



USAF Center for Unconventional Weapons Studies (CUWS) Outreach Journal

Issue No. 1156, 13 March 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: *"Murky Waters: Naval Nuclear Dynamics in the Indian Ocean"*. Authored by Iskander Rehman; produced by Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; March 9, 2015, 82 pages.

http://carnegieendowment.org/files/murky_waters.pdf

More than five years have passed since India launched its first ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) in July 2009. Meanwhile, Pakistan formally inaugurated a Naval Strategic Force Command headquarters in 2012 and has declared its intent to develop its own sea-based deterrent. As India and Pakistan develop their naval nuclear forces, they will enter increasingly murky waters. By further institutionalizing relations between their navies and by insisting on stronger transparency with regard to naval nuclear developments, both countries may succeed in adding a greater degree of stability to what otherwise promises to be a dangerously volatile maritime environment.

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The Japan News – Tokyo, Japan

Because of U.S. Nuclear Umbrella, Japan Not to Support Austrian Document Seeking Atomic Weapons Ban

Kyodo

March 13, 2015

NEW YORK – Japan does not plan to support a document circulated among U.N. members that calls for a ban on nuclear weapons, after the United States, its security ally and provider of nuclear deterrence, urged it not to, government and diplomatic sources said Thursday.

The paper has been distributed by Austria, which hosted an international meeting on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons in December. Hoping to add impetus to the debate on banning nuclear weapons, Austria plans to submit it to a U.N. conference held from next month to review the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

As the only country to have suffered atomic bombing, Japan has pushed for the adoption at the U.N. General Assembly every year of a resolution calling on states to take action toward the elimination of nuclear weapons.

But because the Austrian paper calls for a treaty banning and eliminating nuclear weapons, the Japanese government has found it inappropriate to support the document, given the need for consistency with the country's reliance on the U.S. nuclear umbrella, the sources said.

"The time is not yet ripe for negotiating" such a pact, a government official said.

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A U.S. State Department official said Washington will not back the paper, citing the need to pursue “a more pragmatic approach that represents a consensus view” of countries subscribing to the NPT.

The Japanese stance on the document, however, is likely to disappoint atomic-bomb survivors in the country who have planned to call for a nuclear weapons ban treaty when the NPT review conference is held in New York from April 27 to May 22.

In mid-January, Austria asked U.N. members to express their support for its document, which it titled the “Austrian Pledge.”

In the paper, Austria calls on all NPT members to “identify and pursue effective measures to fill the legal gap for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons,” citing the “unacceptable humanitarian consequences and associated risks” of nuclear weapons.

But the Japanese Foreign Ministry has determined that the content of the document “crosses a red line,” according to the sources. It is instead considering conveying to Austria Tokyo’s intention of cooperating with it in making the upcoming NPT review conference successful and promoting nuclear disarmament.

The sources said a senior U.S. official who visited Japan in February had urged Japanese officials not to support the paper.

The United States has similarly urged some members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, such as Norway, not to support the Austrian document. Norway is actively engaged in discussions about the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons.

The paper has so far won consent from about 50 countries. Austria’s Foreign Ministry has said the countries do not include those possessing nuclear weapons or those under the protection of countries with nuclear weapons.

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/03/13/national/politics-diplomacy/because-of-u-s-nuclear-umbrella-japan-not-to-support-austrian-document-seeking-atomic-weapons-ban/>

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The Washington Free Beacon – Washington, D.C.

China Works to Block U.S. Missile Defense Deployment

Offers financial incentives to Seoul

By Bill Gertz

March 9, 2015

SEOUL—China is engaged in an international influence campaign to block South Korea from joining U.S.-led regional missile defenses, according to current and former U.S. officials.

President Xi Jinping of China, as part of the operation, directly appealed to President Park Geun-hye of South Korea not to allow U.S. military forces to go ahead with plans to deploy the Army’s Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense, or THAAD, a highly effective anti-missile system capable of knocking out both North Korean and some Chinese missiles, said the officials.

As leverage, the hardline Chinese leader is offering Seoul increased trade and business if THAAD deployment is scuttled.

Additionally, Beijing is pressuring the Park administration to allow China’s controversial Huawei Technologies to bid on telecommunications infrastructure projects in South Korea.

Huawei has been linked by the U.S. government to espionage plots conducted through its network equipment. The company has been blocked several times from merging with U.S. companies over the cybersecurity concerns. Xi wants Huawei to be allowed to bid on major contracts in South Korea.

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The U.S. military is concerned that allowing Huawei into communications networks will increase the vulnerability of the country to cyberattacks in a crisis or conflict. China remains a major political and economic backer of North Korea.

The controversy over missile defense has the potential to upset the U.S.-South Korea alliance, one of America's closest relationships in Asia.

The anti-missile defense campaign here is a key part of a Beijing's regional strategy of undermining U.S. influence and ultimately seeking to drive U.S. military forces out of the region.

China wants to use South Korea to weaken and erode U.S.-Japan-South Korea collective defenses, the cornerstone of peace and stability in East Asia since the 1950s, in a bid for Beijing to gradually replace the United States as the most significant Asia-Pacific power, said a U.S. official who specializes in China affairs.

"That's Beijing's strategic objective," the official said, adding that the strategy includes stoking anti-Japan sentiment with propaganda about Tokyo's colonial and wartime past. The Chinese want to prevent South Korea from focusing on more imminent and dangerous threats posed by China and North Korea, the official said.

"Unfortunately, the South Korean leadership seems to have easily fallen for Beijing's calculations," the official said.

THAAD defenses were requested by Gen. Curtis Scaparrotti, commander of U.S. forces in Korea, last year to counter what he said were "evolved" North Korean missile threats. Site surveys of basing locations for THAAD batteries were conducted last year.

The U.S. military currently has deployed Patriot PAC-3 missile defenses in the country to protect military facilities. South Korea last year asked to buy 136 PAC-3s and related equipment.

Patriot missile defenses are effective against short-range missiles but lack capabilities needed to counter North Korea's growing arsenal of intermediate and long-range missiles.

Those weapons include the Musudan intermediate-range missile, the KN-08 road-mobile ICBM, and the developmental KN-11 submarine-launched ballistic missile. The KN-11 was flight tested for the first time last month, according to U.S. officials.

China's campaign to block THAAD deployments are based on fears the defense radar and interceptors could be used against some of the thousands of Chinese missiles that form the backbone of China's military strike capabilities, officials said.

The missiles include four types of road-mobile, medium, and long-range missiles. China's aircraft-carrier killing DF-21D anti-ship ballistic missile and submarine-launched JL-2 missiles are among the weapons the Chinese believe could be countered by THAAD.

Additionally, the deployment of the high-powered THAAD radar can provide coverage over an area of some 600 miles, providing detection of missile launches inside China.

Obama administration officials have done little to counter the Chinese propaganda campaign.

Deputy Secretary of State Tony Blinken said during a visit here last month that THAAD would be aimed at North Korea. He also sought to downplay the deployment plans and said any decision on fielding the weapon would be made with the South Korean government.

THAAD units are equipped with a high-technology radar capable known as the AN/TPY-2. The X-band radar can spot, track, and identify ballistic missile launches over long distances and very high altitudes.

The radar also could be used for "cooperative engagement" missile defense—networked sensors and communications that allows rapid sharing and exchange of launch and targeting data.

Since the 1990s, China's People's Liberation Army has invested heavily in building missile forces. As a result China is trying to prevent THAAD and other missile defenses from neutralizing a key power projection capability.

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THAAD and other missile defenses also are a key element of the Pentagon's new strategy of countering Chinese anti-access and area denial weapons, including the DF-21D, a unique, precision guided missile capable of sinking U.S. aircraft carriers more than 1,000 miles from Chinese coasts.

South Korea's *Joong Ang* newspaper reported last month that Xi, the Chinese leader, urged Park in a prepared statement read during a closed-door meeting last July not to allow THAAD to be deployed. "If the United States attempts to deploy THAAD in the South Korean territory with the justification of protecting the American troops stationed here, South Korea, as a sovereign country, should exercise its right to express its opposition and the THAAD issue won't be a problem between South Korea and China," Xi was quoted as saying. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesmen did not deny that Xi made the statement and have repeated the government's opposition to the missile defense system.

