



USAF Center for Unconventional Weapons Studies (CUWS) Outreach Journal

Issue No. 1147, 09 January 2015

Welcome to the CUWS Outreach Journal! As part of the CUWS' mission to develop Air Force, DoD, and other USG leaders to advance the state of knowledge, policy, and practices within strategic defense issues involving nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons, we offer the government and civilian community a source of contemporary discussions on unconventional weapons. These discussions include news articles, papers, and other information sources that address issues pertinent to the U.S. national security community. It is our hope that this information resource will help enhance the overall awareness of these important national security issues and lead to the further discussion of options for dealing with the potential use of unconventional weapons. **All of our past journals are now available at http://cpc.au.af.mil/au_outreach.aspx.**

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FEATURE ITEM: *“North Korea’s SINPO-class Sub: New Evidence of Possible Vertical Missile Launch Tubes; Sinpo Shipyard Prepares for Significant Naval Construction Program”*. Authored by Joseph S. Bermudez Jr.; published by 38 North.org; 08 January 2015.

<http://38north.org/2015/01/jbermudez010815/>

Recent commercial satellite imagery indicates that the conning tower of a new North Korean submarine first seen in July 2014 houses 1-2 possible vertical launch tubes for either ballistic or cruise missiles. The boat could serve as an experimental test bed for land-attack missile technology, which if successful, may be integrated into a new class of submarines. In addition, imagery over the past six months indicates that North Korea has been upgrading facilities at the Sinpo South Shipyard in preparation for a significant naval construction program, possibly related to submarine development.

North Korea’s development of a submarine-launched missile capability would eventually expand Pyongyang’s threat to South Korea, Japan and US bases in East Asia, also complicating regional missile defense planning, deployment and operations. Submarines carrying land-attack missiles would be challenging to locate and track, would be mobile assets able to attack from any direction, and could operate at significant distances from the Korean peninsula.

Nevertheless, such a threat is not present today. Moreover, an effort by Pyongyang to develop an operational missile-carrying submarine would be an expensive and time-consuming endeavor with no guarantee of success.

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Air Force Times.com – Washington, D.C.

Air Force Adds Airmen to Nuke Security Forces Teams

By Brian Everstine, Staff Writer

January 6, 2015

The Air Force is adding additional manpower to security forces groups that protect the service's nuclear missiles, addressing complaints of a lack of manning and morale issues including overwork.

The 90th Security Forces Group at F.E. Warren Air Force Base, Wyoming, added 37 more airmen in December.

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Air Force Global Strike Command last year began a force improvement program, which included a survey of airmen in all ranks of the nuclear forces to find morale issues. Airmen in security forces complained that they are undermanned, leading to overwork and declining morale. F.E. Warren is the first to see the changes.

"We currently do not have enough manning for every flight to post out 100 percent," Master Sgt. Robert Wilson, the 90th Missile Security Forces Squadron flight chief, said in a news release.

The additional manning comes as Global Strike Command has been outfitting its security forces groups with new uniforms, upgraded weapons and new vehicles.

The survey helped Air Force leadership realize that a prolonged degradation of the manning levels would make things worse, Master Sgt. Vincent Bolden, 90th MSFS weapons systems security noncommissioned officer in charge, said in the release.

"[People] alone can positively affect the ICBM mission, but these new airmen need to be trained, certified in their duty positions, and progress in upgrade training," Bolden said. "The additional [personnel] will afford relief in instances where airmen pulling 'standbys,' or additional days in the field, no longer have to do so."

<http://www.airforcetimes.com/story/military/pentagon/2015/01/06/new-security-forces-airmen-nuclear/21299435/>

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Los Angeles Times – Los Angeles, CA

Nuclear Forensic Experts Prepare for the Worst and Hope to Deter It

By Ralph Vartabedian, Reporting from Oak Ridge, TN

January 7, 2015

If federal agents ever capture a stolen nuclear weapon — or have to investigate the detonation of one — they will turn to one of the most esoteric groups of detectives in the world.

Investigators will need proof of where a weapon came from and who was responsible — a task requiring some of the most sophisticated scientific tools in the federal laboratory system.

Radioactive fallout from a weapon would provide importance clues, as might a suspected smuggler's fingernails or hair. Atomic analysis of chemical traces left in the human body from exposure to different environments might show that a suspect spent time in Kabul, Afghanistan; Tehran; or Pyongyang, North Korea.

That's the aim of scientists at the Energy Department's Oak Ridge National Laboratory, which is researching how the human body stores trace chemicals unique to different parts of the world.

Dust, food and water can leave their imprints in the human body in amounts so minuscule that only the most powerful scientific tools can spot them.

"It requires the best analytic chemistry in the world," said Paula Cable-Dunlap, chief of the Nonproliferation, Safeguards and Security Programs at Oak Ridge.

The research is part of a national program on nuclear forensics. The work was stepped up after the 2001 attacks on the Pentagon and World Trade Center when nuclear weapons experts warned that terrorists could smuggle a nuclear weapon into the U.S. or detonate a conventional bomb that would spread deadly radioactive material in a city.

The idea was that nuclear forensics would help prevent the theft or sale of nuclear materials from reactors and enrichment facilities around the world. And the scientific capability also aimed for a type of Cold War deterrence, in which enemy nations might worry about U.S. retaliation if their secret role in a terrorist attack was identified.

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If a nuclear bomb goes off in the U.S., scientists hope to determine the size of the detonation within hours, the sophistication of the bomb within a day and its origin within a week. The radioactive fallout would leave clues about what nation produced the weapon or whether it was a new design.

Progress has been slow.

"It hasn't been a high priority," said John Hamre, a former deputy Defense secretary during the Clinton administration who helped launch the program even before the 2001 attacks. "I don't think we are spending enough. This has not received the focus it should by the Bush or Obama administrations."

Hamre, who is president of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said the U.S. needed the ability to confront countries with direct evidence of their involvement if such an attack were to occur.

"My personal view is that in the next 20 years, it is more likely than not that we will have an event," Hamre said.

Every nuclear fuel has specific markers, giving scientists a chance to identify what reactor plutonium came from or what ore body produced uranium that was later enriched.

"It involves isotope ratios and concentrations of chemicals in a mix," said Brad Hart, director of the forensic science center at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in the San Francisco Bay Area. "That is a key to forensics, finding traces that may be a fingerprint."

"If I were going to synthesize a toxic chemical, how I did that would create impurities that helps a chemist understand the process that was used to create it," Hart said.

Much of the work at Oak Ridge, Livermore and other labs involves routine analysis of samples taken by the International Atomic Energy Agency from reactors and fuel programs around the world.

Samples gathered by international inspectors must be carefully analyzed to make sure the reactors are complying with nonproliferation treaties. If a reactor is supposed to have 32 fuel rods, for example, and two were missing, it would slightly alter the ratio of isotopes in the samples that are analyzed in the Oak Ridge lab, Cable-Dunlap said.

The work involves high-precision chemical analysis with international security at stake, involving tiny samples that must be refined and examined in a mass spectrometer.

"There is no room for error," said Eddy McBay, a mass spectrometrists focused on the analysis of trace levels of materials.

But how big a role nuclear forensics can play in deterring an attack is uncertain, many experts say.

"It is arguable how much deterrence value it has," said Philip Coyle, a former deputy director at Livermore and more recently a security advisor in the Obama administration.

Coyle said the capability might deter a middleman who traffics in stolen nuclear materials, but probably not a suicidal terrorist.

Nobody knows exactly what the U.S. government is spending on nuclear forensics, because the work is done at multiple labs and by different agencies.

And so far, the esoteric science of nuclear forensics is not filtering down to law enforcement agencies concerned about civilian crime, said Dr. Ross Zumwalt, a New Mexico medical investigator and a member of a National Academy of Sciences committee on forensics.

"If you picked up a fingernail and it had cobalt in it, we wouldn't know what it meant," Zumwalt said. "It is a new and different sort of area than law enforcement normally deals with."

Still, the research could offer law enforcement new tools in the future.

Livermore scientists, for example, are studying unique proteins in keratin, the outer layer of skin that everyone sheds constantly. They want to use them to trace whether someone has handled certain objects or materials. Unlike DNA, the proteins are less subject to deterioration or corruption, Hart said.

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The Washington Times – Washington, D.C.

Inside the Ring: Pentagon Seeks New Weapons to Counter China's Hypersonic Missiles

By Bill Gertz

Wednesday, January 7, 2015

The Missile Defense Agency has tasked a major defense contractor to develop advanced missiles capable of knocking out maneuvering, ultrahigh-speed targets such as China's high-tech Wu-14 hypersonic glide vehicle.

Missile defense specialists at Lockheed Martin, the main contractor for the Pentagon's agency, told reporters Wednesday that an extended-range version of the Army's Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense system is being developed to deal with hypersonic threats.

Hypersonic missiles are maneuvering strike vehicles launched atop missiles that travel at speeds of up to Mach 10, or 10 times the speed of sound. They maneuver and glide along the edge of space, making them difficult targets for missile defenses.

Current U.S. missile defense sensors and interceptors are designed primarily to hit ballistic missile warheads that travel in predictable flight paths from launch, through space and into ground targets.

China surprised U.S. intelligence agencies last year by conducting three flight tests of the Wu-14 in January, August and December. The vehicle traveled at speeds up to Mach 10, or nearly 8,000 miles per hour.

U.S. intelligence agencies assessed the Wu-14 to be a nuclear delivery vehicle designed to break through U.S. defenses.

In addition to China, Russia and India are working on hypersonic strike vehicles. A U.S. test of a hypersonic missile blew up shortly after launch in August. U.S. officials are concerned that hypersonic technology will proliferate to the missile systems of North Korea and Iran, the main focus of current U.S. missile defenses.

"One of the things that the MDA is looking very closely at is the upgrade of the THAAD system so that we can extend the reach in dealing with a target just like that," said Mike Trotsky, a vice president at Lockheed for defense missiles and fire control.

Hypersonic warheads seek to "find a seam" between space-capable interceptors and air-breathing defenses to avoid being shot down, he told reporters on a conference call. Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense interceptors can blast missile warheads into space and into the upper atmosphere "in the region where that threat flies," Mr. Trotsky said.

The extended-range version, with a larger booster and an enhanced upper stage, is being developed to deal with hypersonic threats, he added, noting that work has been underway for the past 12 to 18 months.

"And so the MDA is very interested in [Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense] ER and that's one of the key reasons," Mr. Trotsky said.

Doug Graham, Lockheed's vice president for strategic and missile defense systems, said hypersonic glide vehicles travel at the top of the atmosphere, the system's optimum target zone.

"So, in a sense, you can't fly around THAAD's battle space," he said, "which is why there is intense interest in building an enhanced version of the system," currently deployed on the U.S. island of Guam.



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J.D. Hammond, Lockheed's director of command and control battle management systems, said software is being developed to tie together space-based and ground-based sensor data, both infrared and radio frequency, "so that we have better sensor data on that type of threat."

"That is something that is being worked on in coordination with MDA," he said.

Mr. Graham said maneuvering hypersonic glide vehicle threats, along with continued ballistic missile flight tests by North Korea and Iran, indicate that adversaries are seeking for ways to defeat missile defense systems.

"So we're constantly having to stay ahead of the curve so that our systems remain robust against the full range of threats," he said.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/jan/7/inside-the-ring-pentagon-to-counter-hypersonic-mis/>

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The Guardian (U.S. Edition) – New York, NY

US and Russia in Danger of Returning to Era of Nuclear Rivalry

American threats to retaliate for Russian development of new cruise missile take tensions to new level

By Julian Borger, diplomatic editor

Sunday 4 January 2015

A widening rift between Moscow and Washington over cruise missiles and increasingly daring patrols by nuclear-capable Russian submarines threatens to end an era of arms control and bring back a dangerous rivalry between the world's two dominant nuclear arsenals.

Tensions have been taken to a new level by US threats of retaliatory action for Russian development of a new cruise missile. Washington alleges it violates one of the key arms control treaties of the cold war, and has raised the prospect of redeploying its own cruise missiles in Europe after a 23-year absence.

On Boxing Day, in one of the more visible signs of the unease, the US military launched the first of two experimental "blimps" over Washington. The system, known as JLENS, is designed to detect incoming cruise missiles. The North American Aerospace Command (Norad) did not specify the nature of the threat, but the deployment comes nine months after the Norad commander, General Charles Jacoby, admitted the Pentagon faced "some significant challenges" in countering cruise missiles, referring in particular to the threat of Russian attack submarines.

Those submarines, which have been making forays across the Atlantic, routinely carry nuclear-capable cruise missiles. In the light of aggressive rhetoric from Moscow and the expiry of treaty-based restrictions, there is uncertainty over whether those missiles are now carrying nuclear warheads.

