Council resolutions are periodically needed to keep UN sanctions suspended, so, by alleging a major violation, any one of the P5 members can veto a new resolution. This “snapback” mechanism is set to remain in effect for ten years, after which point the UN sanctions are set to be repealed.

Has Iran upheld its obligations?

Implementation Day, on which sanctions were lifted, came once the IAEA certified that Iran had met preliminary requirements, including taking thousands of centrifuges offline, rendering the core of the Arak heavy-water reactor inoperable, and selling excess low-enriched uranium to Russia. Since then, the IAEA has mostly found Iran in compliance with the JCPOA's requirements. Iran twice exceeded the amount of heavy water that it is allowed under the agreement, the IAEA reported, but quickly resolved it.

“Monitoring is a physical act, but verification is a political act.” —Christopher Bidwell, Federation of American Scientists

The challenge inspectors face is that they are “looking to prove the negative,” says Christopher Bidwell, a senior fellow at the Federation of American Scientists. “IAEA reports talk about where Iran is compliant, but then are silent on known rough issues,” he says, highlighting military sites, for which inspectors must seek access from Iranian authorities or adjudication by the Joint Commission. Also omitted from the public record, the International Crisis Group notes, are reports on Iran’s caches of low-enriched uranium and research on centrifuges. “Monitoring is a physical act, but verification is a political act,” Bidwell says. “How sure are you that what you’ve monitored has told you what you want to know?”

Have the P5+1 countries upheld their obligations?

The United Nations, European Union, and United States all repealed or suspended the sanctions that the JCPOA specified be lifted on Implementation Day, and since then the United States has also unfrozen or delivered to Iran certain seized funds. (Liquid assets freed up in European and Asian banks might have totaled some \$50 billion, according to a U.S. Treasury official; in addition, the United States refunded \$1.7 billion delivered for an arms deal that was signed before the 1979 revolution but never fulfilled.) Most significantly, the United States is no longer enforcing secondary sanctions on Iran’s oil sector, which has allowed Iran to ramp up its oil exports to nearly the level it had been prior to sanctions. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimated in October [PDF] that Iran’s GDP was growing at 4.5 percent in 2016 as it boosted its oil production to 3.6 million barrels per day.

How is Iran’s economy performing?

Iranians have not seen as robust an economic recovery as many had expected to follow the JCPOA’s implementation. A morass of U.S. sanctions unrelated to the nuclear program has discouraged major international banks from investing in the country and made many companies wary of expanding into Iran. They fear being held liable for transacting with the numerous sanctioned



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entities associated with, for example, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), which is ubiquitous in some industries. Uncertainty over whether the nuclear sanctions might be restored persists.

But factors unrelated to sanctions are also hampering the recovery. Corruption, mismanagement, and aging infrastructure are widely acknowledged barriers to industry, and, at about \$50 a barrel as of April 2017, oil is trading at less than half the price it was five years earlier, so the revenues to be made from export don't go as far. The IMF projected that Iran's growth would "taper sharply" [PDF] in 2017 as it would have trouble surpassing its pre-sanctions level of oil production, and in March 2017 Iran said it would limit its oil production to 3.8 million barrels per day if OPEC members' agreement to cap their production—a bid to raise oil prices—holds.

With the economy underperforming compared to what Rouhani had promised, some Iranian politicians have accused the United States of dealing in bad faith. Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, who has expressed ambivalence about the JCPOA, criticized the faltering recovery. But so too has Foreign Minister Javad Zarif, who negotiated the agreement. He said at CFR in September 2016, "it takes a lot to change the global climate that is afraid of the United States taking action against any bank that does any business with Iran." Referring to U.S. Treasury regulations, he added, "there is one sentence that it's OK to do business with Iran and about five pages of ifs and buts," discouraging banks from entering the market.

Do U.S. politics jeopardize the JCPOA?

On the campaign trail, Trump pledged to dismantle or renegotiate the nuclear agreement, echoing the criticisms made by some members of Congress as the agreement was being finalized. Many objected to sanctions relief on the grounds that it would enrich Iran and allow it to expand its influence in regional conflicts like the Syrian civil war. Critics also said that monitoring provisions in the JCPOA offered no guarantee that Iran could not covertly develop a nuclear weapon.

Trump could reimpose waived sanctions or add new ones by presidential prerogative, enact statutory sanctions passed by Congress, or allow the presidential waivers of nuclear sanctions to lapse when they come due for renewal. Any of those measures could be perceived by either Iran or other members of the P5+1 as the United States renegeing on its commitments.

After Iran tested ballistic missiles in late January 2017, the administration extended sanctions to twenty-five individuals and entities associated with either the missile program or the IRGC's expeditionary Quds Force. (Though ballistic missiles could be used to deliver nuclear weapons, they are beyond the scope of the JCPOA; the UN Security Council resolution that codified the JCPOA contains only nonbinding language on the matter.) "It wasn't a drastic departure from previous policy, including from the Obama administration," says Ariane M. Tabatabai, a visiting assistant professor at Georgetown's Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service.

A bill cosponsored by the top Republican and Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee could prevent the president from fulfilling the U.S. obligation to delist certain entities within eight years of implementation; it could also be construed as impeding the benefits Iran can accrue from sanctions relief. That would "threaten the ongoing implementation of the nuclear deal," says the Arms Control Association, an independent Washington-based nonproliferation group.

Do Iranian politics jeopardize the JCPOA?

The JCPOA is contentious in Iran as well. Rouhani is running for reelection on May 19, and "the main thing he's being judged on by the electorate is the economic recovery," Tabatabai says.

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“The Rouhani government oversold its ability to generate economic recovery following the sanctions relief,” she says, “and so now it is dialing back expectations of what is realistic.” The government is now arguing that the recovery will take more time, and that its lag cannot be attributed to sanctions alone.

Hard-liners in Iran argue that the United States is angling to keep the Iranian economy depressed and that Rouhani was hoodwinked into unfavorable terms, a view they say is bolstered by extreme rhetoric from some members of the Trump administration and Congress. They argue that Iran has “redesigned its nuclear facilities while the sanctions have only been suspended,” and so the United States can reinstate sanctions with relative ease even as the Iranian nuclear program has been permanently set back, says Mohammad Ayatollahi Tabaar, an assistant professor at Texas A&M University’s Bush School of Government and Public Service

While some U.S. lawmakers continue to criticize the JCPOA, the other members of the P5+1 are firmly behind it. Many close watchers of the accord say that if the United States were to reinstate sanctions without presenting clear evidence of Iranian cheating, its negotiating partners would be unlikely to follow suit and resurrect the global regime that drove Iran to the negotiating table. “Iran’s goal is to create a gap between the U.S. and EU,” says Tabaar, so Iran likely won’t renege on its nuclear commitments. Instead, he says, hard-liners might push back against the United States in areas beyond the scope of the JCPOA, such as testing ballistic missiles or boosting its support for its clients in Iraq, Syria, or Yemen.

<http://www.cfr.org/iran/impact-iran-nuclear-agreement/p39032>

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NPR (United States)

## **Iran Sticks To Nuclear Deal, But U.S. Says It Will Review Sanctions**

19 April 2017

As President Trump wages a rhetorical battle with North Korea over its nuclear program, his secretary of state says the nuclear deal with Iran will now be placed under review.

In a letter to Congress, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said that Iran is meeting the terms of the 2015 deal worked out with the Obama administration and five other countries. But Tillerson added that the current administration would evaluate whether the lifting of sanctions that had been placed on Iran “is vital to the national security interests of the United States.”

“Iran remains a leading state sponsor of terror through many platforms and methods,” Tillerson said in his letter Tuesday.

He gave no indication of how long the review would take or what the likely outcome would be. The State Department must provide an update to Congress every 90 days.

Trump was a harsh critic of the deal as a candidate, and his administration has taken a tough line with Iran over a number of non-nuclear issues.

Iran has continued to test ballistic missiles — which was not part of the nuclear agreement — and Iran has kept up its staunch support of Syrian President Bashar Assad.

However, Tillerson's letter was in line with many other assessments that have found Iran has kept its part of the bargain. Iran was required to give up almost all of its enriched uranium, which can be used to make a nuclear weapon, and is subject to ongoing inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency.





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In return, many sanctions have been lifted, which has allowed Iran to ramp up its oil exports and earn billions of dollars to help its weak economy.

Iran has said many times that if the U.S. imposed additional sanctions, that would violate the nuclear deal and Iran would no longer feel bound by its terms.

The other countries that were part of the deal — Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China, along with the European Union — remain supportive of the pact and would likely object to any re-imposition of American sanctions.

The deal has allowed many Western companies to resume business with Iran, including Boeing, which has signed two major agreements to deliver dozens of planes to Iran.

The U.S. still maintains some sanctions against Iran for separate, non-nuclear issues, with Washington accusing Iran of sponsoring terrorism outside its borders and violating human rights at home.

The Trump administration has taken hard-line positions against both North Korea and Iran over their nuclear programs, though it's not yet clear whether this will lead to punitive measures.

In the latest sign of U.S.-Iranian tensions, U.S. Defense Secretary James Mattis, who was in Saudi Arabia on a tour of the Middle East, on Wednesday accused Iran of sending missiles to rebel Houthi fighters in Yemen.

The U.S. has supported Saudi Arabia in a bombing campaign against the rebels in Yemen's civil war.

In Iran, Defense Minister Brig. Gen. Hossein Dehqan rejected the allegation and said U.S.-made weapons were being used to commit "crimes" in Iraq and Syria.

<http://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2017/04/19/524701919/iran-sticks-to-nuclear-deal-but-u-s-says-it-will-review-sanctions>

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Voice of America (United States)

### **Tillerson Says Strategic Patience Has Failed With Iran, North Korea**

19 April 2017

By Cindy Saine

U.S. President Donald Trump has directed the National Security Council to review the international agreement on Iran's nuclear program and evaluate whether suspending sanctions "is vital to the national security interests of the United States."

Secretary of State Rex Tillerson said the Trump administration was conducting a comprehensive review of its Iran policy across the entire U.S. government. He said this review must address all the threats posed by Iran, adding, "It's clear there are many."

Tillerson noted Iran's continued support of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's regime and its long-standing hostility toward Israel, and said Tehran has "one of the world's worst human rights records."

On the international Iran nuclear deal, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, Tillerson said it had failed to achieve its objective of a nuclear-free Iran.

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Tillerson made a rare appearance in front of reporters at the State Department, saying, "This deal represents the same failed approach of the past that brought us to the current imminent threat we face from North Korea. The Trump administration has no intention of passing the buck to a future administration on Iran. The evidence is clear Iran's provocative actions threaten the United States, the region and the world."

#### 90-day review

Tillerson had revealed the Iran policy review in a letter Tuesday to House Speaker Paul Ryan.

White House press secretary Sean Spicer said Wednesday that the administration was conducting a 90-day review of the deal.

"The president is directing the National Security Council to lead an inter-agency review of the plan and then evaluate whether suspensions, sanctions related to Iran ... are in the vital interest of our national security," he said.

Tillerson said that as of Tuesday, Iran was complying with its responsibilities under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, which it agreed to in 2015 after negotiations with the U.S., Britain, France, China, Russia and Germany.

"Notwithstanding, Iran remains a leading state sponsor of terror through many platforms and methods," Tillerson wrote.

ny U.S. move to reimpose sanctions could cause Iran to pull out of the deal.

"Iran has stated that if sanctions are reinstated in whole or in part, Iran will treat that as grounds to cease performing its commitments under this JCPOA in whole or in part," the agreement says.

Zachary Goldman, a former U.S. Treasury official who dealt with terrorism and financial intelligence in the previous Obama administration, told VOA Persian's NewsHour show that he was not alarmed by Trump's move.

"It's obviously well within the president's prerogative to review international agreements shortly after he takes office," Goldman said on Wednesday's program. "There's nothing wrong or inherently suspicious about that."

Goldman, who heads New York University's Center on Law & Security, also said it was "no secret" that Trump was "very skeptical" of the JCPOA and that he had imposed several new sanctions on Iran in recent months in retaliation for Iranian actions unrelated to nuclear activity, such as ballistic missile tests and perceived human rights abuses.

He also said he thought the threshold for any U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA would be "quite high," given that it could have "very significant diplomatic consequences" for Washington.

#### Not without precedent

Appearing in the same NewsHour program, James Robbins, a former special assistant in the defense secretary's office during the George W. Bush administration, said a U.S. pullout from the nuclear deal would not be without precedent.

Robbins pointed to Bush's order of a National Security Council review of a 1972 U.S. anti-ballistic missile treaty with the Soviet Union — a review that led to a recommendation of a withdrawal and a Bush decision to do so.

"There have been cases in which a review has resulted in withdrawing from an agreement, so it is certainly possible in this [JCPOA] case," he said.



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But, Robbins, now a national security analyst with the American Foreign Policy Council, a Washington research group, said he did not foresee the Trump administration withdrawing completely from the nuclear deal.

"It may come back with a finding of reimposing certain U.S. sanctions that have been waived," he said. "If that takes place, and the regime in Tehran follows through on a threat to pull out of the agreement altogether, then the snapback mechanism of the JCPOA could come into force and the U.N. could return to the previous status of sanctions under Security Council resolutions. So, Tehran would be well-advised not to overreact to whatever happens."

The JCPOA focused on Iran's nuclear program and allegations that it was working to develop nuclear weapons. The Iranian government repeatedly denied those accusations.

The United Nations as well as individual nations, including the United States, imposed economic sanctions on Iran to try to get the country to abandon any nuclear arms ambitions. Those sanctions badly hurt the Iranian economy, particularly limiting its ability to sell oil on the global market, and led to nearly two years of hard-fought negotiations before the two sides reached an agreement.