Xi's reference to a future "problem" between the two countries is viewed by U.S. officials as a subtle threat to curb economic or trade relations.

Months after Xi's appeal, Chang Wanquan, China's minister of defense, visited South Korea in November. He told his South Korean counterpart, Han Min-koo, that China opposes deployment of THAAD .

Details of what trade and financial incentives China is offering the South Koreans if they agree not to deploy the missile defenses could not be learned.

However, South Korean investment in China has grown sharply over the past decade. From January to September last year, South Korea spent more than \$3.2 billion in China, according to the *Wall Street Journal*. China also attracted large numbers of South Korean manufacturers and sent 25 percent of its \$560 billion in total exports to China in 2013.

By contrast, South Korean exports to the United States have fallen sharply, from 40 percent of its total export market in the 1980s to 11 percent last year.

A senior South Korean official told the *Journal* that Seoul's dilemma is that "China is our single most important economic partner. But we can't weaken U.S. security ties."

Larry Wortzel, a former military intelligence officer once based in China, said the Park government is carefully managing ties with China while historical animosities have left Seoul leery of Japan.

"The Park government and the [Republic of Korea] armed forces are concerned over the missile threat from North Korea, but are wary of anti-ballistic missile systems that will link the U.S, ROK and Japan," Wortzel said. "These concerns have led successive ROK governments to be cautious about U.S-led anti-ballistic missile programs."

John Tkacik, a former official in the State Department, said that Beijing has been struggling in the campaign to split South Korea from its U.S. alliance.

The South Koreans "are very aware that Beijing's primary goal is to weaken U.S. security relationships in East Asia and isn't substantively committed to any real regional partnership with Seoul," Tkacik said, adding that Park appears to have a healthy skepticism of Beijing.

Still, large-scale South Korean investment in China brings risks of economic pressure from Beijing.

Gordon Chang, an economic affairs specialist on China, said Beijing's policies typically involve "throwing lots of money at smaller countries and then treat[ing] them badly."

"At the moment, Chinese policymakers think they can point missiles at the South Koreans—directly and through North Korea—and then pay them enough so that they won't take measures to defend themselves," Chang said. "It will be a neat trick if Beijing can pull this off. I suspect Seoul will take Chinese money for a few years and then decide to build its missile defenses anyway."

South Korea has said that it is planning its own version of a missile defense system, a system that could operate outside U.S. missile defenses in the region.

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Alexandre Mansourov, a specialist at the Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies, said South Korea's current infatuation with China "is transitory and will pass probably sooner than later."

"In the meantime, some adult supervision is in order, so that the 'panda huggers' in Seoul do not do any permanent damage to the ROK's other core relationships and interests," he said.

"The U.S. government has not made final decisions regarding the permanent stationing of a U.S. THAAD unit in the Republic of Korea," said Chris Bush, a spokesman for U.S. Forces Korea.

Chun Hye-ran, South Korea's presidential spokeswoman, had no immediate comment.

A Chinese government spokesman could not be reached for comment.

Hong Lei, the spokesman for China's ministry of foreign affairs, has stopped short of directly opposing deployment of THAAD. "China holds a consistent and clear position on anti-missile issues," he told reporters in Beijing Feb. 5, when asked about Chinese concerns on missile defenses in South Korea. "It is our belief that every country should keep in mind other countries' security interests and regional peace and stability while pursuing its own security interests."

"We hope that countries concerned can properly deal with relevant issues in the larger interests of regional peace and stability and bilateral relations," he said.

Months earlier, Hong was explicit in opposing missile defenses. "We think the antimissile deployment by certain countries isn't conducive to regional strategic stability and mutual trust," he said.

<http://freebeacon.com/national-security/china-works-to-block-u-s-missile-defense-deployment/>

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The Korea Herald – Seoul, South Korea

S. Korea Keeps Strategic Ambiguity over THAAD Missile Defense System

March 11, 2015

South Korea has made no decision on whether to allow the United States to deploy an advanced missile defense battery to South Korea, an official said Wednesday, in what could be the latest attempt to maintain strategic ambiguity over an issue that may hurt its ties with either the U.S. or China.

Presidential spokesman Min Kyung-wook told reporters that there was no request from the U.S. to deploy a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) battery to South Korea.

"As there was no request, there were no consultations (between the two countries) and no decision has been made," Min said.

His comments illustrated South Korea's deepening trouble to keep strategic ambiguity over the possible deployment of a THAAD battery that has emerged as a key source of tension with China, its largest trading partner.

THAAD is designed to shoot down ballistic missiles in their terminal stage using a hit-to-kill program.

Washington says a THAAD battery is a purely defensive system designed only to counter ballistic missile threats from North Korea.

Still, China has repeatedly expressed its opposition to the possible deployment of a THAAD battery here as its radar system can monitor military facilities in China.

In November, the Chinese ambassador to South Korea, Qiu Guohong, warned that if South Korea allows the U.S. to deploy the THAAD battery on its soil, it would hurt Seoul-Beijing relations.

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South Korea has long been walking a diplomatic tight rope between the U.S., Seoul's key ally, and China over the sensitive issue. South Korea is concerned that its relations with the U.S. or China could sour in either case.

Min's comments came two days after Yoo Seong-min, floor leader of the ruling Saenuri Party, said he will forge his party's consensus over the controversial issue by holding a meeting of lawmakers later this month.

Yoo said a possible heated debate on the issue is the duty of the party as it is a matter of survival for South Korea.

The ruling party appears to be split over the issue, with some lawmakers believed to be close to President Park Geun-hye favoring strategic ambiguity and a low-profile approach to the issue.

Meanwhile, some activists accused the ruling party of pushing for the deployment of a THAAD battery with South Korean troops and U.S. troops in South Korea, claiming the deployment of the missile defense system would hurt relations with China and Russia.

South Korea has long been under security threats posed by North Korea's missile and nuclear weapons programs. The country, including its capital city of Seoul with more than 10 million people, is within striking distance of North Korea's missiles.

South Korea's defense ministry said it has no plan to buy a THAAD battery from the U.S., noting that Seoul plans to set up its own missile defense system to shield the country against North Korea's ballistic missiles.

Still, South Korean officials have said a THAAD battery, if deployed by U.S. troops in South Korea, could be helpful in the country's security and defense.

About 28,500 U.S. troops are stationed in South Korea as a deterrence against North Korea. (Yonhap)

<http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20150311000419>

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Yonhap News Agency – Seoul, South Korea

No Decision Made on THAAD Deployment in S. Korea: USFK

By Oh Seok-min

March 12, 2015

SEOUL, March 12 (Yonhap) -- The United States has yet to make a decision on the deployment of its advanced missile-defense system in South Korea, though it has carried out surveys on candidate sites, the U.S. forces here said Thursday.

Washington has hinted at the deployment of a Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) battery on Korean soil, which is home to about 28,500 American troops, to better cope with Pyongyang's growing nuclear and missile threats.

"There are possible site locations in Korea for this system ... Informal surveys have been conducted to find suitable sites in the event of a possible future deployment," United States Forces Korea (USFK) said in a statement.

The statement came after the vernacular daily Munhwan Ilbo reported Thursday that Washington has picked three candidate sites -- the city of Pyeongtaek, just south of Seoul, the southern port city of Busan and the border town of Wonju.

Without elaborating, the USFK said, "No decisions have been made either to deploy a system or determine where such a system might go ... No procedures for discussions with South Korea have taken place."

Stressing that the U.S. will be "in full consultation" with South Korea if it were to station a THAAD unit on its soil, the USFK said the battery "would provide benefits" to the defense" of the host country "against the North Korean missile threat by augmenting the Korean Air and Missile Defense (KAMD) system and U.S. Patriot systems in Korea.

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Officials in Seoul, including defense minister Han Min-ko, have also said its deployment would be helpful for the security of the Korean Peninsula, though the nation is not considering buying the system.

It has been a hot-button issue here as the move is seen by critics as part of a broader U.S. attempt to get the Asian ally to join its air defense system.