The rise in tension comes at a time when the arms control efforts of the post-cold-war era are losing momentum. The number of strategic nuclear warheads deployed by the US and Russia actually increased last year, and both countries are spending many billions of dollars a year modernising their arsenals. Against the backdrop of the war in Ukraine and a failing economy, Vladimir Putin is putting increasing emphasis on nuclear weapons as guarantors and symbols of Russian influence. In a speech primarily about the Ukrainian conflict last summer, Putin pointedly referred to his country's nuclear arsenal and declared other countries "should understand it's best not to mess with us".

The Russian press has taken up the gung-ho tone. Pravda, the former mouthpiece of the Soviet regime, published an article in November titled "Russian prepares a nuclear surprise for Nato", which boasted of Russian superiority over the west, particularly in tactical nuclear weapons.

"The Americans are well aware of this," the commentary said. "They were convinced before that Russia would never rise again. Now it's too late."

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Some of the heightened rhetoric appears to be bluster. The new version of the Russian military doctrine, published on 25 December, left its policy on nuclear weapons unchanged from four years earlier. They are to be used only in the event of an attack using weapons of mass destruction or a conventional weapon onslaught which “would put in danger the very existence of the state”. It did not envisage a pre-emptive strike, as some in the military had proposed.

However, the new aggressive tone coincides with an extensive upgrading of Russia’s nuclear weapons, reflecting Moscow’s renewed determination to keep pace with the US arsenal. It will involve a substantial increase in the number of warheads loaded on submarines, as a result of the development of the multi-warhead Bulava sea-launched ballistic missile.

The modernisation also involves new or revived delivery systems. Last month Russia announced it would re-introduce nuclear missile trains, allowing intercontinental ballistic missiles to be moved about the country by rail so they would be harder to target.

There is also mounting western anxiety over Russian marketing abroad of a cruise missile called the Club-K, which can be concealed, complete with launcher, inside an innocuous-looking shipping container until the moment it is fired.

However, the development that has most alarmed Washington is Russian testing of a medium-range cruise missile which the Obama administration claims is a clear violation of the 1987 intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) treaty, the agreement that brought to an end the dangerous standoff between US and Russian cruise missiles in Europe. By hugging the contours of the Earth, cruise missiles can evade radar defences and hit strategic targets with little or no notice, raising fears on both sides of surprise pre-emptive attacks.

At a contentious congressional hearing on 10 December, Republicans criticised two of the administration’s leading arms control negotiators, Rose Gottemoeller of the State Department and Brian McKeon of the Pentagon, for not responding earlier to the alleged Russian violation and for continuing to observe the INF treaty.

Gottemoeller said she had raised US concerns over the new missile “about a dozen times” with her counterparts in Moscow and Obama had written to Putin on the matter. She said the new Russian cruise missile – which she did not identify but is reported to be the Iskander-K with a reach in the banned 500-5,500km range – appeared to be ready for deployment.

The Russians have denied the existence of the missile and have responded with counter-allegations about American infringements of the INF treaty that Washington rejects.

McKeon said the Pentagon was looking at a variety of military responses to the Russian missile, including the deployment of an American equivalent weapon.

“We have a broad range of options, some of which would be compliant with the INF treaty, some of which would not be, that we would be able to recommend to our leadership if it decided to go down that path,” McKeon said. He later added: “We don’t have ground-launched cruise missiles in Europe now, obviously, because they are prohibited by the treaty but that would obviously be one option to explore.”

Reintroducing cruise missiles into Europe would be politically fraught and divisive, but the Republican majority in Congress is pushing for a much more robust American response to the Russian missile.

The US military has also been rattled by the resurgence of the Russian submarine fleet. Moscow is building new generations of giant ballistic missile submarines, known as “boomers”, and attack submarines that are equal or superior to their US counterparts in performance and stealth. From a low point in 2002, when the Russian navy managed to send out no underwater patrols at all, it is steadily rebounding and reasserting its global reach.

There have been sporadic reports in the US press about Russian submarines reaching the American east coast, which have been denied by the US military. But last year Jacoby, the head of Norad and the US northern command at the time, admitted concerns about being able to counter new Russian investment in cruise missile technology and advanced submarines.

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"They have just begun production of a new class of quiet nuclear submarines specifically designed to deliver cruise missiles," Jacoby told Congress.

Peter Roberts, who retired from the Royal Navy a year ago after serving as a commanding officer and senior UK liaison officer with the US navy and intelligence services, said the transatlantic forays by Akula-class Russian attack submarines had become a routine event, at least once or twice a year.

"The Russians usually put out a sortie with an Akula or an Akula II around Christmas ... It normally stops off Scotland, and then through the Bay of Biscay and out over the Atlantic. It will have nuclear-capable missiles on it," he said.

Roberts, who is now senior research fellow for sea power and maritime studies at the Royal United Services Institute, said the appearance of a periscope off the western coast of Scotland, which triggered a Nato submarine hunt last month, was a sign of the latest such Russian foray.

He said the Russian attack submarine was most likely heading for the US coast. "They go across to eastern seaboard, usually to watch the carrier battle groups work up [go on exercises]."

"It's something the Americans have been trying to brush off but there is increasing concern about the American ability to ... track these subs. Their own anti-sub skills have declined, while we have all been focused on landlocked operations, in Afghanistan and so on."

The Akula is being superseded by an even stealthier submarine, the Yasen. Both are multipurpose: hunter-killers designed to track and destroy enemy submarine and carrier battle groups. Both are also armed with land-attack cruise missiles, currently the Granat, capable of carrying nuclear warheads.

On any given sortie, Roberts said, "it is completely unknown whether they are nuclear-tipped".

A Russian media report described the Akula as carrying Granat missiles with 200-kilotonne warheads, but the reliability of the report is hard to gauge.

The US and Russia removed nuclear cruise missiles from their submarines following reciprocal presidential initiatives in 1991. In declarations at the time of the Strategic Arms Reduction treaty (Start) in the same year, the two countries also agreed to exchange data on deployed sea-launched nuclear cruise missiles for the next five years. The successor treaty, New Start, signed by Obama and the then Russian president, Dmitry Medvedev in 2010 does not include any such reporting obligation. So both sides are now in the dark about what is on each other's attack submarines.

Pavel Podvig, a senior research fellow at the UN Institute for Disarmament Research and the leading independent analyst of Russian nuclear forces, said: "The bottom line is that we don't know, but it's safe to say that it's quite possible that Russian subs carry nuclear SLCMs [submarine-launched cruise missiles]."

Jeffrey Lewis, an arms control expert at the Monterey Institute of International Studies and founding publisher of ArmsControlWonk.com, believes the JLENS blimps are primarily a response to a Russian move to start rearming attack submarines with nuclear weapons.

"For a long time, the Russians have been saying they would do this and now it looks like they have," Lewis said. He added that the fact that data exchange on cruise missiles was allowed to expire under the New Start treaty is a major failing that has increased uncertainty.

The Russian emphasis on cruise missiles is in line with Putin's strategy of "de-escalation", which involves countering Nato's overwhelming conventional superiority with the threat of a limited nuclear strike that would inflict "tailored damage" on an adversary.

Lewis argues that Putin's accentuation of Russia's nuclear capabilities is aimed at giving him room for manoeuvre in Ukraine and possibly other neighbouring states.

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“The real reason he talks about how great they are is he saying: ‘I’m going to go ahead and invade Ukraine and you’re going to look the other way. As long as I don’t call it an invasion, you’re going to look at my nuclear weapons and say I don’t want to push this,’” he said.

With both the US and Russia modernising their arsenals and Russia investing increasing importance its nuclear deterrent, Hans Kristensen, the director of the Nuclear Information Project at the Federation of American Scientists, said we are facing a period of “deepening military competition”.

He added: “It will bring very little added security, but a lot more nervous people on both sides.”

- *This article was amended on 7 January 2015 to clarify that an agreement between the US and Russia to remove nuclear cruise missiles from their submarines was part of reciprocal presidential initiatives in 1991.*

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jan/04/us-russia-era-nuclear-rivalry>

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Want China Times – Taipei, Taiwan

PLA's Type 096 Submarine Can Carry 24 Missiles

Staff Reporter

January 4, 2015

China's new Type 096 Tang-class ballistic missile submarine, thought to be in development, may become a serious threat to the United States in the Western Pacific as it is estimated to be able to carry 24 missiles, according to the Russian Military Analyst based in Moscow.

The article China's Nuclear Potential published on Dec. 30 said that it will still take decades for China to establish sufficient second-strike capability. However, China has taken much less time to develop its nuclear arsenal than most Western observers had previously expected, though the People's Liberation Army Air Force still relies on H-6K bombers and Q-5 attackers for nuclear strike capability.

While Q-5 attackers have been slowly replaced by the more advanced JH-7A, China is unlikely to develop a new stealth bomber to take the H-6K's place in the near future, the article said. However, the H-6K's range had been extended from 1,800 kilometers to 3,000 km and it can now carry six CJ-10A strategic cruise missiles, which would allow the PLA Air Force to hit critical US targets in the Central Pacific.

The article also estimated that the number of China's nuclear warheads is under 2,000. However, only between 250 and 300 nuclear warheads can be transferred on road-mobile systems. At the same time, it also said that China's has less than 459 tactical nuclear warheads. China's nuclear forces are currently under close surveillance by US forces in Central Asia. Even though they do not pose a threat to the US mainland, they may still be a threat to Russia's national security.

The article further said that submarines are strategically important for the PLA. The JL-2 submarine-launched ballistic missiles carried by Type 094 Jin-class ballistic missile submarines cannot reach the continental United States unless fired from the Central Pacific while Jin-class submarines would be detected and countered out by US forces if they attempted to move into the waters around Hawaii.

Until China improves the ability of its subs to withstand US anti-submarine weaponry, the PLA is unlikely to succeed in a conflict against the US. The new Type 096 Tang-class submarines may prove very useful against US forces in the future, however. The number of its ballistic missiles has increased to 24 from the Type 094's 12. With an attack range of at least 11,000 km, it could conceivably attack the United States under the escort of China's surface combat fleet.

<http://www.wantchinatimes.com/news-subclass-cnt.aspx?cid=1101&MainCatID=11&id=20150104000009>

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Want China Times.com – Taipei, Taiwan

China Has 10 DF-31 Ballistic Missiles in Service: Pentagon Report

Staff Reporter

January 3, 2015

Intelligence reports from the Pentagon indicated that the Second Artillery Corps, China's strategic missile force, had already put 10 DF-31 intercontinental ballistic missiles into service, according to Moscow's Russian Military Analysis on Jan. 1.

It will only take 30 minutes for the People's Liberation Army to launch a DF-31 missile into the air. The range of a DF-31 is estimated to be 7,200 kilometers, which is shorter than the DF-5A developed in 1981. When the DF-31 is launched from Central China, it cannot even reach the central US. However, the range of a DF-31A, the modified version, has the capability to hit most major targets in the United States since its range is extended to 11,200 kilometers.

China is developing the DF-31 and DF-41 to replace the DF-5A missiles. Even though the DF-5A has a longer range than the DF-31, it can be easily destroyed since the missile is stored in a horizontal position in tunnels under high mountains. In contrast, the DF-31 and DF-41 are both road-mobiles. With the assistance of the Beidou Navigation System, the accuracy of the DF-31 and DF-41 has been enhanced. Like the DF-5A, the DF-41 is also designed to carry multiple independently targetable reentry vehicle (MIRVs).

The report estimates China to have 20 DF-5A missiles. In addition, it operated a total number of 30 DF-31 and DF-31A missiles. After the DF-41 begins its service, all DF-5A missiles will be retired. Since it is still very difficult for China to transfer its DF-31 and DF-41 on road-mobile systems easily because of their weight, a senior official in China said that some of DF-41s may still be launched from tunnels under mountains.

<http://www.wantchinatimes.com/news-subclass-cnt.aspx?id=20150103000057&cid=1101&MainCatID=11>

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Want China Times – Taipei, Taiwan

Russia Refuses to Sell China Tu-22 Bomber

Staff Reporter

January 4, 2015

Russia has recently rejected China's request to purchase Tu-22 Supersonic strategic bombers to replace the PLA's Cold War-era H-6 strategic bombers, according to Moscow's Russian Military Analyst on Jan. 3.

Large and slow, the H-6 bomber presents a relatively easy target for US and Russian air defenses. China currently operates 100 H-6 bombers based on Soviet Tu-16 strategic bombers purchased from Moscow in 1958. By fitting the H-6 with Russian built D-30KP-2 engines and advanced avionics, the Xian Aircraft Industrial Corporation built the upgraded version of the H-6 bomber called the H-6K.