In exchange for relief from the sanctions that targeted its nuclear activity, Iran agreed to take a number of steps, including affirming that it would under no circumstances "seek, develop or acquire nuclear weapons."

Iran is also allowed to conduct only low-level uranium enrichment, and only so much of it, while also shipping out all of its spent nuclear fuel, turning higher-enriched uranium into reactor fuel, and converting a pair of nuclear sites into facilities used for peaceful research.

Process set to resolve disputes

The International Atomic Energy Agency is in charge of monitoring the implementation of the agreement, and a joint commission set up between Iran and the group of six world powers has been established to address any issues that come up.

The JCPOA stipulates that if either side believes the other is violating the agreement, they can launch a dispute resolution process, the final step of which is a U.N. Security Council vote on whether to continue lifting the sanctions.

A U.S. move to reimpose sanctions could cause Iran to pull out of the deal.

"Iran has stated that if sanctions are reinstated in whole or in part, Iran will treat that as grounds to cease performing its commitments under this JCPOA in whole or in part," the agreement says.

<http://www.voanews.com/a/trump-orders-review-of-iran-nuclear-deal/3816362.html>

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The New York Times (United States)

### **The North Korea Paradox: Why There Are No Good Options on Nuclear Arms**

By Max Fisher

17 April 2017

North Korea, a small and poor country facing far stronger adversaries and the perpetual threat of its own collapse, would not seem a likely state to defy four consecutive American presidents.

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Yet it is precisely that weakness, analysts say, along with the country's history and internal dynamics, that drives its leaders to pursue nuclear and missile programs at virtually any cost — and that robs the world of almost any option to limit them.

Those factors, when viewed together, show why Barack Obama warned President Trump that North Korea would be the gravest foreign threat he faced — and why a solution has proved so hard to find.

Vice President Mike Pence, speaking in South Korea on Monday, cited Mr. Trump's "strength" and willingness to use force, warning, "North Korea would do well not to test his resolve."

But Mr. Trump may find that North Korea is driven by dynamics more complex than can be solved with strength or threats alone.

#### When Peace Is Riskier Than Threat of War

North Korea's nuclear and missile programs are central to a strategy meant to stave off a threat greater than any foreign adversary: the undermining of the North Korean system.

For much of the Cold War, North and South Korea were at roughly comparable levels of economic and political development. Both could claim, at least internally, to be the rightful government of the Korean people who had been temporarily disunited.

But by the 1990s, the South enjoyed a booming economy and a blossoming democracy. Communist governments worldwide were collapsing, and North Korea seemed likely to follow.

Kim Jong-il, then the leader, responded with the "Songun," or military-first, policy, which marshaled the nation to prepare for a war said to be just around the corner.

This policy sought to explain the country's shortages and rationing as necessary to maintain its immense military, to justify oppression as necessary to root out internal enemies and to rally the nationalism that often comes during wartime.

B. R. Myers, a North Korea scholar at Dongseo University in South Korea, wrote in a 2010 book on North Korean ideology, "It is the regime's awareness of a pending legitimacy crisis, not a fear of attack from without, which makes it behave ever more provocatively on the world stage."

Today, the country and government appear to be stable. But this came at a cost: a permanent state of near-war to stave off the forces of history that would otherwise tear down North Korea. Neither threats nor concessions from outside have proved able to override this calculus.

#### A Perpetual State of Almost-War

The Korean War, never officially resolved, was long deadlocked between the Cold War superpowers. When Soviet protection fell away, North Korea became suddenly vulnerable against the vastly more powerful United States and its allies.

Mr. Kim, unable to seek peace without risking a German-style reunification that would subsume the North under South Korean rule, sought to make any potential war too costly to consider.

Missile and nuclear tests, along with what appears to have been a cultivated appearance of irrationality, put the onus on North Korea's enemies to manage tensions.

At first, analysts believe, weapons programs were intended to one day be traded away in a grand bargain with the United States.

But each round of provocation, in deliberately raising the risk of war, made the missile and nuclear programs not just symbolically useful but also strategically necessary.



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After imposing such threats on its neighbors, North Korea could hardly drop these programs without understandably fearing an attack. Disarmament, in this view, would invite annihilation.

#### **A Desire for Extreme Risk**

North Korea's calculus, analysts believe, drives it toward a specific goal: a program powerful enough to survive all-out war with the United States.

Far more powerful states, like Russia or China, dedicate billions in spending and decades of research to similar goals. Small, impoverished North Korea, unable to match their abilities, has compensated with a willingness to accept extreme levels of risk.

Its plan, analysts believe, is to halt any American invasion by launching nuclear strikes at the ports and airfields in the south where troops would enter the peninsula. It would then threaten to launch nuclear-armed intercontinental missiles (an ability it does not yet possess but is developing) at major American cities, forcing the United States to stand down.

By edging up to the line of such a war, North Korea can also coerce its adversaries in peacetime.

Denny Roy, a political scientist who studies Asian security issues, told me last fall that North Korea "intentionally employs a posture of seemingly hyper-risk acceptance and willingness to go to war as a means of trying to intimidate its adversaries."

This puts the world in a quandary: How could any outside threat possibly exceed the risk that North Korea already takes on itself? How could any concession remove the North Korean weakness that drives its behavior?

#### **A Hair Trigger to Nuclear Escalation**

The United States' relative strength is also, paradoxically, a weakness. North Korea knows that it would quickly succumb to a full American attack, making its only option to escalate to nuclear strikes almost immediately at the start of a conflict.

North Korea also fears that the United States might seek to depose its government in rapid strikes against the leadership, a threat it seeks to deter with repeated warnings of a nuclear response.

In this way, North Korean weakness constrains any American options. Punitive strikes, which might otherwise be used to chasten the country, or strikes meant to degrade the missile or nuclear programs, would risk stirring North Korea's fear of an all-out attack, leading to nuclear conflict.

The Nixon administration faced this problem in 1969, when North Korea shot down a United States Navy plane, killing 31. Though the president was willing to bomb Cambodia and Laos and proposed using nuclear weapons in Vietnam, he concluded that even a symbolic retaliation against North Korea would be too risky.

#### **A Unique Tolerance for Pain**

Iran was persuaded to surrender most of its nuclear program by sanctions, which put the government under domestic pressure from citizens who hated their isolation and poverty and from elites who foresaw huge gains from sanctions relief.

But North Korea has proved itself capable of withstanding economic devastation far exceeding Iran's.



In the 1990s, North Korea was plunged into a famine that killed up to 10 percent of the population. But it neither succumbed to internal unrest nor sought to end the crisis by opening up to the outside world.

The famine, Mr. Myers wrote, “may have strengthened support for the regime by renewing the sense of ethnic victimhood from which the official worldview derived its passion.”

“Many migrants remember a widespread yearning for war with America during the famine,” he added.

This is why some analysts doubt that even the most extreme sanctions, including perhaps those imposed by China, could change North Korea’s calculus. Since the famine, though North Korea’s economy has grown reliant on Chinese imports, the country has overhauled its food system. It has responded to past Chinese sanctions with provocations, as if daring Beijing to test the regime.

### An Ability Beyond Removal

Some rogue weapons states, such as Iraq under Saddam Hussein, rely on imported technology or assistance. North Korea’s programs, however, appear largely indigenous.

This means that, while specific sites could be shut down or weapons removed by a potential agreement or set of strikes, the knowledge to reconstitute them may be there for good.

If North Korea remains bent on acquiring a nuclear-capable intercontinental ballistic missile, then no obvious action short of all-out war could completely derail this drive. Cyberattacks, for instance, can only slow its progress.

North Korea is believed to already have short- and medium-range missiles and rockets hidden around the country. Strikes to rapidly destroy these weapons, analysts believe, would be unlikely to succeed before the country could launch at least some.

Seoul, the South Korean capital and a city of 25 million, would be a likely target. Any strike plan, whether to disarm North Korea or punish it, would have to ask whether this was an acceptable risk.

### The High Costs of a Deal

Any agreement that North Korea would be likely to consider minimally acceptable would come at huge cost to the United States and its allies. North Korea would be likely to require:

- A tacit acknowledgment of the country’s right to retain its existing programs.
- A declaration that the United States considered the North Korean government legitimate and would not seek to topple it.
- The lifting of sanctions.
- The withdrawal or reduction of the American military commitment to South Korea

“They want to see the end of that alliance,” said Joshua H. Pollack, the editor of the *Nonproliferation Review*, suggesting that North Korea has drawn inspiration from the way that the United States broke with Taiwan in order to normalize relations with China in the 1970s.

Mr. Pollack emphasized that North Korea probably saw this as a long-term goal to be accomplished over many years, rather than something to demand up front and all at once.

Still, he said, North Korea may see this as the only way to reduce the existential threat that its weapons program is meant to curb.

Any partial or full American withdrawal would risk sending the American relationship with South Korea and Japan into crisis, empowering North Korea and weakening American influence in Asia.



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Even if a president deemed these costs worthwhile, he or she might find the politics of such a deal insurmountable.

#### **A Drift Toward Disaster**

As time goes on, analysts say, the risks only grow.

“If the current action-reaction cycle continues,” Daryl G. Kimball, the executive director of the Arms Control Association, wrote in a recent policy brief, “it will not only diminish the prospect of denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, but it will increase the risk of a devastating nuclear war.”

John R. Bolton, the Bush administration’s ambassador to the United Nations, told Fox News this week that the only “way to end North Korea’s nuclear weapons program is to end North Korea” by bringing about the government’s total collapse.

Mr. Pollack, asked if he agreed, at first dismissed Mr. Bolton as a “hard-liner,” saying a war would risk nuclear devastation, but then he acknowledged that the assessment of North Korea’s determination was probably correct.

“They’re not gonna give this stuff up,” Mr. Pollack said.

[https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/17/world/asia/north-korea-nuclear-weapons-missiles-sanctions.html?rref=collection%2Ftimestopic%2FArms%20Control%20and%20Limitation%20and%20Disarmament&action=click&contentCollection=timestopics&region=stream&module=stream\\_unit&version=latest&contentPlacement=1&pgtype=collection](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/17/world/asia/north-korea-nuclear-weapons-missiles-sanctions.html?rref=collection%2Ftimestopic%2FArms%20Control%20and%20Limitation%20and%20Disarmament&action=click&contentCollection=timestopics&region=stream&module=stream_unit&version=latest&contentPlacement=1&pgtype=collection)

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The New York Times (United States)

#### **A Cornerstone of Peace at Risk**

03 April 2017

One of the big security decisions facing the Trump administration in the next few months is what to do about Russia’s violation of a 30-year-old treaty that bans intermediate-range missiles based on land. How the administration reacts will say a lot about how it views the threat from Russia and will have a profound effect on European security.

An American decision to withdraw from the treaty, known as the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, or I.N.F., would be disastrous. The treaty, a cornerstone of an international arms control regime that has prevented nuclear war, was signed in 1987 by President Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet leader. It prohibits the testing, production and possession of ballistic and cruise missiles, with either nuclear or conventional warheads, that can travel between 500 and 5,500 kilometers. Sea-based missiles and air-launched missiles are not affected.

Despite signing the pact, the Russians, in recent years, have increasingly complained about its limits and have argued that countries like China, India and Pakistan, which have active missile programs, do not have similar constraints. Many American experts consider such arguments specious, given Russia’s huge nuclear and missile inventory.

In 2014, the Obama administration concluded that Russia had violated its treaty obligations by developing a prohibited cruise missile. The dispute became even more dangerous when it was determined that the Russians in December “deployed a land-based cruise missile that violates the

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spirit and intent” of the treaty, as Gen. Paul Selva, the vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the House Armed Services Committee in March.

Every weekday, get thought-provoking commentary from Op-Ed columnists, the Times editorial board and contributing writers from around the world.

Efforts by the Obama administration to persuade Russia to move back into compliance failed. While American experts don’t consider the new missile a significant military threat, there is no doubt that President Vladimir Putin of Russia saw the new missile as another way to stoke fears in the members of NATO, an alliance which President Trump has recklessly sown doubts about.

The Trump administration is now reviewing the overall American nuclear posture, and there could be a decision “very, very soon” on what to do about the I.N.F. violation, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said Friday in London, where he discussed the matter with British officials. Mr. Mattis has argued, “If Russia is permitted to violate the treaty with impunity, such actions could erode the foundations of all current and future arms control agreements and initiatives.”

In anticipation of the missile deployment, the Obama administration funded a new multibillion-dollar initiative to station American troops and those from other NATO members on a rotating basis in European countries near the Russian border, and to expand training exercises and other cooperation. This should be continued and perhaps expanded.

Other possible responses include stationing additional air- and sea-launched missiles — which are not covered by the treaty — with NATO allies in and around Europe and increasing funding for missile defense programs. The point would be to increase pressure on Russia to find some kind of diplomatic solution to the missile treaty dispute.

All of this is playing out in a confused environment in which Russia has been accused of interfering in the American election and Mr. Trump has been an apologist for Mr. Putin, while the Pentagon and the intelligence community are ringing alarm bells about the Russian threat. How Mr. Trump handles the treaty violation will say a lot about whether he is prepared to confront Mr. Putin’s malign meddling.

[https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/03/opinion/a-cornerstone-of-peace-at-risk.html?rref=collection%2Ftimestopic%2FArms Control and Limitation and Disarmament&action=click&contentCollection=timestopics&region=stream&module=stream\\_unit&version=latest&h](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/03/opinion/a-cornerstone-of-peace-at-risk.html?rref=collection%2Ftimestopic%2FArms%20Control%20and%20Limitation%20and%20Disarmament&action=click&contentCollection=timestopics&region=stream&module=stream_unit&version=latest&h)

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NZ Herald (New Zealand)

### **Why North Korea is obsessed with nuclear weapons**

By Charis Chang

17 April 2017

North Korea sees being a "nuclear state" as a "poison pill" that will ensure its own survival, making a peaceful conclusion to its conflict with the US difficult to achieve.