But instead of joining the U.S. system, South Korea has been developing KAMD, a low-tier air defense program, and the Kill Chain, which is designed to launch strikes right after signs are detected of imminent nuclear or missile provocations by Pyongyang.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2015/03/12/39/0301000000AEN20150312010300315F.html>

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TASS Russian News Agency – Moscow, Russia

US Violates NPT by Training Foreign Pilots to Use Nuclear Weapons — Russian Diplomat

The US undermines the global strategic stability and makes further nuclear disarmament steps problematic, says a Russian diplomat

March 11, 2015

MOSCOW, March 11. /TASS/. The United States violates provisions of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) by training pilots of its allied countries to use nuclear weapons, Mikhail Ulyanov, the head of the Foreign Ministry's non-proliferation department, said on Wednesday.

Under the NPT, nuclear weapon states are committed not to transfer nuclear weapons to other countries, Ulyanov said.

"The so-called joint nuclear missions virtually are training of pilots from non-nuclear state to use nuclear weapons," he added.

"We consider this a serious violation of NPT obligations," he said adding that Washington has been avoiding discussions of this issue.

The diplomat also stressed that the US undermines the global strategic stability and makes further nuclear disarmament steps problematic.

"Continuation of nuclear disarmament looks problematic in such conditions," Ulyanov said. "We are putting emphasis on creation of necessary conditions for disarmament, but this is the question to the United States," he added.

Russia expects NPT Review Conference to confirm commitment to treaty obligations fulfilment

Ulyanov added that Russia expects the Review Conference to the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to be held in New York in April - May to confirm the treaty's feasibility and the commitment of its signatories to fulfilling their obligations.

"We expect the conference in New York to confirm the NPT feasibility and commitment of its signatories to fulfilling their obligations," he said. "The main items on the conference agenda will be nuclear disarmament and the creation of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East."

"It would be ideal if the final document is adopted at the conference, but it's no tragedy if this does not happen. Such documents are adopted, as a rule, only at half of the review conferences," the diplomat said. He added that heated debated was expected at the conference and its participants would hardly be able to overcome all differences.

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The 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) will be held from 27 April to 22 May 2015 at the UN Headquarters in New York. The President-designate of the Review Conference is Ambassador Taous Feroukhi from Algeria.

Reviewing Russia's obligations under START treaty not on agenda

Russia is not considering reviewing its obligations under START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty), Deputy Director of Russian Foreign Ministry's Department on Security Affairs and Disarmament Vladimir Leontyev said on Wednesday.

"At a certain stage [in the future], Russia will probably have to analyze observance of START treaty in connection with [NATO's] plans to deploy a missile defense system in Europe," Leontyev said. "However, the issue is not on the agenda at the moment," he added.

<http://tass.ru/en/world/782087>

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RT (Russia Today) – Moscow, Russia

As Part of Russian Territory Crimea can Host Nuclear Weapons – Foreign Ministry

March 11, 2015

The Russian Foreign Ministry has no information on nuclear weapons deployment in Crimea, but maintains that the country has the right to do so in principle.

"I don't know if there are any nuclear weapons there at the moment and I am not aware of such plans, but in principle Russia can do this," the head of the ministry's Department for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Weapons Control, Mikhail Ulyanov, told a Wednesday press conference in Moscow.

"Naturally Russia has the right to put nuclear weapons in any region on its territory if it deems it necessary. We hold that we have such a right, though Kiev has a different opinion on this matter," RIA Novosti quoted Ulyanov as saying.

In mid-January this year, Russia's Chief of General Staff Valery Gerasimov said that in 2015 the nation will focus on reinforcing its military on the Crimean Peninsula.

"In 2015, the Defense Ministry's main efforts will focus on an increase of combat capabilities of the armed forces and increasing the military staff in accordance with military construction plans. Much attention will be given to the groupings in Crimea, Kaliningrad and the Arctic," Gerasimov said.

Earlier this month Russia's Navy chief, Admiral Viktor Chirkov, announced plans for a major rearmament of the force, including the Black Sea Fleet stationed in Sevastopol, Crimea.

The Crimean Republic became part of the Russian Federation a year ago, after over 96 percent of its residents – the majority of whom are ethnic Russians – voted for the move in an urgently called referendum. The decision was prompted by the change of regime in Ukraine, which ousted the democratically-elected president and government.

In mid-March this year Russia's public opinion research center VTSIOM conducted a poll that showed that today over 90 percent of Crimean residents have positive feelings about the reunification with Russia.

<http://rt.com/politics/239669-crimea-nuclear-weapons-ministry/>

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TASS Russian News Agency – Moscow, Russia

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Tensions over Intermediate Nuclear Force Treaty High — Russian Foreign Ministry

The intermediate nuclear force (INF) Soviet-US treaty of 1987 that outlawed the intermediate and shorter range missiles is not falling apart yet, says a Russian diplomat

March 11, 2015

MOSCOW, 11 March. /TASS/. The intermediate nuclear force (INF) Soviet-US treaty of 1987 that outlawed the intermediate and shorter range missiles is not falling apart yet, but tensions over it are soaring high, the director of the Russian Foreign Ministry's non-proliferation and arms control department, Mikhail Ulyanov, told a news conference on Wednesday.

"Some actions by our US colleagues cause great surprise. At a meeting with a US delegation in Moscow on the issue US delegates did explain what particularly they do not like - in their scheme of things we are expected to say voluntarily what we have violated and to confess violations," Ulyanov said. "This kind of approach does not look serious to us."

"At the same time we have at least three questions about US compliance with the treaty. I cannot say that the replies the Americans offered satisfied us," the diplomat said.

"The discussion with the United States on this subject will go on. Its outcome is anyone's guess but at this point it would be wrong to say that the treaty is falling apart," Ulyanov concluded.

US actions jeopardize nuclear disarmament process

Ulyanov said that US actions undermine the global strategic stability and make further steps towards nuclear disarmament problematic.

He reminded that the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty signed in 2010 envisaged a reduction in the nuclear potentials of Russia and the United States, adding that "there was no doubt that both countries would accomplish the task".

Ulyanov added that Washington's current actions, specifically, the deployment of anti-ballistic missile system in Europe and development of high-precision strategic non-nuclear weapons brought into question further steps towards nuclear disarmament.

"In such circumstances, the continuation of the nuclear disarmament process seems problematic", he said.

"This is a question that should be posed to the United States", Ulyanov said, adding that Russia's focus was on creating the necessary conditions for disarmament.

<http://tass.ru/en/russia/782155>

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Business Insider – New York, NY

Stratfor Predicts Loose Nukes in Russia will be 'the Greatest Crisis of the Next Decade'

Armin Rosen

March 10, 2015

The most alarming prediction in the Decade Forecast from private intelligence firm Strategic Forecasting, or Stratfor, involves a Russian collapse leading to a nuclear crisis.

The firm believes the Russian Federation will not survive the decade in its present form, after a combination of international sanctions, plunging oil prices, and a suffering ruble trigger a political and social crisis. Russia will then

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devolve into an archipelago of often-impooverished and confrontational local governments under the Kremlin's very loose control.

"We expect Moscow's authority to weaken substantially, leading to the formal and informal fragmentation of Russia" the report states, adding, "It is unlikely that the Russian Federation will survive in its current form."

If that upheaval happened, it could lead to what Stratfor calls "the greatest crisis of the next decade": Moscow's loss of control over the world's biggest nuclear weapons stockpile.

Russia is the world's largest country and its 8,000 weapons are fairly spread out over its 6.6 million square miles. According to a Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists study, Russia has 40 nuclear sites, which is twice as many as the US uses to house a comparable number of warheads. This policy of dispersal makes it difficult for an enemy to disable the Russian nuclear arsenal in a single attack, but it also makes the Russian stockpile difficult to control.

The Bulletin report also found that the Russia was uncertain exactly how many short-range "tactical" or city-busting "strategic" nukes it has, nor what the weapons' state of assembly or alert status may be.

Stratfor fears that the dissolution of the Russian Federation could cause an unprecedented nuclear security crisis. Not only could the command-and-control mechanisms for Russia's massive and highly opaque nuclear arsenal completely break down. Moscow might lose its physical control over weapons and launch platforms as well.