The combat range of H-6K has been extended to from 18,000 kilometers to 30,000. It can carry a payload of six CJ-10A strategic cruise missiles designed based on the Russian Kh-55. However, those modifications do not make the H-6K an advanced bomber when compared to the B-2 and Tu-22 bombers of the United States and Russia. Equipped with long-range cruise missiles, the combat radius of the H-6K is still not enough to conduct strategic missions.

China has been trying to develop new types of bomber to replace the H-6 for years but it has proven to be a difficult task for the country's aviation industry. To catch up with the United States in the development of strategic bombers China pinned its hopes on Russia but has been thwarted for now.

<http://www.wantchinatimes.com/news-subclass-cnt.aspx?cid=1101&MainCatID=11&id=20150104000010>

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The Korea Times – Seoul, South Korea

S. Korea, China Reaffirm Zero Tolerance toward N. Korea's Nukes

January 5, 2015

SEOUL (Yonhap) — South Korea and China on Monday reaffirmed their stance of zero tolerance toward North Korea's nuclear weapons program and agreed to beef up their cooperation for regional peace, Seoul's foreign ministry said.

The officials of the foreign and defense ministries from Seoul and Beijing held working-level talks, a so-called "two plus two" meeting, in Seoul earlier in the day to discuss bilateral and regional security issues including the situation with North Korea, it noted.

During the talks, the two sides agreed to try to make progress on Pyongyang's nuclear weapons program based on a firm stance of zero tolerance toward it, according to a ranking official from Seoul's foreign ministry.

"The two sides agreed to further strengthen bilateral and multilateral cooperation for peace and security on the Korean Peninsula," the official said, asking not to be named.

The six-party talks over North Korea's denuclearization involving the two Koreas, the United States, China, Japan and Russia have been dormant since December 2008, when the North left the negotiating table.

While Pyongyang is demanding the unconditional resumption of the talks, Seoul and Washington have said the communist country should first show its commitment toward denuclearization. China insists that Seoul and the U.S. should lower the bar for the reopening of the talks.

The Monday meeting, the second of its kind since December 2013, came after North Korea recently offered an olive branch to Seoul by proposing a summit between the political leaders of the two Koreas.

But Pyongyang's relations with the U.S. have deteriorated, with Washington announcing fresh sanctions on the North last week in response to its alleged cyberattack on Sony Pictures. Some analysts said that Washington's actions may negatively affect Seoul's efforts to improve its ties with Pyongyang.

The foreign ministry official said that China "showed its support" to South Korea's bid to improve the inter-Korean relations, noting that Beijing expects progress on the inter-Korean dialogue.

In what's seen as an unusual move, Seoul and Beijing did not discuss the recent signing of a military arrangement among Seoul, Washington and Tokyo to share information on North Korea's nuclear and missile programs, according to the official. China also did not bring up the issue of the possible deployment of an advanced U.S. missile-defense system on South Korean soil.

China largely remains cautious about the three-way pact as it could lead Washington to move closer to Northeast Asia at a time when the U.S. is seen as wary of a rising China.

South Korea and China agreed to launch the working-level security dialogue in June 2013 during summit talks between South Korean President Park Geun-hye and her Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping.

<http://www.koreatimesus.com/s-korea-china-reaffirm-zero-tolerance-toward-n-koreas-nukes/>

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China Daily.com – Beijing, China

Military Announces a Major Reshuffling

January 5, 2015

By *China Daily* (China Daily)



USAF Center for Unconventional Weapons Studies
CUWS Outreach Journal

Maxwell AFB, Alabama

The People's Liberation Army has announced a host of key appointments in a major reshuffle, with many commanders from frontline units being promoted to senior posts in Beijing.

Lieutenant General Wang Jiasheng has been named political commissar of the PLA second artillery force, the army's strategic missile arm, moving from his previous post of deputy political commissar at the PLA General Armaments Department. His predecessor, General Zhang Haiyang, has retired from active service.

A former commander of the Beijing Military Command, Lieutenant General Zhang Shibo, was appointed president of the PLA National Defense University, the top institute of the military.

Lieutenant General Gao Jin, former assistant to the chief of staff, is now president of the PLA Academy of Military Science. He served with the second artillery force for 36 years before being assigned to the PLA General Staff Headquarters in July.

The largest change in personnel took place in the PLA navy, where a number of fleet commanders were selected to move to Beijing posts.

Miao Hua, former political commissar of the Lanzhou Military Command, has become political commissar of the navy. His rank was changed to a naval vice-admiral from lieutenant general.

Vice-Admiral Jiang Weilie, former commander of the PLA South Sea Fleet, and Vice-Admiral Wang Dengping, former political commissar of the same fleet, have both been transferred to the PLA navy headquarters in Beijing to replace officers who have retired. Jiang is now the navy's deputy commander and Wang its deputy political commissar.

In response to speculation that the appointments were related to an ongoing anti-corruption campaign within the military, Yang Yujun, spokesman for the Defense Ministry, told an earlier news conference that the PLA reshuffles its high-ranking officers each year, so the moves should not be misinterpreted.

During 2014, a long list of former powerful figures in the PLA came under investigation.

The most astonishing, and unexpected to many, probe during the year was that of Xu Caihou, a retired general and former vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission.

As one of the most powerful officials in the PLA, Xu was found to have taken advantage of his position to assist the promotion of others, accepting huge bribes both personally and through his family, and to have sought profits for others in exchange for bribes, according to military investigators.

PLA prosecutors wrapped up the investigation of Xu and began the filing of charges in late October. Xu is the highest PLA officer to be investigated and charged in more than 30 years.

http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2015-01/05/content_19238165.htm

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The Boston Globe – Boston, MA

N. Korea Blasts New US Sanctions

By Choe Sang-Hun, *New York Times*

January 05, 2015

SEOUL — North Korea denounced the United States on Sunday for imposing new sanctions on it after a cyberattack on Sony Pictures, calling them byproducts of American hostility toward the North.

North Korea reiterated its denial of involvement in the hacking of Sony and said that Washington's sanctions would only strengthen its resolve to pursue its "military first" policy. That policy calls for an arms buildup, including nuclear weapons development, as a deterrent against Washington's policy.

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“The persistent and unilateral action taken by the White House to slap sanctions against the DPRK patently proves that it is still not away from inveterate repugnance and hostility toward the DPRK,” an unidentified government spokesman was quoted as saying by the North’s official Korean Central News Agency. DPRK stands for the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, North Korea’s official name.

The statement from the spokesman was the North’s first reaction to the new sanctions the Obama administration announced Friday.

The retaliatory sanctions came days after the United States officially blamed North Korea for the hacking of Sony, which produced “The Interview,” a comedy film about a CIA plot to assassinate Kim Jong Un, North Korea’s leader. The hacking destroyed many of the studio’s computers and leaked numerous private e-mails and business files.

North Korea called the film an “act of war,” but it has repeatedly denied involvement in the hacking. In its statement Sunday, North Korea noted that many cybersecurity experts had expressed skepticism about Washington’s evidence that the country was responsible for the cyberattack.

Dismissing such doubts, Washington on Friday announced sanctions against 10 North Korean government officials and three organizations, including the North’s main intelligence agency and the state-run arms dealers.

US officials said the regime’s intelligence agency was the source of “many of North Korea’s major cyberoperations.”

Analysts said the sanctions would have limited effect because North Korea had already been under tough US sanctions for several decades.

The statement from North Korea’s Foreign Ministry said the new sanctions would not weaken the country’s 1.2-million-strong military.

In announcing the new sanctions, President Obama also warned Pyongyang that the United States was considering whether to put North Korea back on its list of state sponsors of terrorism, which could jeopardize aid to the country on a global scale.

American officials portrayed the sanctions as a swift, decisive response to North Korean behavior that they said had gone far over the line. Never before has the US imposed sanctions on another nation in direct retaliation for a cyberattack on an American company.

There have been doubts in the high-tech field, however, about the extent of North Korea’s involvement. Many analysts have said it’s possible that hackers or even Sony insiders could be the culprits, and questioned how the FBI can point the finger so conclusively.

Senator Robert Menendez of New Jersey, the outgoing chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said the sanctions were “a good first step” but didn’t go far enough.

Menendez said on CNN’s “State of the Union” on Sunday that he had urged Secretary of State John F. Kerry to consider putting North Korea back on the list of state sponsors of terrorism, “which would have far more pervasive consequences.”

<http://www.bostonglobe.com/news/world/2015/01/05/korea-assails-for-new-sanctions-over-sony-attack/ivk9YiYED8wZwMt6CaSGCL/story.html>

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The Korea Herald – Seoul, South Korea

N. Korea Likely to Conduct Series of Nuclear, Missile Tests this Year: U.S. Expert

January 06, 2015



USAF Center for Unconventional Weapons Studies
CUWS Outreach Journal

Maxwell AFB, Alabama

The United States and South Korea should brace themselves for a series of nuclear and ballistic missile tests by North Korea this year, an American security expert said Monday, calling for the allies to further bolster joint capabilities to cope with North Korean threats.

Victor Cha, chief Korea analyst at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, made the remark in a policy suggestion report for the new year, cautioning against reading North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's New Year's address positively.

"The United States is likely to see the next series of North Korean nuclear and ballistic missile tests. These may demonstrate Pyongyang's crossing of a new technology threshold, such as warhead miniaturization, a uranium-based test, more accurate ballistic missile or nuclear fusion capabilities," he said.

North Korea could use various pretexts for provocations, such as annual joint military exercises between South Korea and the U.S., U.N. actions on its human rights abuses or U.S. sanctions and other measures aimed at punishing Pyongyang for the cyber-attack on Sony Pictures, Cha said.

"In any event, the administration must be prepared to meet these provocations with concrete measures that acknowledge the necessity of deterring a nuclear North Korea," the expert said, suggesting deploying more advanced missile defense systems on the Korean Peninsula could be one way to strengthen deterrence capabilities.

Cha also warned against interpreting the New Year's address by the North's leader as positive, playing down Kim's calls for improvement in inter-Korean relations and his willingness for an inter-Korean summit as nothing but a usual element that must go into such a speech.

"I didn't read anything special in the North Korean New Year's speech ... If you're the speechwriter for the North Korea New Year's speech, you've got to sort of check that box, right? You have to say, oh yeah, I have to say something about inter-Korean relations," he said.

"That to me is not surprising at all. I don't think there is anything outside of that that is unusually positive in terms of a New Year's speech. In fact, if you read the rest of the New Year's speech, it's quite concerning because it talks about inflexibility on 'Byeongjin' and just continuing with the same line. It's not positive at all," he said.

Byeongjin refers to the North's policy of seeking nuclear and economic development at the same time.

Cha also called on the U.S. to work harder to help mend long-strained bilateral relations between South Korea and Japan, saying three-way cooperation between Washington, Seoul and Tokyo should be seen as the most reliable source of stability in Asia.

The expert said that the White House should seek defense agreements with the two allies, such as a military parts servicing agreement and a collective defense statement, just as the three nations concluded an intelligence sharing memorandum of understanding last month, though the MOU was limited to information on North Korea.

Cha said that the U.S. should also be prepared to cope with growing cyber-attacks from the North and try to use the issue of human rights to supplement traditional defense, deterrence and denuclearization policies toward the North. (Yonhap)

<http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20150106000369>

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Xinhua News – Beijing, China

S.Korea Says DPRK Missiles Can Reach U.S. Mainland

By Yoo Seungki

January 06, 2015

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SEOUL, Jan. 6 (Xinhua) -- South Korea on Tuesday announced its first official assessment that the long-range missiles of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) may reach the mainland of the United States.

The Defense Ministry said in its biennial Defense White Paper that the DPRK is estimated to have a "capability to threaten the U. S. mainland" after five rounds of test-firing of long-range missiles.

The assessment was based on the DPRK's successful launch of Unha-3 rocket, which is believed to have a range of about 8,000 km, into orbit in December 2012. The previous test-firing failed in April that year.

The DPRK's Taepodong-2 long-range missile has a range of about 10,000 km, according to the white paper.

The paper said the DPRK's capability to miniaturize "nuclear weapons" reached a "significant" level because eight years have passed since its first nuclear test. Pyongyang conducted nuclear tests in 2006, 2009 and 2013.

It marked the first time that South Korea's military uses the word "nuclear weapons" in its white paper.

The paper said the DPRK is estimated to have some 40 kg of plutonium, produced from the 5-megawatt reactor at its main nuclear facility in Yongbyon north of Pyongyang. It was the same estimation as in 2012.