Brad Glosserman, executive director of the Center for Strategic and International Studies in the US, told *news.com.au* the status of being a nuclear state was so important to North Korea it was enshrined in its constitution in 2012.





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Former leader Kim Jong-il revised the constitution to state that he had "transferred the country into an undefeated country with strong political ideology, a nuclear power state, and invincible military power".

Glosserman said North Korea's nuclear ambitions were a "poison pill" to ensure its survival as other countries like the US would be afraid of retaliation if they attacked the regime.

"The North Koreans believe they need it, I think mistakenly, as a way of creating greater security that allows them to influence the security environment," Glosserman told *news.com.au* during a visit to Australia last month.

"It keeps Korea on the security agenda in ways that allow it to continue to extort resources from the world and continue to be a source of attention."

North Korea struggles to produce enough food to feed its people, and over the years South Korea and the US have given it millions in food and fertiliser aid.

China, a long-term ally of North Korea, bought its coal until recently and also helps to keep its economy afloat.

Glosserman said if North Korea didn't get international assistance including food then its people would starve so it needed to be "public enemy number two", inspiring just enough fear to keep other countries at bay but not enough for them to attack.

"Public enemy number one gets the Saddam Hussein treatment but public enemy number two, you just want to make it go away," he said.

Another reason why North Korea wanted the weapons was to maintain an area of superiority with South Korea.

"Nuclear weapons capability is the only thing that distinguishes North Korea from South Korea, and the inter-Korean competition is profound. This is the only one in which North Korea is on top, so they've got to keep those weapons," Glosserman said.

"In that environment, the North won't give up its weapons."

#### **"Moment of opportunity"**

Tensions have reached boiling point in the region after a series of nuclear and missile tests in North Korea prompted the US to send an armada of warships to Korean waters including aircraft carrier the USS Carl Vinson.

Experts believe that North Korea could develop a long-range missile capable of reaching the US, with a nuclear bomb at the tip, within four years.

"That is a hell scary moment," Professor John Blaxland told *news.com.au*.

Prof Blaxland is the acting head of the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the Australian National University, and said the nuclearisation of a ballistic missile could threaten the US, halfway across the world, as well as Australia.

In fact, it's been estimated that North Korea could develop a missile powerful enough to reach Australia within two years.

"So do we wait?" Prof Blaxland said. "Or do we act to bring it on? To get in before (North Korea) reaches that state? That is the ongoing debate."



Another factor that has added pressure to the situation is the political turmoil in South Korea.

The US made a deal with South Korea to place a powerful anti-missile system in the country that could intercept and destroy missiles fired from North Korea.

But this deal was placed under a cloud earlier this year when then-president Park Geun-hye was impeached for corruption and then removed from office.

The man seen as a frontrunner to replace her, Moon Jae-in, does not seem supportive of continuing with the deal, and said he wanted to review the decision.

While the presidential race has since narrowed, if Moon was elected on May 9, it could weaken the US bargaining position.

Moon has said he wants to meet with North Korea's Kim Jong Un in Pyongyang as a priority over going to Washington, indicating he favours working with the dictator.

This may calm tensions in the area but could allow North Korea to continue developing its nuclear weapons.

With South Korea currently under interim leadership favourable to the US, Prof Blaxland said there was a "certain moment of opportunity" for the US to act.

Last month the US started installing its advanced missile defence system called THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defence) in South Korea, despite some saying it should wait until the presidential elections were held.

US President Donald Trump has also ordered a naval strike group, led by the USS Carl Vinson aircraft carrier, to the region, though the vessels remain a long way from the peninsula.

US national security adviser HR McMaster repeatedly stated that China - North Korea's key ally - is increasingly concerned about the reclusive communist state's behaviour.

The new consensus is "that this problem is coming to a head. And so it's time for us to undertake all actions we can, short of a military option, to try to resolve this peacefully," McMaster said.

He indicated Washington was working with China to try and find a way out of the crisis.

"The president has made clear that he will not accept the United States and its allies and partners in the region being under threat from this hostile regime with nuclear weapons.

"And so we are working together with our allies and partners, and with the Chinese leadership, to develop a range of options."

Amid speculation that Pyongyang may attempt another nuclear test in the coming days, US President Donald Trump also signaled that China could receive a better trade situation with the US if it was constructive in dealing with the North Korean regime.

### **Can China help?**

Many countries have been looking to China to try and solve the impasse, saying it should exert its influence over North Korea to get it to fall in line.

But Brad Glosserman said the belief the Chinese could force an outcome in Pyongyang was a mistake.

He pointed to the US relationship with Israel as an example, saying despite all that America does to help the Jewish state, it is unable to force Israel to do what it wants.



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"The problem with North Korea's relationship with the world, is the North's relationship with the US," he said.

"What China believes is that if there is to be a resolution, it must be a resolution between Washington and Pyongyang.

"Beijing's only real role is to facilitate that task, the idea that they can put the screws on ... and deliver North Korea is something that the Chinese don't believe and I don't believe."

#### **Should North Korea be allowed to have nuclear weapons?**

If the US did become open to the idea of a nuclear-armed North Korea, Glosserman said this would place stress on the US relationship with South Korea and also with Japan.

"It undermines the integrity of the non-proliferation treaty," he said.

"I believe North Korea went nuclear because Pakistan went nuclear and got away with it. And I'm willing to bet that if North Korea goes nuclear, Iran will go nuclear and if Iran goes nuclear who knows what other dominoes will fall?.

"If North Korea is allowed to become a nuclear weapons state, I would suggest South Koreans might be encouraged to do the same and the Japanese will actively be pushed to do the same.

"There are a number of nuclear dominoes that have the potential to fall."

#### **How can we stop them?**

According to the *New York Times*, the US has been trying to sabotage North Korea's development of missile program using cyber and electronic strikes.

This may even have been why a ballistic missile launched on Saturday was unsuccessful.

Lately, President Donald Trump is reportedly considering "utterly destroying" Kim Jong-un's nuclear sites using pre-emptive strikes.

But Glosserman said he didn't think the US knew where North Korea's warheads or missiles were located.

"The idea that we can intimidate the North Koreans strikes me as being a bit of a stretch," he has previously said.

But while it may be hard for the US to take out North Korea's weapons stockpile if it doesn't know where to target, the use of a military option was still a possibility.

"If there is a missile on a pad and (the US) is reasonably sure that the North Koreans are going to aim that at a US asset or an ally etc ... the perceived need to take that off the pad will be very, very high," Glosserman said.

"I think the North Korean capability is 'one and done'. They get one shot at one adversary and that's the end of their regime.

"It would demonstrate a recklessness and a disregard for human life ... no regime should be allowed to do that and survive, that's an act of war.

"The problem of course is, what will the consequences of that action be?

Glosserman said the countries involved needed to be very careful as diplomacy was everyone's preferred outcome.

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Unfortunately Glosserman said he didn't think a deal could ultimately be brokered.

He said the US was demanding that North Korea give up its nuclear weapons but this is something they were not willing to do.

The Chinese have asked for a freeze in activity but this doesn't get rid of what the weapons they have already got.

"At the end of the day, the North Koreans believe that their nuclear weapons are too foundational to their survival and to the survival of their regime.," he said.

"No one has come up with good terms by which we can at least begin a process to cap then roll back North Korea's nuclear weapons."

[http://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/news/article.cfm?c\\_id=2&objectid=11839789](http://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/news/article.cfm?c_id=2&objectid=11839789)

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Library of Law and Liberty (United States)

### **North Korea and the Qaddafi Double Cross**

By Mike Rappaport

18 April 2017

With the Trump Administration engaged in a soft conflict with North Korea, it is worth noting how the actions of the Obama Administration have made it a harder to reach a resolution with North Korea.

When a country attempts to secure nuclear weapons, it is of course extremely difficult for the United States and other countries to prevent them from entering the nuclear club. A country gains a tremendous amount of military power, influence, and prestige from having nuclear weapons. And so it would be expected that it would be difficult to persuade them not to do so. Various administrations from both parties have not done well in handling the North Korean situation, from the Clinton, to the Bush, to the Obama administrations.

But it is worth noting how badly the Obama Administration contributed to the problem through one of its signature failures – Libya. Most people focus on Libya as a failed policy because it deposed of a dictator with no plan for the country to be governed afterward (even after the criticisms of the Iraqi invasion on that ground by the same people), which led to a significant ISIS presence in the country. Other people focus on the Benghazi.

But it is often forgotten that the deposing of Qaddafi involved a broken promise by the United States. Qaddafi agreed to surrender his WMD program in exchange for guarantees that he would not be attacked by the West. Yet, the Obama Administration responded to this deal with the Bush Administration by double crossing Qaddafi. The New York Times recognizes how this behavior has made it more difficult to deal with North Korea:

Tempting as the analogies to Cuba may be, Mr. Kim is probably thinking of another nuclear negotiation — with Libya, in 2003. Its leader, Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi, agreed to give up his nascent nuclear program in return for promises from the West of economic integration and acceptance. It never really happened, and as soon as Libya's populace turned against the dictator during the Arab Spring, the United States and its European and Arab allies drove him from power. Ultimately, he was pulled out of a ditch and shot.



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Notice how the New York Times omits to mention that it was President Obama and Secretary of State Clinton who set United States policy that “drove him from power.”

One might also believe that another Obama precedent – the arguably sweet heart deal with Iran – has made things more difficult in dealing with North Korea. If a country with nuclear capability is given such a deal, it makes it less likely that North Korea will willingly accept so much less.

To be clear, I’m not saying that North Korea would give up its nuclear weapons in response to pressure if the United States had not broken its word and toppled Qaddafi (or if the Obama Administration had not entered into the Iran nuclear deal). But it does appear that the Obama Administration’s action have made it more difficult for the U.S. to achieve its objectives with the North Koreans.

<http://www.libertylawsite.org/2017/04/18/north-korea-and-the-qaddafi-double-cross/>

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Strategic Culture Foundation

#### **Does North Korean Missile Parade Augur a New Asian Superpower?**

By Richard A. Bitzinger

18 April 2017

North Korea had a pretty good week. True, a missile test Sunday failed seconds after launch. But Pyongyang’s ostentatious parade the day before — held to celebrate the 105th birthday of Kim Il-Sung, founder of North Korea — was a missile-laden triumph.

The parade could be viewed as the debut of a new Asian superpower: A North Korea armed with a formidable array of nuclear weapons and the means to deliver them to targets thousands of kilometers away.

First of all, forget all the choreography of goose-stepping troops or the rows of tanks rumbling through Kim Il-Sung Square. That was just for show. No one is afraid of North Korea’s conventional armed forces, which are embarrassingly backward (except perhaps for its 13,000-plus artillery pieces, which could rain thousands of shells down on Seoul).

North Korea’s security geared to WMDs

What makes North Korea such a fearsome threat is, quite simply, a national security strategy based almost entirely on weapons of mass destruction (WMD) — in this case, the combination of nuclear weapons with a growing assortment of missiles — from short-range Scuds to intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), and land-based and sea-launched systems.

Many of these missile systems were on display in the parade, many for the first time. These included two as-yet untested ICBMs — the KN-08 and KN-14 missiles. The KN-08, a three-stage missile that North Korea calls the Hwasong-13, has an estimated range of about 12,000 kilometers, meaning it could theoretically target the continental United States. At least three different ICBM launchers were on display.

Also on show for the first time was the Pukkuksong-1 submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM), also called the KN-11. The Pukkuksong is believed to have a range of more than 1,000 kilometers. A land-based version of Pukkuksong, designated the KN-15, also rolled past.

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Particularly disconcerting is North Korea's increasing use of solid-fuel propellants. Solid-fueled missiles require fewer crew members and can be readied and fired quicker than a liquid-fueled rocket (which must be slowly fueled before launch, a process that can take hours). They are also safer to transport on land-mobile systems, such as TELs (transporter-erector-launchers). North Korea currently operates at least two solid-fuel missiles, the Pukkuksong and the KN-15, and there are indications that the KN-14 is also solid-fueled.

Besides improvements in quality and capabilities, the impressive show of missiles indicates that North Korea's production of advanced missile systems is moving at full-speed. Six Pukkuksong-1 SLBMs were on display, along with dozens of KN-08, KN-14, and KN-15 ballistic missiles. The effect was one of an impressive buildup well underway.

A would-be nuclear superpower in the offing?

What does it all mean? Jeffrey Lewis, director of the East Asia Nonproliferation Program at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies in Monterey, California, says the parade demonstrates that "the North Koreans are serious about building a nuclear force that can threaten US forces in South Korea, Japan, and the continental United States" (this from a USA Today article).

In addition, Joseph S. Bermudez, a military analyst affiliated with the Washington-based US-Korea Institute at the School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), stated in a commentary posted on the 38 North website that North Korea is particularly keen to develop a working SLBM. Ominously, he said that "assuming the current rate of development," North Korea "is on track to develop the capability to strike targets in the region — including Japan — by 2020."

President Donald Trump's response so far has been to simultaneously badger and cajole China into forcing North Korea to halt its nuclear program, while at the same time threatening unilateral action. "If China is not going to solve North Korea, we will," Trump told the Financial Times earlier this month. Perhaps as an indicator of Trump's resolve, the US has dispatched the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson and a naval strike group into waters near North Korea.

But Trump's response to North Korea simply underscores the brilliance of the North Korean WMD strategy. In the first place, the US Navy can sail around and signal the Kim regime, but it would be hard-pressed to take real military action. Shooting down a test missile will be tantamount to an act of war; so would attacking North Korean nuclear research and weapons sites. And neither action would do much to impair North Korea's capabilities to develop either nuclear weapons or long-range missiles.