"Russia is the site of a massive nuclear strike force distributed throughout the hinterlands," the Decade Forecast explains. "The decline of Moscow's power will open the question of who controls those missiles and how their non-use can be guaranteed."

In Stratfor's view the US is the only global actor that can formulate a response to this problem, and ever that might not be enough to prevent launch platforms and weapons from falling into the wrong hands.

"Washington ... will not be able to seize control of the vast numbers of sites militarily and guarantee that no missile is fired in the process," the Forecast predicts. "The United States will either have to invent a military solution that is difficult to conceive of now, accept the threat of rogue launches, or try to create a stable and economically viable government in the regions involved to neutralize the missiles over time."

The forecast doesn't go into detail about what kind of "military solution" might be appropriate. US Special Forces could conceivably transport fissile material out of the country or temporarily secure the most vulnerable sites, but those materials would have to be evacuated to another country, something that would undoubtedly raise tensions with whatever authority still rules in Moscow. In fact, the surviving Russian government would probably consider any US or allied military action to be an act of aggression.

Regardless of the extent of the collapse, Stratfor predicts a major security vacuum in Russia in the next decade.

The firm also predicts declining US assertiveness in world affairs, the fracturing of the European Union, and the decline of Germany's powerful export economy, and more.

<http://www.businessinsider.com/russia-nukes-could-be-a-huge-crisis-2015-3>

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Sputnik International – Russian Information Agency

Moscow to NORAD Head: Yes, We Can Contain Your Missiles Better Now. Sorry

Moscow has said it fully understands US concerns over Russia's growing military deterrence capabilities, and treats them with compassion.

13 March 2015

The Russian Deputy Prime Minister in charge of the defense industry, Dmitry Rogozin, has answered US concerns over Russia's growing military deterrence capabilities.

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"I am very sympathetic. And I fully understand you!" the politician wrote in his microblog on Twitter.

"В Америке с тревогой отметили растущие возможности РФ по ракетному сдерживанию"

<http://t.co/gdZ7H9YMAВ> Очень сочувствую. Как я вас понимаю!

— Dmitry Rogozin (@Rogozin) 13 Март 2015

His response was a reaction to the concerns voiced by the commander of the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) over Russia's growing military potential; America's long-time missile defense arch-rival has been intensifying its military deterrence capabilities.

Adm. William Gortney told the Senate Armed Services Committee in written testimony on Thursday that Russian heavy bombers had flown more out-of-area patrols in 2014 than in any year since the Cold War.

"We have also witnessed improved interoperability between Russian long-range aviation and other elements of the Russian military, including air and maritime intelligence collection platforms positioned to monitor NORAD responses."

This is giving the Kremlin "deterrent" options "short of the nuclear threshold," Gortney said.

"Should these trends continue over time, NORAD will face increased risk in our ability to defend North America against Russian air, maritime and cruise missile threats," he noted.

The anxiety remains that the Russian deployments of aircraft and ships into Crimea and the Kaliningrad region could give Moscow a platform for the deployment of weapons that concern the US.

"They can range critical infrastructure in Alaska and in Canada that we rely on for a homeland defense mission," Gortney told senators, explaining the reach of the long-range Russian cruise missiles.

<http://sputniknews.com/world/20150313/1019436965.html>

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Want China Times – Taipei, Taiwan

China Developing New DF-31 for Multiple Warheads: US Official

By Staff Reporter

March 08, 2015

China appears to be developing a new variant of the solid-fuel, road-mobile DF-31 intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) capable of carrying multiple warheads.

The claim was made by US admiral Cecil D Haney during a session of the US House of Representatives' Armed Services Committee on Feb. 26, according to a recent report from the UK-based Jane's Defence Weekly.

During his testimony, Haney said that images of a Chinese transporter erector launcher suggest that the People's Liberation Army is "enhancing existing silo-based ICBMs, conducting flight tests of a new mobile missile and developing a follow-on mobile system capable of carrying multiple warheads."

It is believed that Haney's report may have been making an indirect reference to the DF-31B — an upgraded version of the DF-31A — which was reportedly tested on Sept. 25 last year, according to the Washington-based Free Beacon.

Last month, leaked images showed a new 16-wheel launcher vehicle sources believe could be for the DF-31B as it is similar to previous versions of the transporter erector launchers produced by China's Tai'an Company for the DF-31, DF-31A and DF-41.

Jane's Defence Weekly notes that the images indicate that the DF-31B has heavier second and third stages because the new launcher has additional elevating mechanisms compared to vehicles for the DF-31 and DF-31A, which have ranges of 8,000 kilometers and 11,200 km, respectively.

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The report comes as images of the DF-31 system in operation were released by Chinese state media last week. The photos of the DF-31 system's field maneuvers and default positioning accompanied an article written by Chen Dongxue, a grassroots engineer with the PLA's Second Artillery Corps. This marked the first time since the 1999 National Day military parade exhibition that details of the DF-31 have been published by a state-owned media outlet.

<http://www.wantchinatimes.com/news-subclass-cnt.aspx?id=20150308000122&cid=1101>

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Popular Science.com – U.S.A.

China Shows Off Its Deadly New Cruise Missiles

DH-10 for a speedy 500kg delivery

By Jeffrey Lin and P.W. Singer

March 10, 2015

This clear image of a TEL vehicle launching a DH-10 provides us with a detailed look at the cruise missile; while the tailfins have deployed, the air intake and wings have not. The debris is from the breaking open of the canister, while the short cylinder attached to the missile's rear is its integrated rocket booster that brings the missile into flight before the turbofan engine starts.

A DH-10 land attack cruise missile (LACM) launches out of its canister, heading for parts unknown. Weighing about 1-1.5 tons (about the same size as the American Tomahawk cruise missile), it can be launched from land on a three missile transport erector launch (TEL) vehicle, as shown here. Shortly after ejection from the canister, the DH-10's two retractable wings, four tailfins and belly mounted engine air intake will all unfold as it flies as far as 2,500km away. Reportedly able to hit a garage door sized target, in addition to carrying a 500kg high explosive warhead toward a target with accuracy the DH-10's payload can either be a 500kg high explosive warhead or submunitions for attacking fighters on runways and tank columns, nuclear warheads and fuel air explosives. Notably, DH-10s use several guidance modes, including satellite navigation, inertial navigation, and terrain following, making it hard to jam or deceive.

Seen here is a DH-10 cruise missile being towed for arming a H-6 bomber. The DH-10's flexibility, large payload and long range make it one of China's most important strategic weapons.

Despite all the attention lavished on Chinese ballistic missiles like the DF-15 and DF-21, its cruise missiles are some of the most flexible, stealthy and deadly weapons that the PLA has at its disposal. Cruise missiles have several advantages over ballistic missiles; they can be updated during flight on battlefield changes, their low flight altitude makes them very stealthy against air defense radars, and fuel efficient turbofan engines allow cruise missiles to be lighter and cheaper than their ballistic counterparts.

At the 2009 National Day Parade (China's 60th national anniversary), among the parade of lethal weaponry were sixteen DH-10 TEL vehicles (with 3 missiles each, that's 48 missiles total). The 2nd Artillery Corps generally controls strategic systems like the DH-10 LACM, in addition to most ballistic missile types.

The DH-10 was first displayed in public during the 2009 National Day Parade, China is estimated to have at least several hundred DH-10 cruise missiles. The flexibility of the DH-10 is its greatest strength. The 2,500km ranged H-6K bomber can carry 7 KD-20s (the DH-10's air launched variant), giving the PLAAF the ability to reach Pacific targets distant as Hawaii. The Type 052D guided missile destroyer and Type 093A nuclear attack submarines can carry DH-10s in their vertical launch systems; sea launched DH-10s can cover over 90% of all global land mass. The next generation of this family will be the YJ-100, a proposed DH-10 antiship variant that will have an onboard radar and 800km range, potentially China's answer to the U.S. Long Range Anti-ship Missile.

A H-6M bomber can carry two DH-10 cruise missiles (or rather, the air launched KD-20 variant), giving China a strategic strike capability previously held only by the U.S. and Russia. The newer H-6K bomber can carry 7 KD-20s, while the planned H-X stealth bomber will probably be able to carry at least a dozen cruise missiles.