In terms of quantity, the DPRK's military capability got far ahead of South Korea. The DPRK's regular armed forces reach 1.2 million, up about 10,000 in the past two years. It compares with 630,000 military forces in South Korea, down about 9,000 over the past two years.

The DPRK has built up military capability mainly in artillery and warships. It has about 430 warships, up 10 in the past two years and nearly quadruples South Korea's 110 battleships. Its tanks increased from 4,200 to 4,300 units, far outnumbers South Korea's 2,400. It has about 820 fighter jets, more than double South Korea's 400 warplanes.

The DPRK is believed to have founded the 12th Army Corps, raising the number of corps to 10, to strengthen the defense capability in areas bordering China and Russia. The corps was founded in preparation for rising economic cooperation in border regions, including Rajin and Khasan.

The South Korean military raised its warning pitch over territorial and historical disputes with Japan. "Regressive perception of history by some Japanese politicians and Japan's unreasonable claim to Dokdo islets are an obstacle to the bilateral relations going future-oriented," the paper said.

The rocky outcroppings, called Dokdo in South Korea and Takeshima in Japan, has long been a source of disputes between the two countries as both laid territorial claim to the islets that lie midway between the two nations.

South Korea has said that Japan illegally incorporated the islets into its territory in 1905 when the Imperial Japan rushed to disseize the Korean Peninsula. The islets have been controlled by South Korea since it stationed border guards there in 1954.

South Korean President Park Geun-hye has rejected, since her inauguration in February 2013, to sit face-to-face with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, citing his wrong perception of history.

The paper said the South Korean military will sternly deal with Japan's unreasonable claim to the Dokdo islets, but it said the military will cooperate with Japan in security issues such as the DPRK's nuclear threats.

South Korea, Japan and the United States signed a pact on Dec. 29 to share military intelligence on nuclear and missile threats from the DPRK. Seoul and Tokyo will not exchange intelligence directly, but indirectly only through Washington after consents from both countries.

Meanwhile, the paper forecast that relations between China and the United States will emerge as a core factor for security order in northeast Asia. "Rising China and the U.S. push for the 'rebalance to Asia' strategy will result in the bilateral strategic cooperation and competition, which will act as the most important factor to determine the security in northeast Asia," the paper said.

The paper said that the United States is seeking to implement the "rebalance to Asia" strategy in a successful way while reducing defense budget, adding it reflects the U.S. coordination with its allies and partners.

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The U.S. military is known to have around 1.49 million armed forces, 10 aircraft carriers, 72 submarines and 2,224 fighter jets. The U.S. annual defense budget reaches about 600 billion U.S. dollars, higher than Russia's 68 billion dollars and Japan's 51 billion dollars.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-01/06/c_133900323.htm

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Korea JoongAng Daily – Seoul, South Korea

Kim Jong-un Ordered a Plan for a 7-Day Asymmetric War: Officials

BY JEONG YONG-SOO, SER MYO-JA

January 08, 2017

North Korea has a new war plan to complete a Southern invasion within a week using asymmetric capabilities including nuclear weapons, a high-profile defector and South Korean government officials told the JoongAng Ilbo.

The war plan was created less than a year after Kim Jong-un assumed power, a South Korean official told the JoongAng Ilbo quoting a defector who used to serve in a senior position in the North Korean military.

According to the official, Kim Jong-un hosted a top military-party meeting in Wonsan on Aug. 25, 2012, and approved the new war plan. The young ruler became the supreme commander of the North's Korean People's Army on Dec. 30, 2011, shortly after the death of his father, Kim Jong-il.

"In addition to Kim Jong-un, all members of the Central Military Commission of the Workers' Party and the top brass of the military who command a unit larger than a corps attended the meeting," the former senior official of the North Korean military was quoted as saying.

"At the meeting, a larger framework of the operations plan created by the [General Staff Department of the] Korean People's Army was determined. Kim then ordered that each commander of a corps create detailed operations plans for their units based on the war plan and conduct exercises."

South Korean intelligence authorities confirmed the creation of the new war plan by the North.

Following the Wonsan meeting, Kim held three more similar conferences to check on the progress and frequently visited military commands and units to have site inspections, sources from the intelligence communities said.

"We received similar intelligence in the past," said another senior government official. "Recently, we obtained credible information and we are at the final stages of analysis."

According to government sources, the South Korean military is coming up with an updated operations plan that reflects the North's new war plan. The South has a Korea-U.S. Combined Forces Command basic war plan, known as OPLAN 5027. It guarantees U.S. reinforcements for the South in the event of an external armed attack, primarily from the North. The war plan has gone through several modifications over the decades.

Sources told the JoongAng Ilbo that the new North Korean war plan can be summarized as a "seven-day war." Should the North start an invasion or should a localized battle become an all-out war on the peninsula, the North intends to occupy the entire South Korean territory within seven days before U.S. reinforcements arrive.

It also contains a plan to conclude the war within 15 days at most if the North cannot end the war within a week due to resistance by the South and U.S. Forces Korea.

Under the new war plan, the North plans to use asymmetric capabilities including nuclear weapons and missiles to forestall South Korean and U.S. troops in the early stage of war. Special operations forces, which were increased from 80,000 to 200,000 in the last few years, will be mobilized next and conventional weapons such as tanks, artilleries, fighter jets and ground forces will be used later to conclude the war, according to the plan.

Sources said Kim ordered the military to complete preparations for a war by 2013, but the deadline was extended one year. This year was declared as the "year of a great war for unification," the sources said.

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"After Kim took power, the North conducted a series of long-range missile firings and carried out its third nuclear test. It also developed new weapons and reinforced military drills," a government official said. "While Kim Jong-il mobilized the military to rebuild the economy, Kim Jong-un ordered massive military drills frequently and bolstered arms capabilities because of this new war plan."

North Korea's third nuclear test was in February 2013, and last year it carried out 18 test firings of 108 missiles. A military exercise also took place to prepare all front-line units to occupy the South's guard posts at the border. An airborne drill was carried out with 12,000 special forces and an AN-2 low-altitude parachute drop aircraft.

The latest Defense White Paper by the South, released on Tuesday, also illustrated the North's concentrated investments in asymmetric capabilities.

Military and intelligence officials said the young ruler in Pyongyang has concluded that his impoverished Communist country cannot win a war against the advanced capabilities of the South-U.S. Combined Forces with conventional troops.

"An arms race became impossible for the North since the mid-1990s due to its perennial economic hardships," a senior South Korean military official said. "It turned to a strategy of beefing up its asymmetric capabilities because they are less costly, but far much more effective."

Another intelligence official told the JoongAng Ilbo that the new war plan was an outcome of analyzing the latest U.S. military operations. "The North did thorough analyses of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan," the source said. "It concluded that it won't have a chance if a war drags on. To end it quickly, Pyongyang reached a decision that asymmetric warfare is the only answer, despite the pressures and condemnations of the international community."

The young ruler's aggressive investment in asymmetric capabilities may have a domestic purpose, other experts said.

"As a new leader, Kim is trying to boost the morale of the people," said Shin In-kyun, head of the private think tank Korea Defense Network. "By showing off nuclear weapons and missiles, he probably intended to present a rosy picture to the people that the North can stop a U.S. invasion."

<http://koreajoongangdaily.joins.com/news/article/Article.aspx?aid=2999392>

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The Korea Herald – Seoul, South Korea

U.S. Has No Evidence yet Showing N.K. Mastered Warhead Miniaturization Technology

January 9, 2015

The United States has no evidence yet that North Korea has mastered the technology to make nuclear warheads small enough to fit atop ballistic missiles capable of reaching the U.S., a Defense Department official said Thursday.

South Korea's Defense Ministry said in its defense "white paper" report published earlier this week that it believes the communist nation has reached a "significant" point in efforts to mastering the warhead miniaturization technology.

"Gen. Scaparrotti stood in our briefing room several months ago and spoke, I think, very eloquently about this," Col. Steve Warren, a Pentagon spokesman, said, referring to the commander of U.S. Forces Korea, Gen. Curtis Scaparrotti.

"He said that it is prudent for him as a commander to prepare for such a contingency, but that we have no evidence yet that they have achieved that level of technology," Warren said in response to a Yonhap News Agency question about the U.S. assessment of the North's nuclear capabilities.

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Scaparrotti made the remark in October, saying as USFK commander, he assumes that the North has the capabilities to miniaturize nuclear warheads and that the country has "the technology to potentially actually deliver what they say they have."

"Given their technological capabilities, that the time that they've been working on this, that they probably have the capabilities to put this together. I don't believe that they have. I don't know that they have at this point," the commander said at the time.

North Korea has conducted three underground nuclear tests so far in 2006, 2009 and 2013. The country has also conducted a series of long-range missile or rocket launches since 1998. In its latest launch in late 2012, the North succeeded in putting a satellite into orbit aboard a long-range rocket.

Experts have warned that it is only a matter of time for the North to develop nuclear-tipped missiles. (Yonhap)

<http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20150109000230>

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Yonhap News Agency – Seoul, South Korea

N. Korea Trying to Make Submarine Capable of Firing Missiles: Think Tank

By Chang Jae-soon

January 9, 2015

WASHINGTON, Jan. 8 (Yonhap) -- North Korea appears to be trying to equip a submarine to make it capable of firing missiles, a U.S. think tank said Thursday, warning such hard-to-detect, missile-capable submarines would pose significant threats to South Korea.

The website 38 North, run by the U.S.-Korea Institute at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, said it reached the assessment based on commercial satellite imagery taken of the Sinpo South Shipyard on the east coast between July and December.

Imagery from Dec. 18 shows a rectangular opening, about 4.25 meters long and 2.25 meters wide, on top of the conning tower of a submarine, and the opening is believed to be designed to house one to two small vertical missile launch tubes, the website said, citing analysis by Joseph Bermudez, an expert on satellite imagery.

The imagery also showed workers moving around the area, equipment stored on the deck and a heavy-lift construction crane, the website said, adding that the only reasonable explanation for the crane's presence is "continuing to work on fitting out the submarine."

"North Korea's development of a submarine-launched missile capability would eventually expand Pyongyang's threat to South Korea, Japan and US bases in East Asia, also complicating regional missile defense planning, deployment and operations," the website said. "Submarines carrying land-attack missiles would be challenging to locate and track, would be mobile assets able to attack from any direction, and could operate at significant distances from the Korean peninsula."

It is unclear what missile system would be used in a ballistic missile submarine, but possibilities include a shorter naval version of the Musudan intermediate-range ballistic missile, a Rodong medium-range ballistic missile and naval versions of the solid-fueled KN-02 short-range ballistic missile, it said.

"Nevertheless, such a threat is not present today. Moreover, an effort by Pyongyang to develop an operational missile-carrying submarine would be an expensive and time-consuming endeavor with no guarantee of success," the website said.

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North Korea is believed to have developed advanced missile technologies through a series of test launches. In its latest rocket launch, conducted in late 2012, the North succeeded in putting a satellite into orbit aboard a long-range rocket.

The test sparked fears that the North has moved closer to ultimately developing nuclear-tipped missiles that could potentially reach the mainland U.S. The country has so far conducted three underground nuclear tests in 2006, 2009 and 2013.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2015/01/09/39/0301000000AEN20150109000300315F.html>

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Sputnik International News – Russian Information Agency

Russia's New Ballistic Missile Can Become Operational in 2016: SMF Commander

According to the Commander of Russia's Strategic Missile Forces, Russia's new-generation strategic ballistic missile RS-26 are currently being tested and is planned to be put on combat duty in 2016.

25 December 2014

VLASIKHA (Moscow Region), December 25 (Sputnik) — Russia's new-generation strategic ballistic missile RS-26 could be put on combat duty as early as in 2016, Commander of Russia's Strategic Missile Forces (SMF), Col. Gen. Sergei Karakayev, said Thursday.

"Tests of the RS-26 ballistic missile are still underway. We are planning to complete them next year and begin putting the missile on combat duty in 2016," Karakayev told RIA Novosti.

RS-26, dubbed Rubezh, is a solid propellant missile with an estimated range of 5,800 kilometers (about 3,600 miles). According to open sources, as of January 2014, the SMF is estimated to have 311 operational ballistic missile systems of five different types.

According to Western experts, Russia is attempting to fill the gap in its medium-range missile capabilities, which resulted from the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) that eliminated ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges between 500 kilometers (300 miles) and 5,500 kilometers (3,400 miles).

Earlier in December, Russian President Vladimir Putin emphasized the importance of maintaining the country's nuclear deterrence capability, citing a growing number of security challenges, including the controversial US global missile shield, with some of its elements deployed in eastern Europe.