US attack would stoke North Korean paranoia

Moreover, military action would play directly into Pyongyang's hands. The North Koreans are already obsessed with the idea that the US wants to destroy them. A unilateral attack would only prove their fear is justified and would not only make them more intransigent, it might even trigger a war.

In addition, US unilateral military action could rupture the Western alliance and doom efforts to denuclearize the North. South Korea and Japan, which would likely bear the worst and most immediate brunt of any North Korean retaliation, would be angry. China would be livid.

The West is justifiably fearful of North Korea's growing nuclear-and-missile capabilities, which is exactly what Pyongyang wants. And Trump's few options are all bad. If he tries something rash, he simply justifies North Korea's paranoia.



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If he does nothing, then all his posturing and saber-rattling makes him look foolish and amateurish. And in both cases, North Korea remains a nuclear power.

<http://www.strategic-culture.org/news/2017/04/18/does-north-korean-missile-parade-augur-new-asian-superpower.html>

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The Times of India (India)

#### **US won't rest until North Korea gives up nuclear weapons, Mike Pence says**

18 April 2017

The US will not relent until it achieves its objective of ensuring the Korean Peninsula is free of nuclear weapons, Vice President Mike Pence said Tuesday while visiting Japan.

After meetings with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and other leaders, Pence told reporters that President Donald Trump was confident that economic and diplomatic pressure has a chance of compelling North Korea to cooperate.

"It is our belief by bringing together the family of nations with diplomatic and economic pressure we have a chance of achieving a freeze on the Korean Peninsula," Pence said.

"We will not rest and will not relent until we obtain the objective of a denuclearized Korean Peninsula," he said.

The Trump administration has signaled a more forceful US stance toward North Korea's recent missile tests and threats, including a warning from Trump that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has "gotta behave."

So Pence struck a stern tone after arriving at a US naval base from South Korea.

"We appreciate the challenging times in which the people of Japan live with increasing provocations from across the Sea of Japan," he said. "We are with you 100 percent."

On Monday, Pence traveled to the tense Demilitarized Zone dividing North and South Korea, where he warned North Korea's leaders that after years of testing the US and South Korea with its nuclear ambitions, "the era of strategic patience is over."

A senior North Korean official then accused the United States of bringing the countries to the brink of thermonuclear war.

Pence, on a 10-day Asia trip that will also take him to Indonesia and Australia, said Trump hopes China will use its leverage to get its longtime ally North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons program and ballistic missiles.

In Beijing, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi made a fresh appeal for calm.

Wang told reporters that although US officials have made clear that a military strike remains a possibility, he believes that Washington would still prefer to de-escalate tensions through multi-sided talks.

Abe said Japan likewise hopes for peaceful dialogue with Pyongyang, "but at the same time, dialogue for the sake of dialogue is valueless." Pressure on North Korea is crucial, the prime minister said.

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After meeting with Abe, Pence held talks with Japanese Deputy Prime Minister Taro Aso on a new US-Japan "economic dialogue" to be led by the two.

The new forum for trade talks was launched by Trump and Abe during the Japanese leader's visit to the US in February. In part, it is meant to take the place of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the regional trade pact that Trump withdrew from shortly after taking office.

Pence and Aso said they believed the dialogue could yield opportunities to create new jobs on both sides and to fortify the economic aspects of the alliance.

"We would like to seek the best shape and forum for our bilateral relationship," Pence said. "The TPP is a thing of the past for the United States of America."

He said Trump is certain that negotiating trade deals with individual countries was the best way to ensure they yield "win-win" situations for both sides.

The talks Tuesday did not delve into sector-by-sector issues such as auto exports. With no US trade representative yet in office and other key positions still unfilled, such nitty-gritty discussions will have to come later.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/us/us-wont-rest-until-north-korea-gives-up-nuclear-weapons-mike-pence-says/articleshow/58241830.cms>

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Independent (United Kingdom)

## **Mikhail Gorbachev warns of new Cold War with US-Russia arms race 'in full swing'**

By Lizzie Dearden

18 April 2017

Mikhail Gorbachev has warned that the world could be heading for a new Cold War as tensions between Russia and the West continue to mount.

The 86-year-old former Soviet leader, who was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize for his role in the union's dissolution, accused the US and its allies of moving away from peace agreements on nuclear weapons and other central issues.

"The language of politicians and the top-level military personnel is becoming increasingly militant," he told Germany's Bild newspaper.

"The relationship between the big powers continues to worsen. This creates the impression that the world is preparing for a war. So all the indications of a Cold War are there."

Asked whether the situation could "turn hot", Mr Gorbachev cautioned that "anything is possible if we just keep watching, sit back and do nothing".

The Soviet Union's last leader, who has made several public warnings over rising tensions since last year, said that an arms race between Russia and the US was "already in full swing", citing the deployment of Nato troops in eastern Europe.

Mr Gorbachev said he shared Donald Trump's formerly stated view of the alliance as "obsolete", calling for a political instead of military union to help improve relations and further peace.

Large-scale military exercises have seen Russian and Nato troops, tanks and weapons stationed ever closer in neighbouring countries amid disquiet over the Kremlin's intervention in the





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Ukrainian war.

Mr Gorbachev dismissed fears over Russian military deployments in Crimea and eastern Ukraine as “propaganda” and said he trusted Vladimir Putin, while admitting that Russia was only “halfway” to democracy.

His remarks came amid heightened anti-US sentiment in the country’s state-controlled media, which has performed a swift U-turn on its former adulation for Mr Trump.

The President’s decision to attack an airbase belonging to Russia’s ally Bashar al-Assad, drop a giant bomb on Afghanistan and stick with Barack Obama’s policies and sanctions over Crimea have diminished hopes of improved relations.

Following Mr Trump’s decision to send a nuclear-powered “armada” of warships towards North Korea, a prolific pro-Kremlin pundit declared him more dangerous than Kim Jong-un.

Dmitry Kiselyov, the anchor of Russia's main weekly news show Vesti Nedeli, claimed the “world is a hair's breadth from nuclear war”.

“War can break out as a result of confrontation between two personalities; Donald Trump and Kim Jong-Un,” he said on Sunday. “Both are dangerous, but who is more dangerous? Trump is.”

North Korea said it would continue nuclear and missile tests in violation of UN sanctions, following a huge military parade and attempted missile launch over the weekend.

One of Kim’s top officials vowed to “annihilate” the US if it moved to strike, while Mr Trump has threatened to “properly deal” with North Korea if China fails to rein in its ally.

The Russian foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov, criticised Pyongyang for its “reckless nuclear actions” on Monday, but made clear Moscow wanted Mr Trump to de-escalate his stance.

“I really hope that the kind of unilateral action we recently saw in Syria won't happen (in North Korea) and that the USA will follow the line which President Trump repeatedly set out during his pre-election campaign,” he said.

A survey by state polling company VTsIOM showed that the percentage of Russians with a negative view of Mr Trump has jumped to 39 from seven per cent in a month, and that feelings of distrust and disappointment towards him have also grown.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/politics/mikhail-gorbachev-new-cold-war-us-russia-arms-race-full-swing-soviet-premier-putin-trump-north-korea-a7688321.html>

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Iran Press TV (Iran)

### **Russia warns US against 'unilateral action' on North Korea**

17 April 2017

Russia has warned the United States against any “unilateral action” against North Korea, saying any response to Pyongyang's nuclear activities should not violate “international law,” amid reports of potential military confrontation between North Korea and the US.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov made the remarks at a news conference in Moscow on Monday, a few hours after US Vice President Mike Pence said the era of “strategic patience” with the

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North was over, warning Pyongyang not to test US President Donald Trump's resolve over North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs.

"This is a very risky path. We do not accept the reckless nuclear missile actions of Pyongyang that breach UN resolutions, but that does not mean that you can break international law," Lavrov said, adding that he hoped there would not be any "unilateral actions like the one we saw recently in Syria."

The top Russian diplomat was referring to the recent US attack on Shayrat Airfield in Syria's Homs Province with a barrage of 59 Tomahawk missiles, fired from two warships in the Mediterranean Sea, which caused some 15 fatalities, including civilians.

Pentagon's unprecedented offensive on the Syrian soil was conducted without any international authorization.

On Sunday, US and South Korean military officials reported that Pyongyang's latest missile test had failed earlier in the day, with the projectile exploding almost immediately after the launch.

The failed test occurred just a few hours before Pence's scheduled visit to South Korea's capital, Seoul, and just one day after Pyongyang showcased its submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) for the first time during a massive military parade.

During recent weeks, tensions between North Korea and the US have increased, raising fears of a potential military confrontation between the two sides. Washington has voiced concern over Pyongyang's tests, but the North says such launches are an act of deterrence against a potential invasion by the US or South Korea.

On Monday, Pence, while standing alongside South Korea's acting president, Hwang Kyo-ahn, in Seoul, vowed that Washington's commitment to its ally against any possible aggression by the North was "iron-clad and immutable," reiterating that "all options are on the table," including military offensive, to forestall Pyongyang's quest to make a nuclear weapon capable of striking the US mainland.

Last week, a US aircraft carrier-led strike group set course for the Western Pacific Ocean close to the Korean Peninsula amid growing fears over the North's weapons tests.

Last month, Washington particularly infuriated Pyongyang by conducting a joint annual military drill with Seoul and starting the installation of an advanced missile system, known as Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense (THAAD), at an air base in South Korea.

Pyongyang has been subjected to international pressure, including US sanctions and Security Council resolutions, to abandon its arms development and nuclear programs. However, it says the programs are meant to protect the country from US hostility.

<http://www.globalsecurity.org/wmd/library/news/dprk/2017/dprk-170417-presstv02.htm>

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Russia News (Russia)

## **Russia urges new states to join Missile Technology Control Regime**

17 April 2017

Russia comes out in favor of having more states in the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), the Russian Foreign Ministry said on Monday in connection with the 30th anniversary of the MTCR.



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"We reiterate our stance to have the MTCR an operational tool to prevent the spread of WMD (weapons of mass destruction) delivery means, however, its regulations should not be an obstruction to legal trade in products at the issue," the ministry said.

"We are confident that affiliation of new states possessing sizable rocket-and-space potentials as well as the use of standards developed within the MRCR framework by a wide range of other states would to a great extent enhance its efficiency," the ministry said.

The ministry marked that standards of export controls over the products used in creation of WMD delivery means - ballistic and winged missiles, as well as drones, are worked out within the MTCR. Its participants exchange information on missile programs triggering concern, on tendencies in the spread of WMD delivery systems, as well as share experience in fight against illegal supplies of products under control.

The Missile Technology Control Regime is a voluntary partnership among 35 countries. It was established in 1987 to decrease the risk of proliferation of nuclear weapons through establishing control over supplies of equipment and technologies facilitating work on unmanned means of delivering nuclear weapons.

<http://tass.com/politics/941801>

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TASS (Russia)

#### **Moscow demands OPCW explain how White Helmets emerged unharmed in Syrian sarin attack**

20 April 2017

No representatives of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) visited Syria's Khan Shaykhun where an alleged chemical attack took place, so the origin of samples the OPCW claims to have is unclear, said Russian Defense Ministry Spokesman Major General Igor Konashenkov.

OPCW Director General Ahmet Uzumcu said earlier that sarin gas or a sarin-like substance had been used in the chemical weapons attack in Khan Shaykhun. He added that "the analytical results already obtained are incontrovertible."

According to Konashenkov, "in the past two weeks, not a single OPCW representative was seen there." "Where do these samples come from? Who of the OPCW members was able to study them so fast while standard procedures stipulate a complex research which requires time, as we can see in the case of mustard gas use in Aleppo," Konashenkov said.

White Helmets unharmed

The Russian Defense Ministry wants the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to explain how members of the White Helmets (an organization positioning itself as a human rights campaigner - TASS) managed to stay unharmed by sarin in Khan Shaykhun, Defense Ministry spokesman said.

"If it is true that sarin was used in Khan Shaykhun, how can the OPCW then account for the fact the charlatans from the White Helmets organization were hustling and bustling inside sarin clouds with

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no protective gear on? Everybody could see that. Ahmed Uzumcu should provide comprehensible answers to these questions as soon as possible," Konashenkov said.

"Although independent experts do not believe that anyone could have remained unharmed in a sarin gas attack, nevertheless, maybe Mr. Uzumcu has created his own periodic table of elements instead of Mendeleev's one?" Konashenkov added.

#### OPCW's responsibility

The Russian defense ministry spokesman pointed out that the OPCW had been founded as an impartial and responsible international organization. "This is why the statements and conclusions that this organization makes should be based on scientific methods instead of being politically motivated," the Russian general said.

"Moreover, any experts should have an opportunity to check these statements and conclusions," Konashenkov added.

He said that only an impartial investigation on the scene could help figure out what had really happened in Khan Khaykhun as well as "establish those responsible."

#### Aleppo mustard gas attack

The Russian defense ministry spokesman went on to say that the OPCW had been unable to provide an opinion on the use of mustard gas in Aleppo for four months while it took the organization very little time to come to a conclusion on the Khan Shaykhun incident.

"Four months later, the OPCW is still unable to deliver an opinion and recognize that the mustard gas found in Aleppo was really mustard gas, citing the need for additional research. However, as for Khan Shaykhun, everything become clear immediately to Mr. Uzumcu," Konashenkov said.

He pointed out that in late 2016, Russian experts recorded a mustard gas attack carried out by militants in Aleppo. "Russian experts went to the scene and collected samples of the poisonous substance, which were later handed over to the OPCW. At the time, the Syrian authorities insisted the OPCW experts should visit the country and expressed readiness to ensure their security but no one came," the Russian General noted.