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More broadly, future Chinese cruise missiles are likely to branch off into two families, one optimized for stealth, and the other focused on hypersonic flight. China is already investing large amounts of money into hypersonic engines and stealth technology; stealthy cruise missiles would be used to achieve operational surprise while hypersonic missiles would run past heavy enemy defenses. Other advancements would likely include electromagnetic attack technology, datalinks and distributed sensors/networks and improved AI to autonomously hunt targets in denied environments.

<http://www.popsci.com/china-shows-its-deadly-new-cruise-missiles>

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The Chosun Ilbo – Seoul, South Korea

March 11, 2015

N.Korea Threatens Nuke and Missile Tests

North Korea on Tuesday threatened to conduct a fresh underground nuclear test and fire long-range missiles in response to U.S. sanctions and pressure.

The threat took the slightly eccentric form of a poem broadcast on state TV. Entitled "This is [North] Korea's reply," the verses read in part, "They'll know the stirring sound of explosions from an underground nuclear test that will be conducted with burning anger and the justice done by the sun people" against the U.S.

"No longer patient, [North] Korea will launch a series of Kwangmyongsong rockets into the boundless universe and conduct a succession of nuclear tests of justice," the unnamed poet warbled on. "They'll know how dreadful [North] Korea's revenge will be."

In October last year, the deputy chief of the North's mission to the UN said the North will conduct a "new type" of nuclear test.

But a South Korean military spokesman said no special movements of North Korean forces have been detected.

Meanwhile, a North Korean newspaper the same day warned the country "could undergo a more severe hardship in the future" than the famine of the 1990s.

The official Rodong Sinmun added, "Today, our revolution is moving forward in an unprecedentedly challenging and tense situation."

http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2015/03/11/2015031101562.html

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Channel NewsAsia – Singapore

No Sign of Imminent N Korea Nuclear Test: US Think-Tank

Recent satellite imagery shows no sign of North Korea preparing an imminent nuclear test, despite a rise in military tensions on the Korean peninsula, a US think-tank said Wednesday (Mar 11).

Agence France-Presse (AFP)

11 March 2015

SEOUL: Recent satellite imagery shows no sign of North Korea preparing an imminent nuclear test, despite a rise in military tensions on the Korean peninsula, a US think-tank said Wednesday (Mar 11).

North Korea has ramped up the volume on its bellicose rhetoric in recent weeks in response to the launch of annual South Korean-US joint military exercises. Pyongyang's condemnation of the drills has included veiled threats of a nuclear test, but the US-Korea Institute at Johns Hopkins University said satellite pictures offered no indication that any detonation was in the works.



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While the North's Punggye-ri nuclear site is "at a sufficient state of readiness to move forward with a test if ordered to do so... there are no signs of preparations", the institute said in an analysis posted on its closely-followed 38 North website.

"As a result, the North is unlikely to conduct a nuclear or missile test over the next few months," it added.

North Korea is already subject to a raft of UN and US sanctions imposed as the result of its three previous nuclear tests, carried out in 2006, 2009 and 2013.

Pyongyang is currently believed to have a stockpile of some 10 to 16 nuclear weapons fashioned from either plutonium or weapons-grade uranium. A recent report by US researchers, including the US-Korea Institute, warned that North Korea appeared poised to expand its nuclear program over the next five years and, in a worst case scenario, could possess 100 atomic arms by 2020.

<http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asiapacific/no-sign-of-imminent-n/1708232.html>

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The Korea Times – Seoul, South Korea

Seoul to Begin THAAD Debate

By Kim Hyo-jin

March 13, 2015

The government and the ruling Saenuri Party will hold a policy coordination meeting, Sunday, over the possible deployment of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system (THAAD) on Korean soil, according to sources Friday.

Controversy has been brewing over the issue recently after U.S. Forces Korea (USFK) acknowledged it conducted on-site examinations on candidate sites for the envisioned deployment of the advanced missile interceptor battery.

"We will have a heart-to-heart talk on comprehensive security issues," Rep. Won Yoo-chul, the Saenuri Party's chief policymaker, said Friday during a meeting.

It is expected that THAAD will be discussed Sunday along with civil servants' pension reform, the minimum wage and revitalizing the economy.

"As THAAD is not an issue to be spoken about publicly, it will be discussed during a closed-door meeting after an opening speech," a party source said.

A statement released by USFK said it carried out a feasibility survey for stationing THAAD early this year at five sites, including Pyeongtaek in Gyeonggi Province, Wonju in Gangwon Province and Busan. It added that no final decision has been made.

In response, the Defense Ministry expressed concern, saying it is not appropriate to make an official statement about the issue.

The USFK's first official confirmation on the THAAD discussion came a day after Cheong Wa Dae responded cautiously to the escalating dispute over the issue.

"The government's stance is three 'no's — no request, no consultation and no decision," presidential spokesman Min Kyung-wook said Wednesday, implying the government had no request from the U.S., no consultation and no decision.

The ruling Saenuri Party recently fuelled controversy in support of the THAAD deployment amid growing concerns over the Korea-U.S. alliance following a knife attack on U.S. Ambassador to Korea Mark Lippert.

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While supporters argue it will better protect Korea from Pyongyang's ballistic missile threat, opponents believe it could harm relations with China.

THAAD equipped with e X-Band radar provides coverage over an area of some 600 miles, which would provide detection for missile capabilities inside China.

Beijing has strongly opposed the plan and pressed Seoul to reject it, describing the move as a threat to its security. Washington in the meantime has urged Seoul to station the THAAD.

The government has maintained ambiguity between Washington, its biggest ally, and China, its largest trading partner.

The THAAD deployment issue is expected to top the agenda when U.S. Secretary of State Kerry and Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter visit Korea in early April.

They are reportedly planning to come to Seoul and reaffirm U.S. commitment on security in the region.

https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2015/03/205_175175.html

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Sputnik International – Russian Information Agency

Russia Completely Withdraws from Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty

Russia suspends its participation in the work of the Joint Consultative Group under the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe.

10 March 2015

Moscow has halted its participation in a consulting group on the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE), a statement on the Russian Foreign Ministry's site says.

The suspension finalizes Moscow's unilateral moratorium on the implementation of the CFE treaty declared in a decree issued by President Vladimir Putin in 2007.

"Russia made a decision to halt its participation in meetings of the consulting group from March 11, 2015. Thus, suspension of actions in the CFE declared by Russia in 2007 becomes full," the statement reads.

The Russian Foreign Ministry added that "NATO countries actually prefer to bypass the provisions of the CFE Treaty by expanding the alliance."

An "adapted" version of the CFE treaty was signed in 1999, but NATO members refused to ratify it until Russia withdrew troops from Georgia and the breakaway Moldovan region of Transdnestria, a criterion Russia regards as an "artificial linkage." In December 2007, Russia imposed a unilateral moratorium on the CFE treaty, citing its "irrelevance" over NATO's plans to increase its military presence in Eastern Europe and the alliance's refusal to ratify the adapted version. In November 2011, NATO member states said they would no longer exchange information on conventional weapons and troops with Russia. In November 2014, Russia suspended the implementation of the CFE Treaty.

"In these circumstances, Russia considers it senseless to continue its participation in the meetings of the JCG [Joint Consultative Group]...for political and practical reasons and unreasonably costly from the financial-economic point of view," the ministry said citing head of the Russian Delegation to the Vienna Negotiations on Military Security and Arms Control.

The original CFE Treaty was signed in 1990 by 16 NATO and six Warsaw Pact members setting equal limits for each bloc on five key categories of conventional armaments and military hardware, including tanks, combat armored vehicles, artillery, assault helicopters and combat aircraft.

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RT (Russia Today) – Moscow, Russia

Russian S-300 Missile Systems Capable of Targeting Near Space ‘Enter Service’

March 12, 2015

Near space targets can now be hit by Russian army’s mobile tactical air defense S-300 and S-400 systems as a much anticipated long-range missile enters service. It is designed to engage hard targets such as nuclear warheads, rather than satellites.

The news about a mobile version of an exo-atmospheric missile system has been around since the 1990s, and throughout the 2000s it was expected “in a little while.” But the result obtained is worth the years of hard effort.