<http://sputniknews.com/russia/20141225/1016243403.html>

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Sputnik International News – Russian Information Agency

Russia's New Military Doctrine Permits Retaliatory Nuclear Strike Only

Russia considers the prevention of a nuclear war as the top priority for the national defense policy, the updated military doctrine reads.

26 December 2014

MOSCOW, December 26 (Sputnik) – Russia stopped short of including the “preemptive strike” notion into its new military doctrine released Friday, permitting the use of its nuclear arsenal only as a retaliatory measure.

Earlier media reports suggested that Russia's military doctrine could be updated to include the term "preemptive strike." However, provisions concerning the possibility of a nuclear strike remain largely similar to those outlined in the 2010 version.



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“Russia reserves the right to use nuclear weapons in response to the use of nuclear weapons or any other types of weapons of mass destruction against Russia or its allies, as well as in the case of an attack with conventional weaponry that threatens the very existence of the state,” the doctrine says.

A high-ranking Russian Security Council official, who took part in drafting the new version of the doctrine, told RIA Novosti on December 10 that “the section concerning the use of nuclear weapons remains unchanged” in the draft.

According to the updated military doctrine, the prevention of a nuclear war or any other type of conflict is core to Russia’s defense policy.

“The prevention of a nuclear military conflict, as well as any other military conflict, constitutes the basis for Russia’s defense policy,” the doctrine reads.

The principle that Russia's nuclear arsenal is intended solely for deterrence has been at the core of the Russian military doctrine for years.

The final decision to use nuclear weapons for warfare lies with the President of the Russian Federation, according to the document. In December, Russian President Vladimir Putin stressed it was important for the country to maintain its nuclear deterrence capability due to the growing number of security challenges.

The update to the doctrine specified that NATO's military buildup and the US Prompt Global Strike program, which aims to develop the capability of striking anywhere in the world within one hour, as the new threats to Russia's security.

<http://sputniknews.com/military/20141226/1016271354.html>

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The Times of Israel – Jerusalem, Israel

Nazis’ Vast, Secret WMD Facility Uncovered in Austria

Increased radiation levels measured near underground complex, reinforcing claims of nuclear experiments

By Times of Israel staff

December 29, 2014

A huge, secret, underground Nazi weapons factory, believed to have been built for the development and planned manufacture of nuclear weapons and other WMDs, has been uncovered in Austria.

Now scholars want to know if the SS general who oversaw it was brought to America after the war to help the US with its weapons programs.

The vast weapons facility was uncovered last week near the town of St. Georgen and der Gusen by a team led by Austrian documentary-maker Andreas Sulzer, who said it was “likely the biggest secret weapons production facility of the Third Reich.” The 75-acre industrial complex is located close to a second subterranean factory, the B8 Bergkristall facility where the Messerschmitt Me 262, the world’s first operational jet-powered fighter, was produced toward the end of World War II, London’s Sunday Times reported (paywall).

The existence of the facility was mentioned in the diaries of an Austrian physicist who worked for the Nazis, and Sulzer used ground-penetrating radar technology to pinpoint its location. His team cut away layers of earth and granite slabs with which the Nazis had sealed the entrance shaft.

“Declassified intelligence documents as well as testimony from witnesses helped excavators identify the concealed entrance,” The Times said. Work on the excavation was halted last week by local authorities who required that he get new permits for the dig, but is set to resume next month.

Issue No.1147, 09 January 2015

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“Previous research had found increased levels of radiation around the St Georgen site, apparently giving credibility to longstanding claims that Nazi scientists experimented with nuclear weapons in the area, which was under the exclusive command of the SS,” the Times reported.

It quoted Rainer Karlsch, a historian working with Sulzer, saying: “The SS leadership . . . aspired to create a combination of missiles and weapons of mass destruction. They wanted to equip the A4 [a variant of the V-2] missile, or more advanced rockets, with poison gas, radioactive material or nuclear warheads.”

“The facility, like the Bergkristall factory, relied on slave labor from the nearby Mauthausen-Gusen concentration camp,” the Sunday Times said. “Up to 320,000 inmates are said to have died because of the brutal conditions in the subterranean labyrinth.”

“Prisoners from concentration camps across Europe were handpicked for their special skills — physicists, chemists or other experts — to work on this monstrous project,” Sulzer told the British newspaper, “and we owe it to the victims to finally open the site and reveal the truth.”

Sulzer, whose work is being partly funded by German state TV network ZDF, is also seeking to establish what became of SS General Hans Kammler, who managed the project and reported to SS chief Heinrich Himmler.

“Kammler was in charge of Hitler’s missile programs, including the V-2 rocket used against London in the latter stages of the war. He was known as a brilliant but ruthless commander, who had signed off the blueprints for the gas chambers and crematoria at the Auschwitz concentration camp complex in southern Poland,” The Times reported. “Rumors persist that he was captured by the Americans and given a new identity after the war.”

In the post-war Operation Paperclip, some 1,500 scientists, technicians and engineers from Nazi Germany and other countries — who were believed capable of contributing to US weapons programs, and whose expertise the US did not want going to the Russians — were brought to America. Nazi party participants, activists and supporters were supposed to have been excluded from this program, but this restriction was circumvented, and recruits included rocket scientist Wernher von Braun — the central figure in Nazi rocket development.

Kammler is believed to have lived at the St. Georgen site, and was headquartered in an area captured by the US Army in May 1945.

“Kammler was officially said to have committed suicide after the war. But according to John Richardson, supported by declassified documents from the Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC), he was interrogated by Richardson’s father and then taken to America as part of Operation Paperclip,” the newspaper reported. Donald Richardson worked for the Office of Strategic Services, a forerunner of the CIA.

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/nazis-vast-secret-wmd-facility-uncovered-in-austria/>

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TASS Russian News Agency – Moscow, Russia

Strategic Nuclear Force to Become Defense Ministry’s Priority 2015 — General Staff

This year three regiments of the Strategic Missile Force have been rearmed with the new Yars system, and four strategic bombers Tu-160 and Tu-95MS have undergone upgrade and entered duty

December 29, 2014

MOSCOW, December 29. /TASS/. The development of the strategic nuclear force will be the Russian Defense Ministry’s top priority, the chief of the General Staff, Valery Gerasimov, said on the Rossiya-24 television news channel.

“The condition and development of the strategic nuclear force is of top priority, of course. This year three regiments of the Strategic Missile Force have been rearmed with the new Yars system. Four strategic bombers Tu-160 and Tu-95MS have undergone upgrade and entered duty,” he said.

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A number of tasks to upgrade the Strategic Missile Force structure have been addressed. In 2014 two high factory readiness radars were commissioned in Kalinigrad and Irkutsk, and two more entered experimental duty in Barnaul and Yeniseisk," Gerasimov said. "Next year both will join active service. All strategic routes of approach - south-western and eastern - have been put under control. In the Air and Space Defense force all brigades have been reformed to air defense divisions," he added.

Russian Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu earlier reported that Russia's Strategic Nuclear Forces added 38 new intercontinental ballistic missiles to their tables of equipment this year, including 22 submarine-based missiles.

<http://itar-tass.com/en/russia/769871>

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Defense News.com – Washington, D.C.

New Russian Military Doctrine Labels NATO as Main Threat

Agence France-Presse (AFP)

December 29, 2014

MOSCOW – The Kremlin on Friday branded the expansion of NATO as a fundamental threat to Russia in a revised military doctrine that dramatically reflects deteriorating relations with the West.

The new document, approved by Russian President Vladimir Putin, decries the "reinforcement of NATO's offensive capacities directly on Russia's borders, and measures taken to deploy a global anti-missile defense system" in Central Europe.

NATO was already seen a major threat in an earlier version of the doctrine published in 2010, but the war in Ukraine has further raised tensions to levels not seen since the Cold War.

The alarmed tone of the new version comes in the wake of repeated protests by Moscow over NATO's decision to position troops in alliance member states like Poland or the Baltic states that border Russia.

The Kremlin has also opposed NATO's American-driven plan to base its anti-missile defense shield in Central Europe, which Moscow views as directed foremost against Russia.

The doctrine's harsher tone also follows Wednesday's decision by Ukraine to abandon its non-aligned status — a symbolic move that provoked Moscow's anger by potentially clearing the way for Kiev to request NATO membership.

Ukraine faces a huge task to bring its military up to NATO norms, and key members of the alliance, including France and Germany, remain skeptical about it joining the alliance.

Despite its new anti-NATO edge, the Russian doctrine remains primarily defensive in nature, calling any military action by Russia justifiable only after all non-violent options to settle a conflict have been exhausted.

In the same vein, it notes the "decreased likelihood of a large-scale war against Russia", although it does list a number of increasing threats to stability like territorial disputes, "interference in the internal affairs" of nations, and the use of strategic arms in space.

Russia's new military doctrine also introduces the concept of "non-nuclear dissuasion" based on maintaining a high degree of preparedness of conventional military forces. It also urges active participation in regional security organizations like the Commonwealth of Independent States, made up of nine former Soviet Republics; and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation formed by Russia, China, and several ex-Soviet Caucasian republics.

It reserves however the right to use the country's nuclear arsenal in the event of aggression against Russia or its allies, or in case of "threat to the very existence of the state."

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Among the principal duties listed in the doctrine for the country's armed forces during times of peace is the protection "of Russia's national interests in the Arctic," a strategic region in Russia's future energy development to which the United States and Canada also lay claim.

<http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/international/europe/2014/12/28/new-russian-military-doctrine-labels-nato-main-threat/20966651/>

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TASS Russian News Agency – Moscow, Russia

Russian Strategic Bombers Make more than 50 Flights over World Ocean

"The infrastructure is being created to provide for combat service by some part of strategic bombers of long-range aviation," spokesman of Russian Air Force Colonel Igor Klimov told reporters

January 01, 2015

MOSCOW, January 1. /TASS/. Russian strategic bombers have made more than 50 flights over the world ocean in the previous year and fighter jets have made their longest possible flights to far north regions, spokesman of Russian Air Force Colonel Igor Klimov told reporters.

In his words, domestic military forces have received more than 200 aircraft and helicopter gunships, air defence systems S-400, air defence missile artillery systems Pantsir-S1, radar complexes and stations under the state defence order in 2014, he said. The network of military airfields is being streamlined, the colonel recalled.

"Aircraft of long-range aviation have made more than 50 flights over North, Norwegian, Mediterranean, Baltic and Black Seas, Atlantic, Pacific and Arctic Oceans. The infrastructure is being created to provide for combat service by some part of strategic bombers of long-range aviation," Klimov said.

He also noted that fighter jets had made flights at their maximum possible range with three air refuellings, transport jets delivered cargoes to Syria, transferred a mobile hospital to Guinea and landed paratroopers in far northern regions. "The landing of tactical paratroopers was drilled to resolve tasks to eliminate the aftermath of emergencies," Klimov added.

The colonel also noted that successful drills of pilots in strategic war games Vostok-2014 and other military exercises, including international drills, was an outcome of military training in the previous year. Meanwhile, international stage of pilot contest Aviadarts was held for the first time, showing a quite high level of training and skills of Russian military, Klimov said.

<http://itar-tass.com/en/russia/770212>

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The Moscow Times – Moscow, Russia

Russian Battle Robots near Testing for Military Use

The Moscow Times

January 02, 2015

Machine-gun wielding battle robots are going to be tested in Russia's Astrakhan region for use by the country's Strategic Missile Forces, the Interfax news agency reported Friday.

Major Dmitry Andreyev, a representative for the Defense Ministry's Strategic Missile Forces, was cited as saying that preparation for the testing is currently in its final stage.

The trials will be focused on "exploring mobile and stationary robotic systems, including those that are responsible for the formulation of remote-controlled means of stealth technology and signaling," Andreyev said.

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The testing is part of an initiative to deploy robots to protect the Defense Ministry's intercontinental ballistic missile launch sites by 2020, a plan announced by Andreyev last summer.

At that time, Andreyev described the robots as a "remote-controlled firing system" and said testing on the system would be completed by the end of 2014, Interfax reported.

The robots, which weigh 900 kilograms and wield a 12.7 mm machine gun, first underwent testing last April. They boast a speed of up to 45 kilometers per hour, can function for up to 10 hours at a time and remain operational in standby mode for up to one week, Vesti.ru reported at the time.

<http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/russian-battle-robots-near-testing-for-military-use/514038.html>

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Tasnim News Agency – Tehran, Iran

Iran: No Deal Made on Nuclear Issues

January 03, 2015

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Iranian foreign ministry spokeswoman announced that no agreement has been made on the issues raised in the negotiations over Tehran's nuclear energy program.

"No agreement has been made over any of the issues discussed in the nuclear talks," Marziyeh Afkham reiterated.