#### Khan Khaykhun attack

The alleged chemical weapons incident in the town of Khan Shaykhun, the Idlib Governorate, occurred on April 4. According to the Russian Defense Ministry, on that day the Syrian air force delivered airstrikes on several militant facilities where munitions filled with poisonous substances were being made. However, Washington came to the conclusion that Damascus had used chemical weapons which led the US to carry out a missile attack on the Syrian military's Shayrat air base located in the Homs Governorate on April 7, as the US believes that the attack on Khan Shaykhun was launched from there.

<http://tass.com/world/942326>

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TASS (Russia)

#### **Russian expert urges to tighten security at civilian nuclear facilities**

20 April 2017

Viatcheslav Kantor, the President of the International Luxembourg Forum on Preventing Nuclear Catastrophe, has called on all countries to tighten security at civilian nuclear facilities, which can be a target for terrorists.

"The emergence on the global arena of the factor of Islamic State (a terrorist organization outlawed in Russia) with its huge organizational and financial possibilities creates a threat to civilian nuclear facilities," he said at a news conference on Thursday. "As was established by investigators, participants in the terror attack on Belgian metro and an airport in March 2016 had plotted a terrorist attack on a nuclear plant. These developments drew attention to protection of such facilities, which will continue to be a potential target for terrorists."

"Specialists say that terrorists might be seeking to steal warheads from such countries as North Korea, which may lack technically sophisticated protection against such scenarios," Kantor said. "There is evidence of supplies of nuclear components and materials from that country, in particular, low-enriched uranium which can be enriched to a warhead for a nuclear bomb."

He drew attention to the threat of possible "use of radioactive materials by terrorists to contaminate territories." "It requires enhanced attention to control over production, use and disposal of radioactive sources," he said.

He stressed that Russia has cardinaly improved its standards and rules regulating the procedure of handling radioactive sources.

Luxembourg Forum

Set up at the International Conference on Preventing Nuclear Catastrophe in May 2007, the International Luxembourg Forum on Preventing Nuclear Catastrophe is one of the most reputable non-governmental organizations comprising leading global non-proliferation experts. Its Advisory Council includes 49 most authoritative and world-acclaimed experts from 14 countries.

The forum sees its mission in analyzing threats related to the proliferation of nuclear weapons, facilitating further reduction of nuclear arsenals, strengthening nuclear non-proliferation, counteracting nuclear terrorism and preventing attempts by unstable regimes and terrorist organizations to gain access to nuclear weapons and technologies, as well as issuing recommendations on settling regional nuclear crises.

<http://tass.com/politics/942390>

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Indian Strategic Studies (India)

## India's Nuclear Strategy

By Dr. Vipin Narang

16 April 2017

There has been no change in the declaratory Indian nuclear doctrine, and there will not be any foreseeable change in it. However, Indian nuclear strategy may evolve and there are hints at a very important potential evolution in Shivshankar Menon's book, *Choices: Inside the making of India's Foreign Policy*, which are illustrated in some key paragraphs under the chapter on 'No first Use'. What is important to understand is that there is a very important distinction between a declaratory doctrine and nuclear strategy. Strategy is about the employment of a doctrine and there are a lot of strategies in use currently that are consistent with India's declaratory nuclear doctrine.

The declaratory doctrine has its roots in the 1999 draft which is a meandering, very long set of ideas. It is the only actual fleshing out of what India's declaratory doctrine might have looked like. The official release in January 2003, however, comprised of only eight bullet points; the much detailed official doctrine being classified. The declaratory doctrine has several key pillars, the primary pillar being the no first use (NFU) clause.

Under the NFU clause, India declares that it will not be the first to use nuclear weapons in a conflict. There is also a "no use against non-nuclear weapons state" clause. However, the NFU pillar is already qualified in the official doctrine, which also mentions a potential nuclear retaliation against chemical or biological weapons. Thus, in the event of the use of chemical or biological weapons by an adversary, India reserves the right to retaliate with nuclear weapons.

The other key doctrinal pillar is associated with the idea of 'massive retaliation'. While the draft doctrine used the phrase "punitive retaliation," the official doctrine frames it as "nuclear retaliation to a first strike will be massive and designed to inflict unacceptable damage." It has long been presumed that this phrase meant counter-value targeting. India did not have the necessary forces or the accuracy to do anything but counter-value targeting. And in any case, India is trying to deter nuclear use against it. It doesn't need nuclear weapons to deter a conventional attack against it, like Pakistan does. In this scenario, therefore, India's massive retaliation, counter-value strategy made a lot of sense.

However, the evolution of the South Asian security dynamic effectively neutralised India's mainstay conventional doctrine, also known as the Sundarji Doctrine. The events leading up to Operation Parakram forced a rethink of India's conventional options to a more usable form that could enable India to retaliate against perceived Pakistani provocations. The usable option, which eventually took the shape of the 'Cold Start' doctrine, formed a part of the action-reaction cycle, in which, as a response, Pakistan took to developing tactical nuclear weapons (TNWs). While the development of TNWs by Pakistan may not necessarily have been triggered by Cold Start, the doctrine did add fuel to the fire. The myth of Cold Start was even worse for India because while there was no real development of a more usable option on India's side, the doctrine was used by Pakistan to justify the development of TNWs.

The development of TNWs created a new dilemma for Indian nuclear strategists. The threat to retaliate massively in the event of a demonstration shot by Pakistan on its own soil, on Indian forces or on logistics or bridgeheads behind it, created credibility problems for India's strategy. This basically left India with three options - of which one was an option of no-response. The second option, which probably developed in the late 2000s, was the idea of a tit-for-tat or proportional or a tit-for-tat-plus retaliation, where India would still respond through a counter-value strike but



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against a military base or perhaps smaller population centres. While the advantage of this strategy is credibility, the significant disadvantage is that India would then give the nuclear initiative back to Pakistan, exposing its own cities and strategic centres to Pakistani strategic retaliation. The third option in theory is counter-force, where India moves to eliminate Pakistan's strategic nuclear forces and removes the nuclear overhang. This was thought to be an impossible option for India because of the strategy's destabilising effect and also the fact that it would require a massive build-up of arms and forces, which is a difficult option for regional powers with limited resources.

One of the corollaries associated with a counter-force strategy is whether a country can afford to go second with such a strategy. Counter-force has always been associated with pre-emptive use. The counter-value strategy on the other hand gives more space for a relaxed and absolute NFU policy. With counter-force, however, it becomes imperative to go first.

In India's case, the real change in thinking has been on the grounds of this shift in strategy, which is made evident in Menon's book. In one of his operative paragraphs, Menon uses the term "comprehensive first strike" against Pakistan. Comprehensive first strike in nuclear vocabulary means strategic counter-force. The natural corollary for that is an exemption for pre-emptive use. The statements made by Indian officials over the years, including Manohar Parrikar, BS Nagal and Shivshankar Menon, indicate that there has been at least some thinking at the highest levels of the Indian nuclear strategic community that pre-emption is consistent with NFU. Nagal talks about pre-emption as one of the four options within his recommended strategy of ambiguity. Pre-emption is in fact the operative concept in his strategy. Menon, in his book, has very clearly identified an area where the declared doctrine would not constrain India in declaring a pre-emptive strike.

Menon's chapter on NFU is probably the most authoritative writing on the issue that has emerged since India tested nuclear weapons in 1998. It is still not known as to how far India got in moving towards strategic counter-force, or if this is just wishful thinking on Menon's part. But, there is some evidence on the capability side that is suggestive of this shift. The development of MIRVs and BMD that have assured retaliatory logic, operative towards China, can also be used for a counter-force strike against Pakistan. This can be used as tantalising evidence of a decoupling of strategies against China and Pakistan. These are still however unconfirmed theories.

In terms of the implications, the primary question that arises is if India can do this. For India, disarming Pakistan's sea-based leg will be far easier than eliminating its land-based strategic forces. The other question is if it is a good idea. A counter-force strategy is destabilising because of the inherent first strike instability, and therefore these elements need to be debated. While the doctrine is not expected to undergo any change, there has been authoritative thinking on the issue which cannot be easily discounted.

There are some elements in India's nuclear doctrine that lack credibility in important quarters, specifically the doctrinal threat of 'massive retaliation'. According to conventional understanding in India, the unfolding of any nuclear crisis between India and Pakistan follows a very short and reassuring narrative. This includes: a terror attack from Pakistan, Indian conventional retaliation featuring perhaps a 'Cold Start' offensive strike that makes rapid headway into Pakistani territory, Pakistan evaluating its declared option of a TNW demonstration strike on Indian military spearheads, and then being deterred by India's doctrinal commitment of massive retaliation. In the worst case scenario, in the event of TNW use by Pakistan, India retaliates by taking out a couple of Pakistani cities, after which Pakistan folds. The discussion however fails to go beyond this. Pakistan, as per the Indian narrative, is just cultivating irrationality. In the Indian narrative, Pakistani



restraint would remain in play despite huge territorial losses, large-scale destruction of its war-fighting machinery and the discrediting of the Pakistan military.

The Pakistani version is unsurprisingly a different narrative that includes: Pakistani terror attack (of course, denied), Indian conventional retaliation across the India-Pakistan border, Pakistan blocking the cold strike with its sectoral and strategic reserves without crossing the conventional threshold. In the event of Pakistani failure to halt Indian troops with conventional forces, the use of a single demonstration TNW strike in an area where damage could be limited both in terms of the civilian infrastructure and people as well as Indian forces to prevent causing undue provocation. The cautiousness of Indian decision-makers enhanced by international pressure at that stage and coupled with the moral aspect of counter-value retaliation would force India to forego that option.

Therefore, the threat of “massive counter-value retaliation” is not a credible doctrine for India against Pakistan. Menon’s interpretation however offers a different narrative. Menon provides more usable options to Indian planners in the form of comprehensive counter-force strikes; even first strikes, in a situation where the adversary’s use of nuclear weapons appears inevitable.

The crucial question however is whether India has the wherewithal, the information systems, or the capabilities to actually execute a comprehensive counter-force strike against Pakistan. The short answer to this would be ‘no’, the accurate answer would be ‘not yet’.

India’s doctrine and strategy have always been ahead of capability in both the conventional and strategic realms. But India is also playing catch up slowly. To turn Menon’s proposed strategy of comprehensive counterforce strikes into executable capabilities will take more time. With Pakistan racing to put in place a nuclear triad, the possibility of a disarming first strike is receding, made more difficult by the diversification of Pakistan’s delivery means that include the MIRV trials, proliferation of TNW launchers, the Babur ground launch cruise missile, and the Ra’ad air launch cruise missile. Due to this increase in nuclear delivery platforms, taking out strategic ground launch platforms will still leave India open to a potential third strike.

Given that many Pakistani nuclear strike assets are located in the vicinity of major towns, there is difficulty in differentiating between counter-force and counter-value strikes, with one containing elements of the other. India’s ISR capabilities, missile accuracy, MIRV capability and anti-ballistic missile (ABM) capabilities are picking up. But even so, India still lacks the capability to undertake a “splendid first strike” that disarms Pakistan completely. However, Pakistan’s second and third strike capabilities would be seriously eroded if an India strike were complemented by US and Israeli capabilities. As of now, this would be a pre-requisite for any viable first strike against Pakistan.

Even so, there is still merit in choosing an option of a disarming first strike against Pakistan over the option of a massive counter-value strike. Even an unsuccessful and incomplete counter-force strike would reduce the number of warheads being fired at India in the inevitable third strike, and at least some of these would be neutralised by India’s growing ABM capability.

While all of this could be debated, with valid arguments to be made from both sides, Shivshankar Menon should be given credit for enriching the moribund debate on India’s nuclear strategy by presenting a number of additional workable options. What is significant about Menon’s book is that his words reflect upon a potential marriage of the NFU doctrine with a pre-emptive counter-force strategy, such that the latter appears to be consistent with the doctrine.





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Menon's new strategy represents the first indications of a remarkable shift in thinking amongst policy-makers at the highest level.

<http://strategicstudyindia.blogspot.com/2017/04/pcs-discussion-indias-nuclear-strategy.html>

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National (Pakistan)

#### **Pakistan doesn't want nuclear parity with India: Ambassador Zamir Akram**

20 April 2017

Pakistan is not seeking to achieve parity with India in terms of nuclear weapons, but is rather pursuing Full Spectrum Deterrence doctrine to ensure that there are no gaps in its deterrence capability.

This was stated by Pakistan's former envoy to United Nations in Geneva Ambassador Zamir Akram.

He was speaking at a seminar organized by Strategic Vision Institute on 'South Asian Nuclear Doctrines: Deterrence Equilibrium and Strategic Stability'. The seminar coincided with the anniversary celebrations of the Islamabad based think-tank that specializes in issues related to strategic stability.

Zamir Akram noted that threats were growing in the region due to large scale acquisition of military hardware by India, its public rejection of the policy of No-First Use of nuclear weapons, determination to carry out disarming strikes against Pakistan, and its espousal of dangerous and destabilizing doctrines like the Cold Start Doctrine.

"This has required us to move towards Full Spectrum Deterrence for responding to threats at the tactical level, the counter-force level, and the counter-value level. We need to cover all levels of threat."

He said that strategic stability in South Asia was not just about Pakistan and India and instead involved China and US.

This complicated equation was causing its destabilization, which has been further "accentuated by developments outside the nuclear realm that is developments in Occupied Kashmir. And use of terrorism by India through proxies based in Afghanistan," he said.

Referring to a recent statement by Massachusetts Institute of Technology scholar Vipin Narang and assertions by former Indian National Security Adviser Shiv Shankar Menon in his book suggesting that India could shed its No-First Use doctrine and carry out disarming pre-emptive strikes against Pakistan, the former envoy said this did not come as a surprise because Pakistani security quarters never believed in an Indian declaratory statement of No-First Use, which could not be verified.

He observed these indications, nevertheless, pointed to Indian efforts to build capacity to carry out the disarming strikes.

Dr Zafar Nawaz Jaspal, who teaches at Quaid-e-Azam University, in his presentation noted that both Pakistan and India lacked the "proficiency in decapitation capability".