The new 40N6 missile guarantees a direct hit on a target at a range of 400 kilometers and at heights of up to 185 kilometers – effectively near space.

This missile’s specialization is not soft targets like low Earth orbit (LEO) satellites with easily intercepted predetermined orbits. The 40N6 missile is capable of exo-atmospheric interception of IRBM (intermediate-range ballistic missile) warheads in their terminal phase, leave alone any aircraft target within the missile range perimeter.

As for securely intercepting warheads of the ICBMs (intercontinental ballistic missile), this task is going to be delegated to the upcoming S-500 Prometheus airspace defense systems that are scheduled to enter service next year.

Reportedly, the final customizing of the 40N6 missile has been going on since 2008, which is explained with extremely challenging assigned task to guarantee the declared target kill altitude at maximum range. The media reported that the 40N6 missile passed final state quality tests in January 2015.

A source in Russia’s Defense Ministry told Tass news agency that the new missile is going to be supplied “*primarily to the Western Command*,” the regions of Russia bordering NATO member states.

According to the source, the new sophisticated weaponry is “*already into mass production*.” It is not known at exactly which facility, however.

<http://rt.com/news/239961-near-space-missile-defense/>

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TASS Russian News Agency – Moscow, Russia

Putin's Approval Rating at 88% — Poll

Russian Public Opinion Research Center head Valery Fedorov unveiled latest results from annual assessments carried out since Putin was first elected head of state

March 13, 2015

MOSCOW, March 13. /TASS/. Russian electors have placed President Vladimir Putin "on the peak of national confidence", winning 88% performance approval and the highest vote of confidence in his presidency recorded over 15 years, pollsters say.

This was announced at TASS headquarters on Friday as Russian Public Opinion Research Center head Valery Fedorov unveiled latest results from annual assessments carried out since Putin was first elected head of state.



Pollsters gathered views among 1,600 survey respondents in 130 Russian localities. Returns registered a continuing rise in support for the president since the last poll in 2014.

<http://tass.ru/en/russia/782629>

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Tasnim News Agency – Tehran, Iran

“Technical Stalemate” in Iran Nuclear Talks Broken: Salehi

March 07, 2015

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Ali Akbar Salehi said recent diplomatic talks in Switzerland helped end a deadlock on the technical issues in the course of talks between Iran and six world powers over Tehran’s peaceful nuclear program.

Two rounds of high-profile meetings in the Swiss cities of Geneva and Montreux were very productive, good steps were taken, and the technical stalemate was broken in the nuclear negotiations between Iran and the Group 5+1 (Russia, China, the US, Britain, France and Germany), Salehi said on Saturday.

Over the past two weeks, Salehi held several meetings with US Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz in Geneva and Montreux to discuss details of the technical issues in a long-awaited nuclear deal between Iran and the Group 5+1 (alternatively known as the P+1 or E3+3).

“We had reached sort of deadlock in the technical talks,” Salehi noted, saying he joined the team of Iranian nuclear negotiators to discuss details with the highest-ranking US energy official.

“In those talks, we discussed (uranium) enrichment, Arak research reactor, the issue of research and development, the issue of Fordow (nuclear site) and some more detailed subjects,” the AEOI chief explained.

“On the issues relating enrichment and the Arak reactor, we took very good steps and could allay their fake concerns by offering technical proposals,” he pointed out.

Iran and the six nations are in talks to hammer out a final agreement to end more than a decade of impasse over Tehran’s nuclear energy program.

The two sides held bilateral and multilateral negotiations in the Swiss city of Geneva earlier in February to narrow the remaining differences ahead of a deadline for a final agreement by July 1.

<http://www.tasnimnews.com/english/Home/Single/677542>

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

US and Europe 'On the Same Page' in Pursuit of Iran Nuclear Deal, says Kerry

US secretary of state and French foreign minister report progress in negotiations but say much work remains ahead of March deadline

Associated Press (AP)

Saturday, 07 March 2015

US and European diplomats said on Saturday they are united in their strategy and goal in trying to achieve a nuclear deal with Iran.

“We are on the same page,” the US secretary of state, John Kerry, said after meeting the French foreign minister, Laurent Fabius. “We know what we are chasing after and we are chasing after the same thing.”



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Kerry and Fabius cited progress in the talks, with the last round just wrapping up on Wednesday in Switzerland. But the officials acknowledged big gaps that must be bridged if the sides are to reach a deal by the end of March deadline that the negotiators have set.

"There is progress in certain areas but there are also divergences," Fabius said.

The next round of talks is set to begin on 15 March.

Kerry said Iran still needed to make decisions that would allow it to prove to the world that it is not trying to develop nuclear weapons. Tehran claims its nuclear programme is peaceful and exists only to produce energy for civilian use.

"We have a critical couple of weeks ahead of us," Kerry said. "But we are not feeling a sense of urgency that we have to get any deal. We have to get the right deal."

Iran's vice-president, meanwhile, said technical roadblocks hampering a final nuclear accord with world powers had been eliminated during ongoing discussions with American negotiators.

Ali Akbar Salehi, who is also in charge of Iran's nuclear agency, told state television on Saturday that Tehran offered proposals to remove "fake concerns" over the country's nuclear programme, paving the way for a final deal.

But the hardline daily paper Kayhan slammed the negotiations, saying that an American proposal of a 10-year suspension of Iran's uranium enrichment activities is a first step aimed at finally toppling Iran's ruling Islamic government.

Iran and the six-country group – the US, Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany – hope to reach a rough deal on Iran's disputed nuclear programme by March and a final agreement by 30 June.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/mar/07/us-europe-kerry-iran-nuclear-deal>

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Al Arabiya – Dubai, U.A.E.

U.S. Will 'Walk Away' if Iran Nuke Deal Not Reached

Agence France-Presse (AFP)

Sunday, 8 March 2015

Washington -- President Barack Obama assured in a taped television interview Sunday that the United States was prepared to "walk away" from nuclear talks with Iran if a verifiable deal cannot be reached with Tehran.

Obama made the comments Saturday as U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry was in Paris to smooth over differences with France, which has pressed for greater guarantees that an agreement will stop Iran from gaining a nuclear weapon.

"If there is no deal then we walk away," Obama said in the interview, which aired on "CBS News Sunday Morning" and in expanded form on the network's "Face the Nation" show.

"If we cannot verify that they are not going to obtain a nuclear weapon, that there's a breakout period so that even if they cheated we would be able to have enough time to take action -- if we don't have that kind of deal, then we're not going to take it," he said.

Obama said the Iranians have negotiated seriously and progress has been made "in narrowing the gaps, but those gaps still exist.

"And I would say that over the next month or so, we're going to be able to determine whether or not their system is able to accept what would be an extraordinarily reasonable deal, if in fact, as they say, they are only interested in peaceful nuclear programs.

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"And if we have unprecedented transparency in that system, if we are able to verify that in fact they are not developing weapons systems, then there's a deal to be had, but that's going to require them to accept the kind of verification and constraints on their program that so far, at least, they have not been willing to say yes to."

Obama said the negotiations on Iran's nuclear program were gaining "greater urgency because we have been negotiating for over a year."

"And the good news is during this period Iran has abided by the terms of (an interim) agreement. We know what is happening on the ground in Iran. They have not advanced their nuclear program.

"So we're not losing anything through these talks. On the other hand, you get to a point in negotiations where it is not a matter of technical issues any more, it is a matter of political will."

In Paris, Kerry also agreed with the French that there were still gaps to overcome in the "critical weeks" ahead.

"We want an agreement that's solid," Kerry told reporters after meeting with French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius.

Fabius stressed that "differences still remain" which had to be "overcome" and "there is still work to do."

Fabius had expressed his concerns over the deal on Friday, saying "as regards the numbers, controls and the length of the agreement, the situation is still not sufficient."

Iran has long denied seeking to arm itself with an atomic bomb, insisting its nuclear program is for energy production and other civilian purposes.

<http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/world/2015/03/08/U-S-will-walk-away-if-Iran-nuke-talks-fail-to-reach-deal.html>

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Ha'aretz Daily News – Tel Aviv, Israel

Iran Unveils New Long-Range Cruise Missile

Soumar appears similar to a Russian missile that can carry nuclear payload, reach southern Europe.