She made the remarks in reference to a report published by The Associated Press.

The report quoted some diplomats as saying that Iran and the US have tentatively agreed on a formula that Washington hopes will reduce Tehran's ability to make what it called nuclear arms by committing it to ship to Russia much of the material needed for such weapons.

"Such politically-motivated media campaigns are aimed at damaging the atmosphere of the talks and complicating the settlement of the (nuclear) issue," said Afkham.

According to the report, both sides in the talks are still arguing about how much of an enriched uranium stockpile to leave Iran.

But the diplomats said the newly created catalog lists shipping out much of the material as tentatively agreed upon.

Iran and the sextet wrapped up a week of intensive nuclear talks in Vienna on November 24 without reaching a long-awaited deal they were supposed to hammer out by the self-imposed November 24 deadline.

Their negotiations aim to hammer out a final agreement to end more than a decade of impasse over Tehran's peaceful nuclear program.

The two sides concluded a round of deputy-level talks on Tehran's peaceful nuclear program in Switzerland's Geneva on December 17.

The Swiss city will reportedly once again host the next round of talks before January 20, 2015.

<http://www.tasnimnews.com/English/Home/Single/607236>

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Ha'aretz Daily News – Tel Aviv, Israel

Iran: We Foiled Mossad Attempt to Assassinate Nuclear Scientist

Revolutionary Guards official says operation took place in last two years.

By Haaretz

January 4, 2015

Issue No.1147, 09 January 2015

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An Iranian Revolutionary Guards official says the elite force foiled a Mossad attempt to assassinate one of the country's nuclear scientists in the last two years, Iran's Fars news agency reports.

"In the last two years, the Zionist enemy (Israel) was trying hard to assassinate an Iranian nuclear scientist, but the timely presence of the [Revolutionary Guards] security forces thwarted the terrorist operation," Col. Ya'qoub Baqeri, deputy chief liaison officer of Flight Guards Corps, told Fars on Saturday.

The story noted that in June 2012, Iran announced it had arrested "all the elements" involved in the assassinations of five Iranian nuclear scientists that had taken place in the previous two years. Fars added that prior to those purported arrests, Iranian intelligence detected Mossad bases "within the territories of one of Iran's Western neighbors" that trained and assisted the assassins.

Israel has never commented officially on these killings, but major Western media, quoting off-the-record Israeli intelligence sources, have attributed them to the Mossad. Last March, CBS News reported that the Obama administration was pressuring Jerusalem to halt such killings.

CBS national correspondent Dan Raviv, an expert on Israeli intelligence, reported that the Mossad "ran an assassination campaign for several years aimed at Iran's top nuclear scientists. The purpose was to slow the progress made by Iran, which Israel feels certain is aimed at developing nuclear weapons; and to deter trained and educated Iranians from joining their country's nuclear program."

Raviv reported that at least five nuclear scientists had been killed, mostly by car bombs. "Remarkably, the Israeli assassins were never caught, obviously having long-established safe houses inside Iran – although several Iranians who may have helped the Mossad were arrested and executed," the CBS report stated.

The CBS story added that even ahead of the pressure from the Obama administration, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had himself ordered the Mossad to stop the assassinations because he no longer wanted to run the risk of agents getting "captured and hanged."

<http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/1.635269>

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FARS News Agency – Tehran, Iran
Tuesday, January 06, 2015

Zarif Rejects Enrichment outside Iran

TEHRAN (FNA) - Iran's top negotiator in the nuclear talks with the six world powers dismissed the possibility of Iran's uranium enrichment outside its borders, adding that the entire world has accepted the country's enrichment right.

"Today, no one speaks of enrichment outside Iran. Today no one has a word about (Iran's right of) enrichment in principle since today enrichment and moving towards industrialized enrichment has been accepted as an inalienable reality and no one doubts about it anymore," Zarif said, addressing Iranian legislators at the parliament on Tuesday.

"Today, no one speaks of suspending enrichment. Today no one speaks of closing Fordo (enrichment facilities) or Arak (heavy water reactor) (both in Central Iran)," he added.

Zarif referred to the fatwa (religious decree) issued by Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei that has placed a strong religious ban on the acquisition, possession and use of atomic bombs, and said even the US and western leaders lay emphasis on this fatwa as an indication of Iran's true opposition to the Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs).

"Today, our sides in the negotiations have well realized that Iran is committed to talks, but hates to be despised," he underscored.

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In relevant remarks in December, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani underlined the nation would never give up its inalienable nuclear rights.

"Today like before we will continue our resistance on the path of the country's national interests and goals as well as our religion," President Rouhani said in a meeting with a group of elites and war veterans in Golestan province, Northern Iran.

The Iranian president reiterated that resistance would help the nation to embrace victory in all areas and achieve its goals.

"You should not have any doubt that the G5+1, the western world, the eastern world and the region all are in need of constructive interaction with Iran," President Rouhani added.

He reiterated that Iran is today at a juncture that the world has accepted its basic nuclear rights, and said, "The world today has accepted the nuclear enrichment to take place on Iranian territory."

"The world has accepted that we have Arak heavy water reactor; the world has accepted that we continue our activities in Fordo."

Rouhani underlined that the world had accepted that the time for imposing oppressive sanctions against Iran was over.

He pointed to the removal of "oppressive sanctions" as an inalienable right of the Iranian nation, and said, "You should have no doubt that Iran will become triumphant and Iran will be better off next year."

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13931016001024>

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The Daily Star – Beirut, Lebanon

France Won't Yield on Iran Nuclear Demand: Hollande

Agence France-Presse (AFP)

January 6, 2015

PARIS: French President Francois Hollande said Monday that his country would stand firm on its demand that Tehran vow not to pursue nuclear weapons ahead of fresh international negotiations.

"If there is no clear statement from Iran on giving up nuclear weapons, there will be no agreement," Hollande said on France Inter radio. "France will not yield on that point. It will remain absolutely firm."

Western countries fear Iran is seeking to build nuclear weapons, which Tehran has strongly denied.

The talks have been complicated by the conflicts in Iraq and Syria, with the West finding itself on the same side as Iran in combating the ISIS jihadi group.

Hollande accepted that Iran is "a partner in finding stability in Iraq and Syria," but France has been keen to separate that issue from the nuclear talks.

"If Iran wishes to fight against Daesh [ISIS], it is because the group represents a threat to its interests," Defense Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said last month. "Hoping that support from Iran against Daesh can be exchanged for us ignoring Tehran's violations on non-proliferation issues would be a profound error."

Iran and the "P5+1" group of nations – the US, Britain, France, Russia, China and Germany – are due to resume talks in January.

A temporary agreement was signed in November 2013, with Tehran accepting strict constraints on its nuclear program in exchange for a lifting of sanctions.

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<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2015/Jan-06/283177-france-wont-yield-on-iran-nuclear-demand-hollande.ashx>

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FARS News Agency – Tehran, Iran

Wednesday, January 07, 2015

Iran's Deputy Top Commander: Resumption of Ties with US Impossible

TEHRAN (FNA) - Deputy Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Brigadier General Massoud Jazayeri rejected any possibility for Tehran-Washington rapprochement.

"The Iranian nation never forgets the wounds put on its body by the crimes of Britain, the US and their allies," Jazayeri said, addressing a gathering in Tehran on Wednesday.

"Given the US arrogant nature, there won't be any resumption of relations with that country," he stressed.

Jazayeri underlined that given the attempts made by the super capitalist and Zionist systems to loot countries, the freedom-seeking states should increase their power in all fields, adding that the successful experience of the Islamic Revolution correctly shows that the hegemonic powers and the US will be brought to their knees when they are confronted with firm resolve.

In relevant remarks in November, Jazayeri condemned the US cruelties and animosities towards Iran, and said Tehran could not trust Washington.

"Most of the Muslim world's problems are the result of the arrogant and expansionist performance of the hegemonic powers, headed by the US, and the tragedies that Islamic countries have faced, are so much that we cannot have even an iota of trust in the Americans," he said in Tehran.

Reminding the US disloyalty to its promises to Iran in the past, Jazayeri said, "It is obvious that from now on, we will not have even an iota of trust in the promises of the hegemonic powers."

Also in December, Jazayeri emphasized that he was pessimistic about the attainment of desirable results in Iran's nuclear talks with the six world powers (the US, Russia, China, Britain and France plus Germany), although both sides continued the negotiations seriously.

"We shouldn't pin so much hope on getting a desirable conclusion from the negotiations," he told reporters on the sidelines of a students congress in Tehran.

"The opposite party to the talks is not interested in the settlement of our issues based on justice and our legal and international rights," the senior commander added.

Jazayeri warned that the world powers and their allies were, in fact, attempting to prevent Iran from gaining and using its sources of power, specially in the field of economy.

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13931017000427>

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Tehran Times – Tehran, Iran

Iran, 5+1 to Resume Talks on January 18: Araqchi

Political Desk

Thursday, 08 January 2015

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TEHRAN - Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi has said that Iran and the 5+1 group (the five permanent UN Security Council members plus Germany) are scheduled to resume the next round of nuclear talks in Geneva on January 18.

The talks are to be held at the level of deputy foreign ministers, he told IRNA on Tuesday.

He also stated that prior to the talks, the Iranian negotiating team will hold bilateral meetings with the U.S. and Russian delegations.

On an announcement earlier by Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif that the talks start on January 15, he said bilateral talks will begin on that date.

Iran and the six major powers failed to meet a November 24 deadline to strike a final nuclear pact and agreed to extend the talks until July 1, 2015.

<http://tehrantimes.com/politics/120841-iran-51-to-resume-talks-on-january-18-araqchi>

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Press TV – Tehran, Iran

Zarif to Meet with Kerry in Geneva on Jan 14: Araqchi

Friday, January 09, 2015

A senior Iranian nuclear negotiator says the country's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and his American counterpart John Kerry are to meet in Geneva later in January.

The two top diplomats will travel to the Swiss city on Wednesday, January 14 to meet prior to the bilateral meeting of their deputies, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs Abbas Araqchi said on Friday.

Araqchi said Iranian and American negotiating delegations will subsequently hold bilateral negotiation January 15 to 17 in Geneva and that Iran and the P5+1 group of world powers will negotiate at deputy foreign ministerial level on January 18.

Nuclear negotiators from Iran and the P5+1 group – the US, Russia, China, France, Britain and Germany – wrapped up their latest round of talks on Tehran's nuclear program in Geneva on December 17, 2014.

The three-day Geneva discussions were held almost three weeks after Tehran and the six countries failed to reach a final agreement by a November 24 deadline despite making some progress.

The two sides agreed to extend their discussions for seven more months until July 1, 2015. They also agreed that the interim deal they had signed in Geneva in November 2013 should remain in place during the negotiations.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov will travel to Iran on January 12 for bilateral nuclear negotiations and consultations, Araqchi said.

<http://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2015/01/09/392313/Zarif-to-meet-with-Kerry-in-Geneva>

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The Tribune – Chandigarh, India

DRDO Develops Mobile Lab to Screen Troops in Nuclear Scenario

Vijay Mohan, Tribune News Service

January 5, 2015

Chandigarh: With threat perception of terrorists using weapons of mass destruction increasing, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has developed a mobile truck mounted laboratory to screen troops in the field from the after effects of radiation and initiate remedial measures.

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The chamber, termed as Mobile Whole Body Counter (MWBC) will do away with the necessity and the logistic impediment of evacuating soldiers from operational areas to rear echelons.

According to a bulletin issued by DRDO's Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Allied Sciences (INMAS), in case of radiological and nuclear accidents, some radio-nuclides are released, which contaminate the environment for extended periods of time due to their long life. Stating that terrorists are fast graduating towards chemical, biological radiological and nuclear (CBRN) terrorism and since Indian forces are constantly engaged in anti-terrorist and internal security duties in Jammu and Kashmir, the North-East and Maoist affected areas, the bulletin claims that the chances of use of radiation dispersal devices (RDD) by terrorists on Army installations are high.

Consequently, in order to keep soldiers fighting fit in the event of use of RDDs by terrorist outfits, each soldier suspected of being affected by radiation will be required to screen for radioactive contamination. This would help mitigate any panic in the unit concerned as well monitor therapeutic response.

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/nation/drdo-develops-mobile-lab-to-screen-troops-in-nuclear-scenario/26753.html>

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Breaking Defense.com – Washington, D.C.

OPINION/Commentary

Rethinking the Ground-Based Strategic Deterrent

By Robert Spalding and Adam Lowther

December 29, 2014

The United States Air Force needs to replace the Minuteman III ICBM fleet at the three nuclear missile bases in Wyoming, Montana, and North Dakota. Critics decry the cost of a proposed replacement, thought to be in the range of several hundred billion dollars. Their main argument against replacing ICBMs is not the cost of replacing the Minuteman III. The critics say we just don't need them. They are, they say, a "Cold War relic."