He said he was cautiously optimistic about deterrence stability continuing because both countries are aware of the colossal cost of its failure. However, war-mongering by Indian Prime Minister

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Narendra Modi, arms race and non-state actors were constraining the deterrence stability, he added.

SVI President Dr Zafar Iqbal Cheema was hopeful that India would stay away from contemplating disarming strikes against Pakistan.

“A successful disarming, decapitating or pre-emptive strike against adversary possessing credible nuclear weapons capability is considered an impossibility as a rational decision,” he maintained hoping that India would act as “a rational actor and would not undertake this dangerous exercise of launching a pre-emptive strike.”

He said there was no precedent of even a failed pre-emptive strike against a nuclear state and even in South Asia the concept had long been laid to rest.

India, he recalled, had in 1980s considered conventional military doctrine of pre-emption against Pakistan’s nuclear infrastructure, but had to abandon its plans.

Dr Cheema said nuclear warheads cannot be attacked with assured certainty because they are kept dispersed and under well planned camouflage.

“Survivability of even few nuclear weapons for retaliatory purposes could wreak havoc,” he warned.

<http://aaj.tv/2017/04/pakistan-doesnt-want-nuclear-parity-with-india-ambassador-zamir-akram/>

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Security Wise

## **McMastering Islamabad**

18 April 2017

Not a fortnight back India’s National Security Adviser Ajit Doval betook himself to Washington and there in his meeting with his US counterpart he squawked and he complained against, what else, Pakistani-sponsored terrorism in India. Yesterday, Lt Gen HR McMaster, Trump’s NSA made an unannounced trip to Islamabad. So it was the case in the one instance of Muhammad going to the Mountain and, in the other, of the Mountain coming to Muhammad!

Did McMaster at all talk sense to the Pakistani COAS Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa or Prime Minister Nawaz on the Kashmir-directed terrorism emanating from ISI quarters, or alert them to Delhi’s long standing grievance? It’d appear not, because all McMaster said was that he “had hoped for many, many years that the Pakistani leaders will understand that it is in their interest to go after these groups less selectively than they have in the past and the best way to pursue their interest in Afghanistan and elsewhere is through diplomacy not through the use of proxies that engage in violence.”

Had this statement been confined to the first part of it, namely, “that the Pakistani leaders will understand that it is in their interest to go after these groups less selectively than they have in the past”, then Narendra Modi’s BJP regime, which seems to have made leaning on the US its foreign and security policy calling card, could have taken heart. After all McMaster would have been seen as buying into Delhi’s argument about Pakistan’s complicity. Instead, as the US NSA and his team made clear, Washington is desperately keen that the Pakistan Army not roil the Afghan scene by silking the terrorist Haqqani Network elements who enjoy safe haven on the Pak side of the



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Durand Line, and by implication, that it doesn't give a damn whether GHQ, Rawalpindi, reins in terrorist gangs such as the Lashkar-e-Tayyaba and Jaish-e-Mohammad active in J&K, or not.

McMaster's lightning visit also suggests that the Trump Administration understands well that the use of massive fuel air explosives to decimate Daesh (Islamic State) concentrations, will not do the trick. And hence that the frontline role of Pakistan is critical to a defeated US doing the obvious thing — declaring victory and getting the hell out!

In the event, there seems to be no end to lesson that Delhi is simply unwilling to learn! So, the class of Modi, Doval, Sushma Swaraj, Foreign Office, et al, sit you down, and repeat after me:

NO, the US is NOT in South Asia to support and advance India's national interest.

NO, NO, the US is NOT in the least keen about stamping out terrorism at-large, leave alone terrorists discomfiting India, only terrorists directly threatening the US and its interests.

NO, NO,NO you can't cut a mutually beneficial deal with President Donald J Trump — as the Indian PM expects to when he visits the US this year, unless the benefit tilts overly to the American side.

And NO, NO, NO, NO, umrika bahadur will NOT save India's goose in any circumstances, and CANNOT be relied on to do anything other than work to bolster its own national interest at all times.

And, YES, India will have to further its own interests by itself, by whatever means and whatever it takes.

When the diplomatic geography is so little appreciated and basic precepts of international relations are ill-understood by the Indian leadership and, institutionally, by the Government of India, it is hardly to be wondered that India gets it in the neck all the time.

<https://bharatkarnad.com/2017/04/18/mcmastering-in-islamabad/>

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Islamic Republic News Agency (Iran)

#### **Rouhani: JCPOA relieved nation of problems**

20 April 2017

Addressing inaugural ceremony of 400 developmental and economic projects via videoconference, he said, 'Our financial transactions with the world was such that transferring or receiving money had been charging us 11 percent in charges while the figure has declined to three percent today.'

Referring to multiple achievements of the 2015 nuclear deal, the top executive said, 'JCPOA saved us. One of its impacts is breaking down siege on Iran.'

'Today, we sell oil to whoever we want and for any currency we wish,' he said, hailing the achievements of the landmark deal reached between Iran and six world major powers in 2015.

Pointing to the industrial development in South Pars, Rouhani said that the biggest ever investment in the history of Iran's history was made in this facility, as six phases have already been inaugurated and this is unprecedented.

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Prior to the implementation of JCPOA, the bread in people's tablecloth used to come from abroad, but today, all wheat needed is produced domestically and three million tons are being exported, he said.

'Our people created a great epic in 2013,' he said, referring to presidential election which brought him to office.

'If the government failed to put the economy back on its rail, six major world powers did not sit for talks with us,' the president said making a reference to the prolonged nuclear negotiations which led to the landmark 2015 international pact.

Describing public confidence as his administration's biggest asset, Rouhani said that if the government has managed to do something, it was in the wake of public confidence.

The people believe in the government which will leave behind all the problems with this asset, he said.

The government lowered inflation rate from 45 percent to 15 percent and it was through the unity between the government and nation that non-oil exports overtook imports for the first time during the past 62 years, he said.

He also hailed agriculture development projects inaugurated in Shiraz, saying that agriculture has been revolutionized in the country in recent years and it will push the country towards self-sufficiency.

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/82500226/>

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Tehran Times (Iran)

## **Murphy refutes idea Trump acted recklessly to alleged gas attack in Syria**

By Hossein Amiri

17 April 2017

"Photographs of civilians dead or dying from poison gases used in that attack were widely available within hours. So the President's reaction was not that 'fast'," Murphy tells the Tehran Times.

Iran along with Russia have proposed an independent fact-finding committee to investigate chemical weapons attack.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has said there is evidence that militants were preparing future chemical attacks in order to draw U.S. into Syria's six-year war.

"While I am not a party to the current efficiency of American intelligence, it is my understanding that U.S. surveillance assets closely tracked the Syrian Air Force aircraft involved in the attack, which came from the Shyrat air base near Homs against targets in Idlib province," Murphy argues.

Russia's Defense Ministry released a series of tweets in both Russian and English on its official social media account, saying Syrian militants were transporting "toxic substances" to insurgent-held areas of the war-torn Syria in order to convince the U.S. to step up its efforts to remove Syrian President Bashar al-Assad from power.

In a joint press conference with his Iranian and Syrian counterparts in Moscow Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said the U.S. and its allies are attempting to stymie an international probe into the gas attack. He expressed strong skepticism about a preliminary investigation conducted by



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the UN chemical weapons watchdog, saying that its experts have failed to visit the site and it has remained unclear where the samples have been taken and how they have been analyzed.

"If our U.S. colleagues and some European nations believe that their version is right, they have no reason to fear the creation of such an independent group," Lavrov added.

Trump changing from 'America first' to 'world first'

Back to Aug. 29, 2013 Trump tweeted that the U.S. would get "more debt and possible long-term conflict" if it attacks Syria and said Barack Obama needs congressional approval to attack the country. However when the Tehran Times asked Murphy why Trump himself did not seek the permission of Congress, he said, "What has changed is that Trump is now the American president. He reacted with deep emotion to the reports he was receiving of the deaths of Syrian civilians from the poison gas attacks."

He added, "Voices from the U.S. Congress demanding that the administration seek congressional approval of deeper U.S. involvement in the Syrian civil war are being heard. How the president will answer those demands is as yet unclear."

Some analysts have said the U.S. strike on April 7 on Syria's Shayrat airbase, from which the U.S. claims jet fighters were used to drop chemical weapon on Khan Sheikhoun, is an end to Trump's honeymoon with Putin. On the other side, some say the strike could lessen pressure on Trump whose aides were in contact with the Russian government during the presidential campaign.

When asked about such comments, Murphy said, "I think his authorizing the attack may have reassured some Americans that he has not committed himself and America to an unquestioning friendship with Putin. But I do not believe that explains why he reacted as he did in authorizing the U.S. missile attacks on Shyrat."

The former U.S. ambassador also justifies the U.S. attack on Iraq in 2003 under the pretext that Saddam Hussein had hidden weapons of mass destruction.

"To this day many of those involved in authorizing the invasion of Iraq in 2003 remain convinced that there was sufficient cause to do so. The "evidence" to which they referred was ambiguous. Also, Saddam Hussein had deliberately preserved ambiguities in his statements about Iraqi efforts to develop a nuclear bomb," Murphy said.

However Murphy sympathized with the Syrians who have been suffering greatly since the war started in the country in late 2011.

"My understanding of Syrian thinking is derived from Syria's refugees. As an admirer of the Syrian people from my days as US consul in Aleppo in the 1960s and as ambassador in the 1970s I am saddened by the humanitarian catastrophe which has overwhelmed their country."

<http://www.tehrantimes.com/news/412668/Murphy-refutes-idea-Trump-acted-recklessly-to-alleged-gas-attack>

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RT (Russia)

## US, Aussie advisers caught in ISIS chemical attack against Iraqi troops in Mosul

19 April 2017

The Iraqi unit targeted on Sunday in a chemical weapons attack in Mosul was hosting embedded foreign military specialists, according to officials and media reports. American and Australian troops were unharmed by the toxic agent used by Islamic State.

The attack in western Mosul was the second in two days. According to CBS News, 25 people required medical treatment in the aftermath, which is significantly larger than the figure voiced earlier by Iraqi officials. Earlier reports said six soldiers were sent to a field hospital after having breathing problems.

Australian military advisers were involved in the attack by Islamic State (IS, formerly ISIS/ISIL), the country's Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull confirmed on Wednesday.

"My advice right at the moment is that no Australian troops were affected by the chemical attack," he told ABC radio.

"Australian troops, Australian forces, did provide assistance following the attack. That's my current advice received in last few minutes."

The Australian Defense Ministry called the attack "failed" and said it highlighted IS's "desperation as Iraqi ground forces continue operations to liberate Mosul."

The Pentagon released a similarly dismissive statement, labeling IS chemical weapons "rudimentary" and largely ineffective.

No official identification of the agent used in the attack was released so far, but according to the CBS report it was mustard gas.

The operation to retake Mosul, Iraq's second-largest city, is currently in its seventh month. While Iraqi troops and their allies vastly outnumber IS fighters, the progress has been slow as terrorist use car bombs and urban guerrilla tactics to harass and deter the attackers.

Mosul residents have been caught in the crossfire of the operation, with thousands reportedly killed and hundreds of thousands fleeing the city.

<https://www.rt.com/news/385262-mosul-chemical-australian-troops/>

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The Conversation (Australia)

## What we know about the April 4 chemical attack in Syria

11 April 2017

The April 4, 2017 chemical attack on the rebel-held town of Khan Sheikhoun in Syria led to at least 70 deaths and more than 100 people requiring medical attention, prompting an outcry from the international community. It led to the April 7 US bombing of the Shayrat air base.

It is alleged that sarin was used in the Khan Sheikhoun attack. This particular chemical became famous in 1995 with the Tokyo subway attack, launched by members of the cult movement Aum Shinrikyo.

Was it sarin?



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Sarin is an organophosphorus compound and was first synthesised in 1938 in Germany as part of a pesticide research program.

Sarin is a moderately volatile substance – that is, it readily forms a gas – which can be taken up by inhalation or skin contact. It is an inhibitor of the enzyme acetylcholinesterase, which is critical in regulating nerve function.

When exposed to a low dose of a nerve agent such as sarin, people experience increased production of saliva, a running nose and a feeling of pressure on the chest. The pupils of the eye becomes contracted, so-called “pin-point” pupils.

Pin point pupils, which have been recorded in video footage of the Khan Sheikhoun attack, are a characteristic consequence of acetylcholinesterase inhibitors like sarin. This clinical sign is quite different from the irritating effects of chlorine and mustard gas.

Medium to higher dose exposure to sarin and other nerve agents can result in difficulty in breathing and coughing, abdominal cramps and vomiting, and sometimes involuntary discharge of urine and faeces. Increased saliva production, running eyes and sweating may occur, as well as muscular weakness, tremors or convulsions. Loss of consciousness, and death due to respiratory failure may be seen at higher doses.

Survivors of the Tokyo subway sarin attack recovered reasonably well but experienced some clinically detectable neurological effects, and some evidence of brain changes.

Although sarin use is suspected in Khan Sheikhoun, there are many organophosphorus insecticides that would exert the same effect (in sufficient quantity). It is possible that an organophosphate pesticide or a simple organophosphate (not normally classified as a chemical weapon) was used in this attack.

The production of sarin requires special facilities and is expensive, perhaps running into the tens of millions of dollars. Similar chemicals, such as tabun, are less expensive to make.

Will we ever know what was used?

In order to establish the identity of the substances used in Khan Sheikhoun, a combination of information needs to be gathered and assessed. In particular the results of chemical tests on wipe samples, soil and clothing samples must be determined and verified.

The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Fact Finding Team would be the most authoritative source to reveal the nature of the chemical(s) used, and we will await their report. However, in the past these reports have been inconclusive owing to the time taken to gather chemical samples, limits of detection, specificity and the presence of mixtures.