By Anshel Pfeffer

March 8, 2015

Iran's Defense Ministry, in an unusual public display, on Sunday introduced a new cruise missile, the Soumar.

The missile is very similar to the Russian Kh-55, which can carry nuclear or conventional warheads and has a range of 2,500 kilometers (1,550 miles).

This would enable the Iranians to hit targets not only throughout the Middle East but in eastern and southern Europe as well.

Reports have said the Iranians were attempting to develop cruise missiles, but this is the first time they have unveiled such weapons publicly.

Iranian websites that reported the introduction presented photographs of a display of a number of static Soumars and a short video of a launch of one of them from a military vehicle.

Reverse-engineering effort

In 2005 senior officials in Kiev confirmed that Ukraine in 2001 had sold a dozen Kh-55 missiles to Iran. Ukraine held the missiles after the Soviet Union disintegrated.

Since the missiles were delivered, the Iranians have been trying to reverse-engineer the Kh-55 to produce a local version.

Issue No.1156, 13 March 2015

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The missile presented in Tehran resembles the Kh-55 externally and has a booster enabling it to be launched from the sea or ground. The Russian original doesn't need a booster in addition to its jet engine, as it is launched in the air from a bomber.

"The unveiling of the cruise missile is very surprising," says Tal Inbar, head of the space and unmanned-aerial-vehicle center at the Fisher Institute for Air and Space Strategic Studies in Herzliya.

"We have to ask ourselves why the Iranians are interested in revealing that they have such a weapon, which threatens wide swaths of Europe, including ... Moscow and NATO members Greece and Turkey.

"Iran has for years been developing the Shihab series of ballistic missiles, but it makes sense for it to simultaneously develop cruise missiles."

Inbar says that "it's much easier to hide a cruise missile. They are smaller and more mobile [and] you can launch them from a variety of platforms on land, from submarines, bombers and even disguised merchant ships."

Cruise missiles fly at subsonic speeds, which make them easier to shoot down, but their relatively small size and ability to fly at low altitude make them difficult to detect.

Timing raises questions

The timing of the Iranian exhibition raises questions, coming as it does on the eve of what could be a crucial round of negotiations toward an agreement limiting Iran's nuclear program.

The Obama administration has said it would insist on including Iran's long-range-missile program in the agreement as well.

But from the details of the impending agreement that have leaked so far, the Americans and other world powers taking part in the talks seem to have capitulated to Iran's demand that the missile program is non-negotiable.

The Iranian media reports make no mention of any participation in the missile event by representatives of President Hassan Rouhani, who is eagerly pushing the nuclear deal.

Development of advanced weapons systems is carried out under the auspices of the Islamic Republican Guards Corps, whose commanders oppose a nuclear deal with the West.

Defense Minister Hossein Dehqan, a former general in the IRGC, attended the event, which probably was not coordinated with Rouhani.

Another observation regarding the timing: Had the Iranians introduced the missile five days earlier, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu would certainly have made much of the event in his speech last week to Congress in Washington.

<http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/.premium-1.645898>

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Tasnim News Agency – Tehran, Iran

Republicans Warn Iran Nuclear Deal Won't Last

March 09, 2015

TEHRAN (Tasnim) - A group of 47 Republican senators has written an open letter to Iran's leaders, warning them that any nuclear deal they sign with US President Barack Obama's administration won't last after Obama leaves office.

The letter has been organized by freshman Senator Tom Cotton and signed by the chamber's entire party leadership as well as potential 2016 presidential contenders Marco Rubio, Ted Cruz and Rand Paul, according to Bloomberg View.

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The letter is meant not just to discourage Iran from signing a deal but also to pressure the White House into giving Congress some authority over the process.

“It has come to our attention while observing your nuclear negotiations with our government that you may not fully understand our constitutional system... Anything not approved by Congress is a mere executive agreement,” the senators wrote. “The next president could revoke such an executive agreement with the stroke of a pen and future Congresses could modify the terms of the agreement at any time.”

Arms-control advocates and supporters of the negotiations argue that the next president and the next Congress will have a hard time changing or canceling any Iran deal, especially if it is working reasonably well.

The new letter is the latest piece of an effort by Senators in both parties to ensure that Congress will have some say if and when a deal is signed.

Still, Senators from both parties are united in an insistence that, at some point, the administration will need their buy-in for any nuclear deal with Iran to succeed.

There’s no sign yet that Obama believes this -or, if he does, that he plans to engage Congress in any meaningful way.

<http://www.tasnimnews.com/english/Home/Single/680345>

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Mehr News – Tehran, Iran

March 10, 2015

US Senators’ Letter Adds to Iran’s Distrust: Zarif

TEHRAN, Mar. 10 (MNA) – During the 17th meeting of Iran’s Assembly of Experts, Iranian FM deemed the open letter by a number of US senators on Iran’s nuclear deal as underlying the distrust for the United States.

After the election of the new chairman of the Assembly of Experts at the 17th meeting of the body held here on Tuesday, Mohammad Javad Zarif briefed the participants on the latest developments in nuclear negotiations.

While expressing gratitude for the Leader’s continued support of the negotiating team, Zarif referred to the open letter of 47 US Senators to Iranian leaders on the cancellation of the nuclear agreement at the end of President Obama’s administration and said, “this correspondence which is unprecedented and undiplomatic only reveals to us that the United States is untrustworthy.”

“Whether the negotiations come to fruition or not, we will be the side that has triumphed. Since what we have achieved during these years are dignity and self-esteem, an asset that cannot be reclaimed and the Americans and the Western world are fully aware of this fact,” said Zarif.

He also noted that during the past several months, Iran’s constructive diplomacy has been able to partially improve the outlook of the negotiating side toward the Islamic Republic; “although negotiating with the Americans is facing a number of issues due to the presence of hardliners in the US Congress, we will make every effort to bring the talks to a desirable conclusion,” said Zarif.

<http://en.mehrnews.com/detail/News/106252>

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Saudi Gazette – Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Tuesday, 10 March 2015

Report: Iran to Allow Inspectors Access to Disputed Site

Associated Press (AP)

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TEHRAN — Iranian state television is reporting that officials are again willing to give international nuclear inspectors access to a site where purported experiments on high explosives may have taken place.

The site in question is Marivan, some 480 kilometers (300 miles) west of Tehran near Iran's border with Iraq.

Iran has said since 2012 that experts from the UN's International Atomic Energy Agency are free to visit Marivan.

The agency originally suspected Marivan could have hosted high-explosive experiments that could be used to set off a nuclear charge.

Iran has called the allegation baseless. State television said on Monday that Behrouz Kamalvandi, spokesman of Iran's nuclear department, made the offer.

It came as a two-member UN watchdog team arrived in Tehran for talks amid the country's nuclear negotiations with world powers.

<http://www.saudigazette.com.sa/index.cfm?method=home.regcon&contentid=20150310236326>

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Xinhua News – Beijing, China

Kerry says Congress Cannot Modify Potential Iran Nuclear Deal

(Xinhua)

March 12, 2015

WASHINGTON, March 11 (Xinhua) -- U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said on Wednesday that Congress could not modify the terms of a potential nuclear agreement between world powers and Iran.

"It's incorrect when it says that Congress could actually modify the terms of an agreement at any time. That's flat wrong," Kerry told lawmakers. "They don't have the right to modify an agreement reached, executive to executive, between leaders of a country."

Kerry told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the U.S. is not negotiating a "legally binding plan," but one that has "a capacity for enforcement."

Forty-seven U.S. Republican Senators warned Monday in an open letter to Iranian leaders that a deal over Iran's nuclear program will be at risk once President Barack Obama leaves office.

"The next president could revoke such an executive agreement with the stroke of a pen and future Congresses could modify the terms of the agreement at any time," the letter read.

The rare move of Congressional intervention on U.S. foreign policy drew criticism from the White House, with Vice President Joe Biden dismissing it as "a dangerous mistake to scuttle a peaceful resolution" of the Iran nuclear issue.