The fact that nuclear peer Russia and near-peer China are modernizing their ICBM forces is often lost on those critics. While the reasons why are debatable, Russia's recent aggression on a variety of fronts has left many Russia apologists dumbfounded. Russia isn't just modernizing its ICBMs. At a frequency unprecedented since the Cold War, Russian nuclear-capable bombers are penetrating the American Air Defense Identification Zone's (ADIZ) in both the continental United States and around Guam. Russia, unlike the US, is investing heavily to modernize their nuclear triad — delivery vehicles and weapons. The Russians seem intent on relying on their nuclear force to counter American conventional military superiority.

China likewise is improving its nuclear forces. The DF-41— a multiple reentry vehicle ICBM — was recently tested successfully. They are also working on improving their nuclear submarine capability, placing new submarine-launched ballistic missiles on Jin class nuclear submarines. To deter such capabilities America requires a secure and reliable nuclear deterrent for decades to come.

Why ICBMs?

The fact that the basics of the ICBM mission have not changed much since these systems were first fielded may explain why some believe they are outdated. Before we commit to deactivating this weapon system, it is important to consider some of its benefits.

First, ICBMs provide an excellent deterrent to nuclear attack on the homeland. The 400-plus Minuteman III silos spread across the American West are invulnerable to all but massive nuclear missile attacks. Thus, their existence sets a high threshold for attacking the United States, either conventionally or with nuclear weapons. Without ICBMs, our strategic nuclear targets shrink from 503 to six, which could all be destroyed with conventional strikes. Only ICBMs require a nuclear strike.

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Second, ICBMs cost less than the other two parts of the nuclear triad. While a Minuteman III weapon system replacement will come at a cost; it is likely to prove operationally cost effective over the long term. It is important to remember that ICBMs are used every single day to deter our adversaries.

Building new ICBMs provides the US an opportunity to consider deploying ICBMs in new and creative ways to deter a broader range of future threats. Instead of just procuring a new nuclear-capable ICBM, a common launch vehicle capable of carrying multiple modules might prove a good option.

A New Ground Based Strategic Deterrent

Some non-traditional missions a common launch vehicle might provide include:

- a capability for providing time critical space assets like sensors, navigation, or communications satellites in response to a contingency;
- traditional missions like: ballistic missile defense; anti-satellite strikes;
- and prompt conventional strike.

The benefit of such a system would be the ability to replace the top of a missile with a different payload in order to carry out a different mission. At the same time, nuclear deterrence could be preserved.

Traditional nuclear deterrence works by creating the fear of a massive retaliatory response in the minds of a potential adversary. What if ICBMs could also demonstrate that an adversary's objectives are beyond reach? Some have speculated that terrorists may not be deterrable using nuclear weapons, and thus the ICBM force is irrelevant against these threats.

In the future, a state or terror group may elect to detonate a nuclear weapon in the upper atmosphere creating an electro-magnetic pulse (EMP). It would not cause direct casualties but it would cause major disruptions to financial and communication systems worldwide. If the US can demonstrate the ability to rapidly restore these systems in the wake of an EMP attack, the incentive to launch such an attack may be diminished.

A prompt conventional strike capability (usually known as Prompt Global Strike — PGS) would also fill a niche role so the US could strike a fleeting terrorist target or rogue regime. Given its cost, only a small number of such weapons would be feasible and useful. They could not effectively replace nuclear ICBMs.

The concern that a nuclear-armed opponent might mistake a launch as a pre-emptive nuclear attack is used against ICBMs providing the PGS capability. However, with today's improved communications and space situational awareness capabilities the US can offer effective advance notification and assurances to Russia and China, reducing the risks raised by detractors.

Conclusion

While the options for a Minuteman III replacement are still open, what is not debatable is the fact that Russia and China both see ICBMs as critical to their own security. It is now time for the United States to do likewise. When it comes to nuclear deterrence, symmetry of weapons plays an important role in stability. We should not forget that.

Col. Robert S. Spalding III is a B-2 pilot and former military fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations.

Adam Lowther is a professor at the Air Force Research Institute at Maxwell Air Force Base. He specializes in the study of nuclear weapons policy. He was deeply involved in the Commander Directed Investigation about cheating and drug use among missileers at Malmstrom Air Base.

<http://breakingdefense.com/2014/12/rethinking-the-ground-based-strategic-deterrent/>

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Strategic Culture Foundation Online Journal – Moscow, Russia
OPINION/Columnist

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Russia Revises Military Doctrine and Upgrades Strategic Nuclear Forces

Yuriy RUBTSOV
31 December 2014

This is the first substantial upgrade of Russia's military doctrine published in February 2010. The document had to be revised by the end of 2014 in response to the growing pressure exerted on Russia by the West after Moscow refused to recognize the legitimacy of the coup in Ukraine. A military doctrine offers no spectrum of responses to isolated threats but rather provides guidance on countering the long-term trends undermining the country's security. The revised version of the doctrine describes the following factors that pose threats to Russia:

- the growing military potential of NATO and its expansion bringing the alliance's military infrastructure close to the borders of the Russian Federation;
- the deployment of foreign military contingents on the territories of the states adjacent to Russia;
- the construction and deployment of strategic missile defense by the Pentagon undermining global stability, the implementation of Prompt Strike Concept and the plans to place weapons systems in space;

The doctrine provides guidance on how to respond to emerged threats and challenges. The new provisions are introduced as a reaction to the events in Ukraine and around it, as well as in Africa, Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan which threaten the Russian Federation. The specific features of contemporary military conflict include «the complex use of military force in combination with political and economic measures, information warfare and other actions of non-military nature implemented with intensive use of people's protest potential» along with the use of political forces and public movements controlled and financed from outside. The authors of the document say it openly that Russia is ready to counter the organizers of «color revolutions».

The revised military doctrine remains to be of defensive nature. Russia would resort to the use of force only when all non-violent ways to solve a conflict are exhausted.

The document is added by a new provision on non-nuclear deterrence which envisions the implementation of foreign policy and military measures to prevent an aggression against the Russian Federation when the use of nuclear weapons is premature or unjustified.

As one can see the nuclear weapons are not viewed as the only means of deterrence. At that the West exerts unprecedented pressure on Russia and the talks about the return of Cold War posture are renewed. It makes the strategic nuclear forces the most important factor to guarantee security. The revised document does not envision changes in the order the nuclear forces could be used. A nuclear strike could be delivered in response to the use of nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction against Russia and its allies or in case Russia becomes a victim of conventional attack when the very existence of the state is threatened. Belarus and other partners - members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization are the Russia's allies to be defended.

The Russian military leadership pays special attention to upgrading the nuclear shield. On the very same day the Russian President signed the document a RS-24 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) blasted off from Plesetsk successfully hitting a designated target at the Kura test range on the Kamchatka peninsula in the Far East. The solid-fuel Topol-M and Yars ICBMs designed for mobile platforms and silos make up the backbone of Russia's contemporary strategic potential. Over 20 mobile and ground-based Yars ICBMs will be added to the inventory of the Russia' Strategic Rocket Forces next year.

The day before the Commander of the Strategic Rocket Forces of Russia Colonel-General (three stars) Karakayev officially announced the development of a heavy solid-fuel ballistic missile known as RS-26. Starting from 2016 the RS-26 is to reinforce the group of solid-fuel rockets, such as Topol-M and Yars of the Strategic Missile Forces. The characteristics are classified but it is known that the missile already dubbed by media the «killer of missile defense» will be able to break through any type of missile defense.



The silo-based systems are upgraded too. The RS-20B Voevoda (NATO classification – Satan) is the most powerful nuclear weapon in service today. It can penetrate the multi-echelon missile defense deployed by the US. It is in service since the 1980s. Its service life was extended but the time is drawing near for its replacement.

In a few years the heavy 100-ton Sarmat will take its place. It will be produced only by Russian enterprises to exclude the risks like in case of Satan, for instance, when some components were produced by Ukrainian Yuzhnoe design bureau and manufacturer. The Sarmat heavy ballistic missile will be deployed in Uzhur (Krasnoyarsk region) and the village of Dombarovskiy (Orenburg region). There is one more inspiring news to confirm the strong political will of Russian leadership. Russia was unwise enough to take out of service the RT-23 railway ICBM launching system (NATO reporting name SS-24 Scalpel). As a platform a train could cover a thousand kilometers a day and it was impossible to track it from satellites as it was undetectable among many thousands of other trains moving on the ground. Strategic Rocket Forces Commander Col.Gen. Sergei Karakayev stated a new military railroad missile system dubbed Barguzin is being developed for Russia's Strategic Rocket Forces. An R&D project was rolled out to develop a new rail-mobile intercontinental ballistic missile with the first prototype to be completed in 2020. The weapon's mobility makes it difficult to track, thus complicating a preemptive strike. On his part, Russian Deputy Defense Minister Anatoly Antonov said the new system does not violate the START Treaty which stipulates that each side has a right to independently decide the structure and composition of its strategic nuclear potential.

One regiment (that is one train) of the new Barguzin rail-mobile system will include six (MIRV-multiple independently targeted vehicle) Yars missiles. The Scalpel system included three RT-23 Molodets ICBMs. The strategic forces will have a division including five railway missile platforms (regiments) constantly changing the location as they will move across the country's vast plains. The Scalpel railway ICBM platform used to be a never ending headache for Americans to make them strongly insist that the system be taken out of service. One can only imagine what kind of nightmare the Barguzin will become for the USA. The system's life service is to last till 2040.

NATO spokeswoman Oana Lungescu responded by saying in a statement that the alliance «poses no threat to Russia or to any nation.» «Any steps taken by NATO to ensure the security of its members are clearly defensive in nature, proportionate and in compliance with international law», she said. No matter it evidently contradicted the facts the spokeswoman said «In fact, it is Russia's actions, including currently in Ukraine, which are breaking international law and undermining European security.» Such statements evoke no surprise, especially after it was stated in Washington that Russia moved to the borders of NATO - not the other way around.

The official representative of the alliance added that NATO seeks constructive relationship with Russia. It is logical to guess that the revised military doctrine and the measures taken by the Russian government to upgrade the country's defense will give a new impetus to this process.

<http://www.strategic-culture.org/news/2014/12/31/russia-revises-military-doctrine-and-upgrades-strategic-nuclear-forces.html>

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The National Interest.org – Washington, D.C.

OPINION/Feature

India's Mighty Nuclear-Weapons Program: Aimed at China and Pakistan?

The who, what, when, where and why when it comes to New Delhi's nukes.

By Robert Farley

January 3, 2015

India's nuclear weapons program is a cornerstone of New Delhi's security strategy for the 21st century. For most of the post-war period, India badly trailed the established nuclear powers in weapon quality, quantity, and the sophistication of delivery systems. In recent years, however, India has indicated a willingness to take the steps necessary to becoming a first rate nuclear power.

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This article examines the development of the nuclear program over history, the current state of the program and its associated delivery system projects, the strategic rationale of India's nuclear efforts, and the likely future contours of the program. The current balance of nuclear power in South and East Asia is unstable, and likely to result in a nuclear arms race involving Pakistan, India, and China.

History of the Program:

Indian work on nuclear technology began even prior to independence from the United Kingdom, but a period of instability and insecurity beginning in 1960 accelerated development. Indian defeat in the Sino-Indian War demonstrated conventional vulnerability, which the inconclusive 1965 Indo-Pakistani exacerbated. US efforts to intimidate New Delhi during the 1971 war with Pakistan also played a role.

India detonated its first nuclear device in 1974, in a "peaceful" nuclear demonstration. Yielding between 6 and 15 kilotons, the test drew widespread international criticism. Indian nuclear development progressed through fits and starts over the next two decades, with New Delhi reaching an uneasy accommodation with the world's nuclear community to keep the program in the shadows. Ballistic missile development continued alongside the nuclear program.

This accommodation broke down in May, 1998, when India tested five devices (four fission, and one thermonuclear device that likely failed). Driven by domestic politics and deteriorating relations with Pakistan, the tests strained India's relations with the United States, and with the international non-proliferation community. However, they did indicate India's commitment to a future nuclear defense profile, and confirmed India's progress with weapons design over the previous two decades.

How Many Nukes Does India Have?

According to the Arms Control Association, India likely possesses around 100 nuclear weapons, mostly of a low yield fission variety. However, reports indicate that India has stepped up its production of fissile material, in conjunction with its nuclear submarine program. This could give India the ability to produce more and larger weapons in a relatively short time frame. It is certainly within India's means to vastly increase the size of its arsenal, and plans to construct four ballistic missile submarines (each carrying twelve missiles) almost certainly indicates an intention to expand.