The conflict in Syria involves the government military forces, the rebels, ISIS and the Kurds. It is sometimes hard to know where the chemicals might be coming from (for example, from neighbouring countries), or whether they have been produced or sourced locally.

Local history of chemical attacks

This experience in Syria may lead to improved medical responses in the case of future attacks. But in the absence of detailed knowledge of the substances involved, the treatment of casualties is unlikely to be optimal.



With so many individual chemical substances, and improvised mixtures, only generic decontamination and treatment procedures can be used. However, it may be feasible to have chemical specialists attached to hospitals collecting and storing specimens for subsequent analysis.

Sadly, the use of chemicals in Khan Sheikhoun is not an isolated incident. After all, a recent report of the OPCW Fact Finding Mission for the period December 2015 to November 20, 2016, recorded 65 potential incidents of the use of chemical weapons reported in open sources.

The use of chemical weapons has a long history in the region. On March 16, 1988, Iraq dropped bombs containing multiple toxic chemicals on the Kurdish city of Halabja, killing thousands.

<https://theconversation.com/what-we-know-about-the-april-4-chemical-attack-in-syria-76012>

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War on the Rocks

## **It Didn't Have To Be This Way: Finding Leverage In Syria**

By Aaron Stein

12 April 2017

The execution of Assad's April 4 chemical weapons attack was a textbook use of these weapons. This suggests that the decision to use them was military in nature, not a complicated exercise in signaling to the outside world. Reported Russian military activity in the area clearly implicates Moscow as one of two things: either an impotent and clueless backer of the Syria regime, incapable of monitoring the activities of an air force it is co-located with, or party to a war crime

At President Donald Trump's order, a barrage of cruise missiles collided with the Syrian air base that was purportedly the source of the chemical attack on Khan Sheikhoun. This use of force has been widely praised and hailed as a potential turning point in the Syrian conflict. However, the use of limited cruise missile strikes to change state behavior has a poor historical track record. It is too early to tell if the strikes will contribute to the immediate goal of deterring future chemical weapon use in Syria or even a second goal now articulated by some members of the Trump administration: forcing Russia to reevaluate its support for Bashar al Assad.

Diplomacy is needed now, as ever, to end the Syrian civil war, but the same obstacles remain. The anti-Assad opposition is divided and, in some areas such as Idlib, sustained with support from an al-Qaeda affiliate. Iran and Russia remain committed to Assad's preservation. Turkey is working at a cross purpose with the United States over how best to fight Islamic State, and is threatening to use force to attack Washington's preferred ground partner, the Kurdish-dominated Syria Democratic Forces. A cruise missile attack does not change these dynamics. In fact, this choice may have been a missed opportunity for the Trump administration.

The rush to use force has deprived the United States of leverage over Russia, an adversary working at against American interests around the globe. The key challenge, as pointed out by Michael Kofman yesterday, is to figure out exactly what U.S. policy is, then figure out how to build leverage against Russia and Syria towards that policy aim. The cacophony of conflicting policy statements from Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and U.N. Ambassador Nikki Halley has made it hard to discern if the administration is moving toward an overt policy of regime change. However, in Trump's letter to Speaker Paul Ryan on the attack he laid out narrow goals:

I directed this action in order to degrade the Syrian military's ability to conduct further chemical weapons attacks and to dissuade the Syrian regime from using or proliferating chemical weapons...





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Below, I offer an approach that can serve that narrower aim while also gaining multilateral support to punish those who enable the Syrian military's devastating campaign.

#### **How We Got Here**

America's use of military force now allows Russia to shift the focus from its own culpability in mass atrocities to Washington's disregard for international norms. In 2013, Russia guaranteed Syria's decision to agree to dismantle its chemical weapons program. Syria joined the Chemical Weapons Convention in 2013, following its brutal use of chemical weapons Ghouta, a densely-populated Damascus suburb. The Sarin attack killed 1,500 people in the deadliest chemical weapons attack since the Chemical Weapons Convention opened for signature in 1993. The attack violated former President Barack Obama's stated "red line" for the use of military force, leading the Pentagon to prepare a target list for airstrikes far in excess of last week's strike. Donald Trump also called for restraint in the wake of the attack, tweeting on multiple occasions his aversion to military force. During the campaign, he was more overt in his preference when signaled possible collaboration with the Assad regime, saying, "I don't like Assad at all, but Assad is killing ISIS, Russia is killing ISIS and Iran is killing [Islamic State]."

Falling short of regime change, the purported aim was to reinforce the norm against the use of chemical weapons by "detering and degrading" the regime's ability to use chemical weapons. This would, in turn, reinforce the global norm against the use of weapons of mass destruction. Like the 2003 invasion of Iraq, this outcome would link norm enforcement to near unilateral U.S. military action, and would be conducted without widespread international support.

Eventually, Obama chose not to strike the Syrian regime. Instead, the Obama administration worked with Russia on a deal for Syria to become a member of the Chemical Weapons Convention. In doing so, the president sought to use international institutions to achieve the policy goal underpinning his red line: the elimination and removal of Syria's chemical weapons.

After Syria formally acceded to the convention in October 2013, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the implementing body of the Chemical Weapons Convention, began to destroy Syria's chemical weapons. From the outset, the process was plagued with uncertainty, but it was officially completed by June 2014. Following implementation, the OPCW put in place a secondary mechanism to monitor Syrian compliance. Known as the Fact-Finding Mission, the body was asked "to establish facts surrounding allegations of the use of toxic chemicals, reportedly chlorine, for hostile purposes" in Syria. In turn, the mission's work led to a joint United Nations-OPCW body — dubbed the Joint Investigative Mechanism — to identify the perpetrators of attacks documented by the mission. The United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution in support of the Joint Investigative Mechanism in 2015, extending the mandate again in 2016.

#### **Applying the Chemical Lessons of Iraq and Libya**

The destruction of Syria's chemical weapons relied on Assad making a declaration of chemical precursors (the component chemicals that when mixed create weapons) and associated infrastructure to manufacture precursors or the munitions. To verify the declarations, Assad's list was measured against intelligence assessments from the major Western powers and Russia. It is now clear that Assad's list was incomplete. His failure to declare Syria's full stockpile mirrors similar incidents in Libya following the overthrow of Muammar Gaddafi. In that case, the Libyan National Transitional Council declared two additional storage facilities and sulfur mustard precursors in artillery shells and badly degraded storage containers. Gaddafi, like Assad, held these

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weapons back and did not declare them. In Iraq, after the United States overthrew Saddam Hussein, U.S. soldiers were exposed to unaccounted for and undeclared chemical weapons during the destruction of Iraqi ordnance. The Iraqi chemical weapons were all leftovers from the Hussein regime's 1980s-era program that the regime appears to have lost track of after the 1991 Gulf War.

The Libya and Iraq examples are useful for thinking about how to employ existing tools to increase pressure on Russia, a worthwhile strategy for American foreign policy, and then to translate that pressure into achievable solutions in Syria. In the Libya and Iraq cases, military force helped overthrow regimes that maintained a severely degraded chemical weapons capability. Both the Iraqi and Libyan regimes were serial human rights abusers presiding over authoritarian states with few natural allies. Syria is now in a similar position, wherein the government clearly retains the capability to use chemical weapons, albeit on a lesser scale than in 2012. Yet, there is a clear difference: The Assad regime's survival is guaranteed by Iran and Russia. Given Iran's position as the largest victim of chemical weapons use in the world and Russia's role as a great power, Assad's use of chemical weapons should be used to impose costs on policies that contribute to the use of those weapons.

### Holding Syria and its Backers to Account

Russia was instrumental in securing the original chemical weapons agreement that ultimately ended with Syria becoming a member of the convention. In doing so, Syria is obligated to:

... never under any circumstances: (a) To develop, produce, otherwise acquire, stockpile or retain chemical weapons, or transfer, directly or indirectly, chemical weapons to anyone; (b) To use chemical weapons; (c) To engage in any military preparations to use chemical weapons.

Assad flagrantly violated these obligations. In the event of suspected noncompliance, a state party can call on the OPCW to inspect the territory of another signatory. As a party to the convention, Syria is obligated to grant the OPCW access. To facilitate this arrangement, the Syrian regime, Russia, and the insurgents in the area would have to agree to a ceasefire to allow for independent inspections that allows the OPCW to make a determinative judgement about the perpetrator of the attack. This would be a departure from the approach taken to Ghoutta in 2013. If Syria resists, it would be in further violation of its convention obligations. Russia, too, would be undermining an international norm that it purports to support, and indirectly confirming regime culpability. As a means to coerce compliance, the United States and its Western allies have the option to prepare sanctions against the Syrian military and, more importantly, the Russian entities responsible for providing spare parts to chemical weapons capable delivery vehicles. A sanctions-based strategy would require sustained diplomacy on the part of the United States and its European allies, but it would have the benefit of increasing the economic pain on Russia at a time when its economy is doing poorly and corruption is more salient in Russian domestic politics.

The aforementioned options rely on the international norms and enforcement mechanisms that Syria agreed to in 2013, while also building a case for sanctions against the key enabler of Assad's chemical weapons delivery vehicles: Russia. It would have also served as a key piece of leverage with members of the European Union, many of whom are wary of using sanctions against Russia. Absent a credible international investigation, the western response is likely to fragment, weakening broad-based support for a U.S.-led effort to impose costs on Russia for its support of Assad. At the very least, this process should have been set in motion before Tillerson travelled to Italy for his meeting with the G-7, and in preparation for the next meeting with the leaders of the European Union in June 2017. In this sense, the strikes staked out a maximalist response before the marshaling of a coalition that, with the right combination of incentives and pressure, could have considered increasing pressure on Russia.



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In Moscow this week, Tillerson should consider taking a very hard line and call for an inspection on terms that deprive Russia of its veto at the U.N. Security Council. In doing so, he should ignore Russian calls for a hollow and toothless inspection effort that will not assign blame for the chemical weapons attack. This task, however, will be difficult after the strikes. Contrary to what many administrations supporters seem to think, the United States lacks a credible military threat to compel a change in the current Russian approach. The United States will not target Russian military assets and has signaled that it does not intend to augment its military presence on the ground. This policy rightly assumes that a broader confrontation with Russia over Syria is not in America's best interest.

Sanctions on Russian entities could help to give the United States leverage to achieve its two articulated goals: the deterrence of future chemical weapons attacks and punishing support of an actor that uses chemical weapons. Washington should seek to win European support, ideally with Brussels reciprocating and implementing its own similar sanctions against Moscow. The sanctions are unlikely to significantly alter Russia's position on Assad. Instead, the goal of the sanctions should be to compel future Russian concessions on issues of interest to the United States in future peace talks involving the regime and the opposition or, more narrowly, on a well-enforced ceasefire. The sanctions could also be tailored, allowing for some to be removed for Russian efforts to compel Assad to declare and then turn over his remaining chemical weapons for destruction.

#### Strategy by Cruise Missile

Cruise missiles are useful tools of war, but — like all weapons — they do not automatically produce political outcomes. This was true in 1998 during the four-day bombing of Iraq designed to “punish” Saddam Hussein for ending U.N. inspections and again that same year with Operation Infinite Reach, where a cruise missile strike against al-Qaeda targets in Afghanistan and Sudan was meant to deter future terror attacks. The Desert Fox strikes did not compel Saddam to comply with American demands for an intrusive inspection of Iraq's large presidential sites. The inspectors left Iraq shortly before the United States and United Kingdom began the air campaign and never returned — they were replaced with a weaker inspection regime than before the start of military action. The strike, therefore, failed to force Saddam to readmit inspections the U.S. relied on for on the ground information about the Iraqi WMD program — an outcome that contributed to the poor intelligence undergirding the ill-conceived invasion of Iraq in 2003. Clinton's cruise missile attacks on al-Qaeda did not stop the group from attacking the United States three years later on 9/11. For Syria, the outcome is still unknown, but the strike does not change the dynamics of the conflict — a goal senior U.S. officials now attach to the strike.

Cruise missiles don't give the United States any leverage, they do not degrade Russia's ability to sustain Assad's war effort, they do not account for the weapons Assad “held back,” and they do not provide a pathway to eliminate these weapons. Policymakers will have to think through how to eliminate these weapons. The threat of their proliferation and future use will not disappear — and it is long-standing U.S. policy to uphold global norms against weapons of mass destruction. Absent a strategy built around the tactic of using standoff weapons, the recent attacks may amount to little more than the destruction of supporting elements at a Syrian air base, and not much else.

<https://warontherocks.com/2017/04/it-didnt-have-to-be-this-way-finding-leverage-in-syria/>

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The Washington Post

## **The Democrats' arms-control agenda is a failure**

By Marc A. Thiessen

14 April 2017

In January, President Barack Obama's national security adviser, Susan Rice, declared: "We were able to get the Syrian government to voluntarily and verifiably give up its chemical weapons stockpile." Obama, she boasted, was able to "deal with the threat of chemical weapons by virtue of ... diplomacy" and "in a way that the use of force would never have accomplished."

Tell that to the children of Idlib, their lifeless eyes dilated from exposure to an apparent nerve agent that the Obama administration assured us the Assad regime no longer possessed.

"I'm very proud of this moment," Obama declared last year of his decision not to enforce his red line and turn instead to Russia to get him out of his pledge with a face-saving agreement for Syria to give up its chemical weapons — one we now know President Bashar al-Assad violated with impunity.

The Syrian gas attack was not just a failure of Obama's feckless foreign policy. It also was a failure of the Democrats' arms-control agenda. For decades, Democrats have placed their faith in international agreements to control the spread of dangerous weapons. But, as we have seen in recent years, pieces of parchment, not backed by credible threat of force, are powerless to restrain murderous dictators from trying to stockpile weapons of mass destruction.

It's not just Syria. As President Donald Trump ordered strikes against the Assad regime, he was meeting with China's president to discuss how to deal with another Democratic arms-control failure: the North Korean nuclear threat. On Oct. 18, 1994, President Bill Clinton boasted that while "three administrations have tried to bring this nuclear program under international control," his administration had finally succeeded in reaching a historic agreement with North Korea that would help to put an "end to the threat of nuclear proliferation on the Korean Peninsula."

Twelve years later, North Korea exploded a nuclear device. Despite Clinton's promises of intense verification, the North Koreans had — just like Assad — been cheating all along. They not only continued developing nuclear weapons but also became one of the world's most profligate proliferators of nuclear technology, helping Syria to build a suspected nuclear reactor at Deir al-Zour (that was stopped not by diplomacy, but by an Israeli military strike).

Worse, on Jan. 1, Kim Jong Un announced that his regime had "entered the final stage of preparation for a test launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile" that could one day deliver such a bomb to the United States.

Once North Korea possessed a demonstrated nuclear capability, it became increasingly difficult for subsequent administrations to roll back its nuclear program. But at least we could defend ourselves by building and deploying ballistic missile defenses to protect against a North Korean attack, right?

No, Democrats said, that would violate another sacred precept in the left's arms-control canon — the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. Democrats howled when President George W. Bush withdrew from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in 2001, allowing the United States to begin deployment of defenses against rogue regimes. Unable to prevent U.S. withdrawal, Democrats did their best to limit deployment. The Wall Street Journal reported that Obama cut funding for missile defense by about 25 percent over the course of his presidency as of 2015 and eliminated critical programs that could overcome decoy missiles by placing multiple warheads on a single interceptor and destroy incoming missiles in the boost phase when they are slowest and thus easiest to strike.

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As a result, we now face a rapidly emerging intercontinental ballistic missile threat from North Korea, but we are years behind the curve in terms of our ability to defend against it.

That's not all. If you liked the arms-control failures in Syria and North Korea, you're going to love the results of Obama's nuclear agreement with Iran. The Iran agreement is actually far worse than the nuclear framework Clinton negotiated with North Korea. While North Korea at least had to cheat to develop a nuclear bomb, Iran does not have to cheat because Obama's agreement does not require it to dismantle any of its nuclear facilities, end enrichment, end research and development on advanced centrifuges, permit snap inspections, or stop the development of intercontinental ballistic missiles. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said that, far from preventing Iran from becoming a nuclear power, the Iran deal "paves Iran's path to the bomb."

The Democratic arms-control establishment assures us that Netanyahu is wrong. Well, it also assured us that Obama's diplomacy had disarmed Syria, that Clinton's diplomacy had helped to end "the threat of nuclear proliferation on the Korean Peninsula," and that we would be safer relying on the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty and "mutually assured destruction" rather than ballistic missile defenses.

Feeling safer yet?

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-democrats-arms-control-agenda-is-a-failure/2017/04/10/512b91ae-1df6-11e7-be2a-3a1fb24d4671\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.95acc4fa46af](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-democrats-arms-control-agenda-is-a-failure/2017/04/10/512b91ae-1df6-11e7-be2a-3a1fb24d4671_story.html?utm_term=.95acc4fa46af)

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Foreign Affairs

### **There's No 'Trump Doctrine', and That's Okay**

By Noah Rothman

10 April 2017

These are confusing times to be a self-described "true believer" in Donald Trump and Trumpism. Trump's most passionate supporters might not have yet lost faith in their redeemer, but he seems to have lost faith in them.

As White House strategist Steve Bannon appears to be losing ground in his ill-conceived, public war with Trump advisor and son-in-law Jared Kushner, his position in the administration is increasingly tenuous. Evidence that Trump's chief strategist is losing his power to set presidential strategy came in the form of 59 Tomahawk missiles that struck targets in Syria last Thursday night. Bannon reportedly tried to argue against executing those strikes in defense of the norm prohibiting the use of WMD and in retaliation for the massacre of Syrian civilians. He lost that argument.

The strikes on Syria appear to have sent Trump fans who thought he would pursue a semi-isolationist foreign policy into a state of existential dread. The president's biggest boosters on the populist nationalist right are livid over this display of American military power in pursuit of recognizable and even traditional U.S. geopolitical objectives. Bannon's diminished stature and Donald Trump's embrace of interventionism in the Syrian conflict may represent a welcome pivot to political realities and away from the naïve idealism that typifies "Fortress America" advocacy, but it has also inaugurated a communications crisis inside the White House.

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The president's first 100 days in office are almost up, and the West Wing is reportedly growing panicky about the lack of tangible progress within this usually energetic period for young administrations. Even before last week's cruise-missile strikes targeting the Assad regime, the administration's confused approach to foreign affairs has caused headaches for the president's communications staffers.

"There is no Trump doctrine," said Communications Director Mike Dubke, according to Politico's Shane Goldmacher amid a meeting of officials involved in the "rebranding" of the Trump presidency. This statement of objective fact appeared to panic the "true believers" who already feel the floor beneath them buckling. "He was elected on a vision of America First," said one irritated White House official in the room. "America First is the Trump doctrine." Another official explained with palpable frustration that the president's communications team didn't understand the administration for which they worked.

This display of self-consciousness by pro-Trump nationalists is fitting. Their efforts to retrofit a compelling rationale onto whatever Trump felt like saying in the moment, often before adoring crowds that dictated the tempo and content of the president's campaign-trail speeches, was always a fraught prospect. They deserve the terror that's now gripping them. Yet, in their anxiety, Trump's "Originals" have created a set of conditions that no president should be expected to meet. Of course, there is no such thing as the "Trump doctrine." It's day 80.

A president's "foreign-policy doctrine" is a thing that becomes transcendently relevant only in hindsight. Doctrines are evolutionary. They form organically and over the course of years, often in response to very specific challenges from a unique set of threats to American national interests. Presidencies that believe they can fabricate a doctrine from whole cloth on day one usually find that their plan doesn't survive first contact with the enemy.

The Trump administration's doctrine, to the extent it exists, is to be the anti-Obama administration. The Obama administration entered office with no grander objective than not being the Bush administration. And so on. Clearly defined doctrines, like those associated with George W. Bush, Ronald Reagan, Harry Truman, and James Monroe, were formed amid defining crises. Presidents who eschew doctrine-setting like President Obama (the 44th President famously said his doctrine was "not going to be as doctrinaire" as Bush's, because blanket approaches to complex foreign-policy matters were often overly simplistic) end up having a doctrine imposed on them.

Fuming over the constant criticism of his approach to foreign affairs, by June of 2014, Obama and his aides reportedly dubbed their approach to geopolitics "don't do stupid s\*\*t." This petulant response to valid critiques—arrived at only after Russia invaded Ukraine, China inaugurated a crisis in the South China Sea, and a terrorist state the size of Great Britain burst out of the cadaverous Sykes-Picot agreement—was never a doctrine but a tantrum.

Doctrines are forward-looking and prescriptive. This is retrospective; no one can say for sure what constitutes "stupid s\*\*t" until the effects of a particular action are known. In truth, the Obama administration applied an ideological litmus test to every foreign-policy decision from day one. Obama's doctrine was progressive internationalism of the kind that would strike the starkest possible contrast with his predecessor. In seeking to distinguish himself from Obama on foreign-policy matters, Trump appears to be reacting to events non-dogmatically. That's not a doctrine, and it doesn't need to be.

Doctrines develop out of crises, and Donald Trump will not be the first American president in history to avoid confronting an international crisis. There should not be any panic over the lack of a presidential doctrine within the first 100 days of a presidency, and there wouldn't be if people in this White House hadn't campaigned on a myth. "Fortress America" is an impossible objective. The



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growing pains associated with giving up on “America First” may be uncomfortable, but they do nevertheless represent growth.

<https://www.commentarymagazine.com/foreign-policy/there-is-no-donald-trump-doctrine-and-thats-okay/>

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Japan Times (Japan)

#### **Trump more believable and moral than Putin?**

By Ramesh Thakur

15 April 2017

U.S. President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin are the leaders of countries with 14,000 nuclear weapons, including 1,800 ready for instant launch on presidential authorization. Both pursue “America/Russia first” policies to make their country great again. But only one of the two countries has a string of military bases and hundreds of thousands of troops deployed in distant hot spots circling the globe. Over the past two decades, only one has threatened, bombed, attacked, invaded and forcibly removed leaders of many other countries.

Of the two leaders, only one is widely believed, including by his own citizens, to be paranoid, volatile, erratic, inconsistent, bombastic, vulgar, shallow and a morally compromised individual. He can be moved by TV images of suffering children to bomb a country but bans their people — the same suffering children — from coming to his own country as desperate refugees. Only one — but not the same one — pursues a coherent foreign policy informed by long-term strategic purpose.

This raises a key puzzle. Both countries are engaged in the Syrian conflict, which is a tangled mess of internal, regional and global conflict parties and patrons. They offer contrasting narratives of heinous incidents. Chemical weapons were used in an attack on Khan Sheikhun on April 4. Trump blames the Syrian Air Force. Putin dismisses this as a self-serving fabrication and claims that chemical weapons stored at a rebel-held base were released after a Syrian strike.

Putin calls for an independent international investigation to establish facts and culpability. Instead Trump hits Syria with almost five dozen cruise missiles. Western leaders largely back the U.S. strikes, Americans are jubilant at throwing off the Obama-era strategic restraint and most Western analysts buy into the Trump narrative of enforcing international law against the use of chemical weapons, with the U.S. once again setting the world’s moral compass. When CNN host Fareed Zakaria gushed that in this one act “Trump became president,” he was not doing irony to indicate that bombing other countries has become a necessary rite of passage for a modern American leader. Zakaria was expressing genuine adoration of the Dear Leader.

Could the discrepancy be greater between what most Americans believe about Trump’s leadership credentials and individual morality, and their support of him as the champion of international law and global norms? Or between the record of U.S. international behavior and Western support of America being the international law enforcement sheriff?

The long history of U.S. presidents dissembling about confused incidents to launch or escalate wars includes the notorious 1964 Tonkin Gulf incident in the Vietnam War and allegations of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein’s weapons of mass destruction (WMD) to invade Iraq in 2003 and

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capture and execute Saddam. In Syria itself, with respect to the chemical weapons attack in the suburbs of Damascus on Aug. 21, 2013, Seymour Hersh concluded that President Barack Obama, like President George W. Bush in Iraq in 2003, had cherry-picked facts and intelligence, presenting assumptions as facts and omitting important intelligence pointing to jihadis' capability to mount a chemical weapon attack. Trump effectively followed the policy of "bomb first, prove later" — exactly the sequence Bush adopted in Iraq in 2003 to commit the greatest geopolitical blunder since World War II.

The requirement for proof before punishment doesn't have an opt-out clause. Incomprehensibly, Trump of all people — with his known penchant for making up facts — is exempt from providing rock solid proof of Assad's culpability.

As in murder mysteries, it is always worth asking: Who benefits? The risks of inviting U.S. intervention by using chemical weapons in an inconsequential battle far outweighed any possible military gains for the regime. Andrew Wilkie, who in 2003 as an Australian intelligence analyst famously questioned the dominant narrative on Iraq's WMD and is now a parliamentarian, asks why Assad would use chemical weapons in Khan Sheikhun. For rebels, the risk-reward calculus is reversed in provoking U.S. intervention. Such cynicism is usually a better guide than naive credulity to understanding Middle Eastern politics.

Richard Butler, a former U.N. chief weapons inspector in Iraq, is unequivocal: "No evidence for the U.S. claim that Syria bombed Khan Sheikhun with chemical weapons has been provided." Until then, "it is not possible to accept the claim. And, there are abundant reasons, from past experience, and a good deal of logic to support skepticism about it. The action by the U.S. was an act of aggression, violating international law."

BBC News lists the dizzying record of policy flip-flops and U-turns within 24 hours. Longer-term major policy reversals include warning Obama in 2013 not to attack Syria. We cannot even be confident that Trump's current Cabinet personnel will still be in office next year. This "mercurial" president can on an unchecked whim fire almost a thousand nuclear weapons at any country within minutes. The surge of popularity following strikes on Syria will embolden him to choose robust military action over caution and strengthen his disdain for constitutional fetters on using military force, let alone any restraints of international law. And Western leaders —who, unlike Trump, are mostly responsible leaders —have welcomed this turn of events.

The majority of Western leaders could do with a crash course in Geopolitics 101 and Nuclear Politics 101. On the first, every country has a core of vital interests over which it will go to war. The vital interests of major powers include territory and friendly regimes in neighboring countries. China will not tolerate a potentially hostile regime on its border with Korea. America would not tolerate one in Canada or Mexico, or Russia along its borders with Europe.

On the second, unlike wars using conventional weapons, with nuclear wars not just the conflict parties but the whole world will be totally destroyed. So why exactly is the Western world cheering the transformation of Trump into a wartime president who can indulge his authoritarian instincts to the fullest "to amass, consolidate and concentrate power"?

The self-interest of all countries — Europe, Canada, Japan and Australia included — requires them to counsel caution and restraint, not applaud adventurism based on gut instincts; to encourage policy consistency and reliability, not erratic unpredictability; to strengthen legal restraints and institutional enforcement mechanisms to check unilateral, aggressive and other norm-violating behavior by all major powers; and to require investigation and evidence before action is taken, not afterward.





## ***USAF Center for Unconventional Weapons Studies***

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To return to the key puzzle: Why should we entrust world peace in the quality of decision-making of Trump rather than Putin? Second, for most countries, which breach of international law and norms is worse: use of chemical weapons by either party inside Syria, or the unilateral use of military force by a major power against a sovereign state?

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2017/04/16/commentary/world-commentary/trump-believable-moral-putin/>

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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.

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