Launch Systems:

India has long maintained 2/3rds of the nuclear triad, with aircraft-deliverable nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. Several of India's fighter-bomber types can deliver nuclear weapons from the air, and we can expect that future acquisitions (whether of the Rafale, the Su-30MMK, or the PAK-FA) will have similar capability.

With the Prithvi and Agni families of weapons, India has a host of short and medium ballistic missiles that can carry nuclear weapons.

The newest element of India's nuclear arsenal is the INS Arihant, a nuclear ballistic missile submarine currently undergoing trials. India's first domestically built nuclear submarine, Arihant is the first of an expected four SSBNs, will carry twelve Sararika missiles, ranging from 500-1000 miles depending on payload. While the sophistication of the submarines remains in some question, neither Pakistan nor China have plausible anti-submarine warfare capabilities for tracking or sinking the boats.

Strategic Purpose:

India faces two near term nuclear threats. Against Pakistan, India has a huge conventional advantage, but has struggled to meet the irregular challenge. Conversely, most analysts believe that China continues to have a significant military advantage over India, although India's position along China's primary energy supply route ameliorates this problem.

This places India in the unusual position of needing to deter a more powerful nuclear adversary, while intimidating a weaker opponent. Pakistan's apparent decision to press forward with a major nuclear weapons acquisition

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program, along with its long-term commitment to using jihadist groups to destabilize the border regions, make it difficult for India to formulate a cogent response. Because of the stability-instability paradox, nuclear parity benefits Pakistan, allowing the smaller state to undertake risky moves without fear of escalation. At the same time, however, a larger Indian nuclear program could incur a reaction from China, which has long been satisfied with a moderate deterrent arsenal.

Finally, while India does not at this time envision serious conflict with either Russia or the United States, the nuclear weapons capability effectively insures India against great power intervention in its region, or its wars. The contribution of nuclear weapons to national prestige may be waning, although this was important to India at earlier points in the program.

The Future:

Pakistan seems to have determined to rely on nuclear weapons for external defense, conventional military forces for internal integrity, and jihadist terror groups for the pursuit of foreign security policy. If Pakistan continues to build up its nuclear forces, India will answer, and as India's answer brings New Delhi's arsenal within range of China's, Beijing may respond with its own buildup.

This is what Indian escalation may look like:

- Ballistic missiles with longer ranges, MIRV capability, and the potential for maneuverable re-entry.
- SSBNs with longer range missiles, effectively out of the reach of either Chinese or Pakistani anti-submarine systems.
- High yield thermonuclear weapons, potentially requiring additional testing. India may also attempt to develop or acquire long-range stealth aircraft that can penetrate either Chinese or Pakistani airspace.

Concluding Thoughts:

While the strategic nuclear relationship between the United States and Russia has achieved a rough (if increasingly hostile) stability, the China-India-Pakistan triad remains much more fluid, and far more dangerous. Asymmetric nuclear competition between Pakistan and India may generate a potentially more dangerous relationship between India and China. Given the paranoia of Pakistan military leadership, it's hard to see any side exercising unilateral strategic restraint. At the same time, prospects for multilateral arms control between the three powers look grim.

Robert Farley is an assistant professor at the Patterson School of Diplomacy and International Commerce. His work includes military doctrine, national security, and maritime affairs. He blogs at Lawyers, Guns and Money and Information Dissemination and The Diplomat.

<http://nationalinterest.org/feature/indias-mighty-nuclear-weapons-program-aimed-china-pakistan-11956>

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The National Interest.org – Washington, D.C.

OPINION/Feature

Welcome to Cold War 2.0: Russia's New and Improved Military Doctrine

The bear sharpens its claws...

By James Carden

January 5, 2015

As if more evidence were needed that the United States and Russia have indeed embarked upon a New Cold War, the news comes that Russia has revised its military doctrine for the first time since 2010.

Decrying what it sees as Western efforts to turn Ukraine into a "front line of confrontation," the revised doctrine would allow for Russia to deploy precision conventional weapons "as part of strategic deterrent measures" against

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what it sees as its principal threat: NATO. According to the document “the expansion of NATO’s military infrastructure to the Russian borders” poses a significant threat to Russian security. The doctrine also allows for the use of tactical nuclear weapons in the case of a conventional attack that “threatens the very existence” of the Russian state.

No one deserves to be surprised by any of this. As far back as 1993, in the first post-Soviet iteration of the doctrine, Russia renounced its “no first use” policy regarding tactical nuclear weapons if faced with a large-scale attack that posed an existential threat to the state. Around the time of the first round of NATO expansion in and around 1996-7, Russia’s National Security Concept continued to retain “the right to use all forces and means at its disposal, including nuclear weapons, in case an armed aggression creates a threat to the very existence of the Russian Federation as an independent sovereign state.”

In 2000, no doubt spurred on by NATO’s 78-day bombing campaign over Serbia the year before, Russia, now under Mr. Putin, again revised its military doctrine. According to Nikolai Sokov of the Monterey Institute of International Studies, the 2000 iteration of the doctrine broadened the scenarios in which Russia could conceivably deploy nuclear weapons, including:

...armed conflict (primarily ethnic or religious in origin, waged inside the country; other states might be involved indirectly); local war (one or several other states as opponents; the scope and goals of the conflict are limited); regional war (attack by a state or a coalition of states pursuing significant political goals); and global war (attack by a coalition of states; survival and sovereignty of Russia are at stake).

Russia seemed to climb down from its nuclear-heavy posture in 2010, setting what some analysts saw as a “higher bar” for nuclear escalation than was set forth in the 2000 Doctrine. But 2010 was an altogether different time—the apotheosis of the “reset” period that saw the signing of the New START treaty followed by the passage of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1929, which signaled greater U.S.-Russian cooperation regarding Iran.

Some analysts have noted that the current budget squeeze resulting from the price of oil will force the Russian Defense Ministry to slash its operating budget. Contemplating such a cut in Russia’s conventional forces made *Forbes’* Tim Worstall positively gleeful, noting that “it’s always a source of amusement that the aircraft carrier cannot go anywhere outside of Russian territorial waters without a deep sea tug to deal with the likely occasion of the engine breaking down.” Perhaps. Yet we might want to hold off on the schadenfreude; after all, a cut in conventional-weapons expenditures will likely increase Russia’s reliance on its nuclear deterrent, which is a development no one should welcome.

Meanwhile, a dispiriting picture of the administration’s acrobatics with regard to its Russia policy comes courtesy of Bloomberg’s Josh Rogin. Rogin cites administration officials who—presumably with straight faces—report on the behind-the-scenes efforts to engage Russia on issues as diverse as Iran, Syria, the IS Group and North Korea, all the while adding more and more names to the Magnitsky List and threatening further sanctions.

Missing of course from the administration’s reckoning is any awareness that the events of the past month have conspired to shape the Russian government’s threat perception. Leaving strict causality aside, the trend of recent events has ominous portents. Consider. In the weeks leading up to the announcement of Russia’s revised military doctrine, Kiev abandoned its nonaligned status, paving the way for a bid to join NATO; the value of the Russian ruble declined precipitously, prompting a steep rise in interest rates and a concomitant upward pressure on prices; and President Obama signed into law a bill under the cynical moniker of the Ukrainian Freedom Support Act (H.R. 5859), which, among other things, provides for \$350 million in military aid to Kiev.

And according to Rogin’s estimable report, there was not a word about any of this from either the administration or from the hearty band of neo-Cold Warriors on Capitol Hill, many of whom, like John McCain, believe that Obama’s Russia policy is a “strategy worthy in the finest tradition of Neville Chamberlain.” Rhetoric such as this has become a specialty of the Honorable Gentleman from Arizona, but it never seems to occur to McCain and like-minded neocons that crying “Munich!” over and over again is a weak substitute for an actual policy. Worse, it has contributed mightily to one of the principal tragedies of the past year: a revanchist Russia has now become a self-fulfilling prophesy.

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James Carden is a contributing editor for The National Interest.

<http://nationalinterest.org/feature/welcome-cold-war-20-russia%E2%80%99s-new-improved-military-doctrine-11961>

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The Hill – Washington, D.C.

OPINION/Congress Blog

January 07, 2015

A New Missile Defense Policy for the New Year

By David J. Trachtenberg

This year, the new Congress can advance American security by changing the direction and focus of U.S. missile defense policy. It should seize the opportunity.

The Obama administration sees robust defenses to protect American citizens from missile attack as “destabilizing.” Consequently, U.S. missile defenses focus primarily on protecting deployed forces and allies against regional threats. Homeland missile defense efforts remain centered on defense against limited attacks from nations with the least substantial ballistic missile capabilities, like North Korea and Iran – while leaving Americans vulnerable to nuclear annihilation from the more substantial missile forces of Russia and China, all in the name of preserving “stability.” Recent events, however, suggest it is time to rethink this approach.

China has successfully tested ICBMs with multiple warheads and a hypersonic strike vehicle intended to counter U.S. missile defenses, boasting of its ability to rain nuclear destruction on American cities. Russia is building more nuclear weapons, modernizing its entire strategic nuclear arsenal as its top military priority, and conducting Cold War-style simulated strategic force attacks on the West. Russia’s foreign policy is increasingly anti-American, its new military doctrine cites NATO as the “main threat,” it is violating arms control treaties, and has threatened its neighbors with nuclear attack. Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and annexation of Crimea are hardly stabilizing actions.

Yet the Missile Defense Agency (MDA) continues to pursue a “business as usual” approach to defending the homeland. For example, Vice Adm. James Syring, the MDA Director, said that Russia’s behavior and strategic force modernization efforts have no impact on U.S. missile defense plans, noting, “Our policy hasn’t deviated at all. Our focus remains the regional threats.”

Countering regional threats is important, but protecting the homeland should be accorded at least equal priority. Congress has an opportunity this year to rebalance MDA’s approach. One of the most important ways it can do this is by ensuring that problems with the Exo-atmospheric Kill Vehicle (EKV) on the current generation of Ground-Based Interceptors (GBIs) are fixed. While MDA appears eager to move forward with development of a new common kill vehicle – a worthy goal in itself – such an approach will take more time, cost more money, and create more risk than redesigning the current EKV. Unfortunately, the evolution of ballistic missile threats does not afford us the luxury of waiting for a perfect solution.

Fortunately, we know how to fix this problem, and can apply lessons learned from successes with other interceptor programs, most notably the Standard Missile-3 (SM-3), which has an exemplary track record scoring successful intercepts in 80 percent of its tests. Redesigning the GBI’s kill vehicle to incorporate the most successful hardware and technology from the SM-3 program has clear advantages over developing a new kill vehicle from scratch.

Improving the reliability of the EKV is an immediate problem that needs to be addressed quickly. Yet MDA has indicated it will scrap plan to do so if sequestration kicks in again. Sequestration should be overturned, but it should not be used as an excuse to avoid necessary actions.

Other actions Congress should consider to improve our missile defense posture include:

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- Investing in technologies for boost-phase defense – including space-based interceptors – that provide the most cost-effective means of countering ballistic missiles soon after launch. The Obama administration curtailed the most promising boost-phase intercept programs, leaving the United States with no way to shoot down ballistic missiles during their most vulnerable stage of flight.
- Augmenting the Ground-based Mid-course Defense (GMD) system in Alaska and California with a third interceptor site. The planned deployment of 14 additional GBIs and enhancement of the sensors they rely on are useful but insufficient steps.
- Accelerating the GMD test program. Vice Adm. Syring says the GMD program should conduct at least one flight test annually to maintain momentum. But last June's successful GMD test occurred after a nearly three-year hiatus and the next planned test is not scheduled until the end of 2016.

Critics will wrongly argue that a more robust missile defense approach is strategically unwise and fiscally irresponsible in an era of budget austerity. Potential adversaries would like nothing more than to see the U.S. self-deterred in responding to the growing missile threats they pose due to exaggerated concerns over "stability." And the costs of effectively defending the nation from missile attack pale in significance to the potential costs of failing to do so.

U.S. missile defense policy is at a crossroads. We can continue to act as if nothing has changed in recent years or we can chart a new course that more appropriately emphasizes defending Americans against the growing threat of ballistic missile attack.

So long as the administration appears comfortable with the former approach, it will be up to Congress to strike a more prudent balance.

Trachtenberg is president and CEO of Shortwaver Consulting. He was principal deputy assistant secretary of Defense for International Security Policy in the George W. Bush administration and was head of the policy staff of the House Armed Services Committee.

<http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/homeland-security/228672-a-new-missile-defense-policy-for-the-new-year>

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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

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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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