The P5+1 group, consisting of the U.S., Britain, France, China, Russia and Germany, is negotiating with Iran over its nuclear program in hopes of reaching a framework deal by the end of the month. The deal would likely oblige Iran to cut back its nuclear program -- reportedly for at least ten years -- in exchange for a loosening of crippling economic sanctions.

On Wednesday, Kerry said his reaction to the letter was "utter disbelief", adding that it "ignores more than two centuries of precedent in the conduct of American foreign policy."

"During my 29 years here in the Senate, I never heard of nor even heard of it being proposed anything comparable to this," said the U.S. top diplomat.

He also warned that the Republican Senators' move could harm global trust in the United States.

"This risks undermining the confidence that foreign governments, in thousands of important agreements, commit to between the United States and other countries," he said.

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Many members of Congress are concerned that the Obama administration will sign off on a deal that is not strict enough, or that only delays Iran's ability to get a nuclear weapon.

Republicans and several Democrats have drafted legislation aimed at forcing Obama to submit the agreement to Congress, but haven't yet advanced the legislation for a vote.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-03/12/c_134059322.htm

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Press TV – Tehran, Iran

Leader Warns of Trickery in Iran Nuclear Talks

Thursday, March 12, 2015

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has urged the Iranian negotiators in the nuclear talks with the P5+1 group of world powers to exercise vigilance over the subterfuge of the other side.

"The team assigned by [Iranian] President [Hassan Rouhani] to [attend] the talks constitute good, reliable and sympathetic individuals who are trying to secure the country's interests," said the Leader on Thursday in a meeting with the members of the Assembly of Experts and the body's newly-elected Chairman Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi on Thursday.

Nevertheless, the Leader expressed misgivings over potential duplicity by the P5+1 in the negotiations.

"Of course, I'm concerned because the other side is into deception, trickery and backstabbing," Ayatollah Khamenei underlined.

The Leader also noted that the letter sent by US senators to Iranian officials revealed the collapse of political ethics in the US system.

Ayatollah Khamenei then underlined that the other parties to the talks, particularly the US, adopt a harsher tone whenever the deadline for reaching a comprehensive deal approaches.

"This is part of their ploys and tricks," said the Leader.

Ayatollah Khamenei then lashed out at the White House for accusing Tehran of terrorism, dismissing the accusation as "ludicrous, cheap and disgusting."

Elsewhere in the remarks, the Leader took a swipe at efforts aimed at tarnishing the image of Islam, saying "Islamophobia will backfire" and, instead, put Islam at the center of attention for people around the world.

Ayatollah Khamenei then noted that pure Islam, which supports the oppressed and is against oppression and reactionary attitudes, should be introduced and promoted.

<http://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2015/03/12/401461/Leader-voices-support-for-nuclear-team>

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CNN.com – Atlanta, GA

Iran Deal: A Treaty or Not a Treaty, that is the Question

By Stephen Collinson, *CNN*

Thursday, March 12, 2015

Washington (CNN) If it looks like a treaty, walks like a treaty and talks like a treaty, is it a treaty?

According to the White House, only if the President of the United States says it is.

That's infuriating Republicans and even some Democrats, who are demanding that the Obama administration submit any final nuclear deal with Iran to Congress for approval.

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"This is clearly a treaty," Arizona Sen. John McCain told reporters Tuesday. "They can call it a banana, but it's a treaty."

The GOP position could jeopardize the long-term survival of any Iran deal, and it represents the party's newest clash with President Barack Obama over the limits of executive authority, as Republicans object to a pact they warn could eventually give Tehran a nuclear bomb.

It's that skepticism that has largely led the White House to define the deal as a "nonbinding agreement" rather than a "treaty," which the Constitution requires Senate "advice and consent" on.

Can the White House avoid Congress?

The distinction -- and whether it can legitimately be used to shut out Congress -- turns on complicated and unresolved questions of constitutional law. While Republicans call foul, the administration defends the differentiation as perfectly sound, and no surprise.

Secretary of State John Kerry stressed Wednesday that the administration never intended to negotiate a treaty.

"We've been clear from the beginning. We're not negotiating a 'legally binding plan.' We're negotiating a plan that will have in it a capacity for enforcement," he said at a Senate hearing.

That doesn't sit well with Republicans, many of whom believe the Senate's constitutional role is being bypassed.

Idaho Sen. James Risch dismissed the administration's argument: "Let there be no mistake, this is a treaty that is being negotiated. It's a treaty and should be treated as such."

Republicans see criticism of the administration's maneuver as a way to gum up the works on the current deal, and to push their larger assault on the White House's exercise of power.

At the Senate hearing Wednesday, Kentucky Republican Rand Paul explicitly tied the administration's bid to keep the deal away from Congress to other accusations of White House overreach.

"This is an administration that seeks to legislate when that is not in their purview, whether it be immigration, whether it be health care," he charged, noting that he had joined 46 other GOP senators in signing a letter to the Islamic Republic informing them of Congress's role in approving binding agreements.

"I signed the letter to Iran. But you know what? The message I was sending was to you," he told Kerry. "I signed it to an administration that doesn't listen, to an administration that, every turn, tries to go around Congress because you think you can't get your way."

But legal experts say that though a court challenge along the lines of pending GOP cases on immigration and health care is possible in theory, it would be a long shot.

Legal challenges

There is no currently no suit on the issue being discussed on Capitol Hill, and it's far from clear that Republicans would be standing on firm legal ground with such a challenge. The debate, rumbling for decades, has yet to be definitively resolved in case law.

"It is a very interesting question," said Nicholas Burns, a former senior U.S. diplomat, arguing that it is essentially up to the administration to decide whether it is negotiating an agreement that formally binds the United States to commitments under international law; i.e., a treaty, or a less stringent arrangement.

Jim Walsh, a specialist on the Iran nuclear program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, said the Iran deal, which commits the United States to waive or lift sanctions, does not rise to the level of a formal treaty.

"Treaties traditionally have involved reductions in armaments, nuclear weapons, conventional forces. They require us to take something away that we have already built or established." In this case, the United States would lift sanctions, but would not be changing its military posture.

"We have had all sorts of agreement that were never ratified by Congress," Walsh said.

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But David Rivkin, a constitutional and international law expert who worked for President George H.W. Bush, said that any international agreement requiring major undertakings on the part of the United States -- such as the proposed Iran deal -- must be sent to the Senate for advice and consent.

"The Constitution is quite clear," he said.

Republicans point to none less than the vice president of the United States to bolster their case.

When Vice President Joe Biden was a senator in 2002, he wrote a letter to then-Secretary of State Colin Powell charging that a planned strategic arms reductions deal with Russia constituted a treaty subject to Senate approval since it would require "significant obligations by the United States."

American influence and commitments

But Biden's 2002 letter didn't keep him from unleashing his fury at the GOP letter to Iran on Monday.

"Around the world, America's influence depends on its ability to honor its commitments," Biden said in a statement. While Congress approves some agreements, "as the authors of this letter must know, the vast majority of our international commitments take effect without congressional approval."

Indeed, in the letter he penned to Iran, Arkansas Sen. Tom Cotton acknowledged that the administration could seek a mere "executive agreement" free of congressional review.

Presidents claim inherent powers to conclude executive agreements under Article II of the Constitution. U.S. law stipulates that an agreement is only viewed as a treaty once it has been made with "the advice and consent of the Senate," a study by the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service noted.

But administrations often choose to conclude deals with foreign states that don't satisfy that requirement. Such an "executive agreement" is still considered a treaty that is binding under international law, but does not reach the same standard under U.S. law, according to the study.

Nonbinding agreements with China and Russia

Examples of "nonbinding" documents include a U.S.-Russia to remove Syria's stocks of chemical weapons and the Proliferation Security Initiative to stop the global shipment of the weapons of mass destruction components.

Biden argued Monday that this practice is as old as the United States itself.

"Under presidents of both parties, such major shifts in American foreign policy as diplomatic recognition of the People's Republic of China, the resolution of the Iran hostage crisis, and the conclusion of the Vietnam War were all conducted without congressional approval," he said in his statement opposing the GOP letter.

The White House would clearly prefer a binding agreement with Iran, which would have a better chance of longevity. But the strength of opposition in Congress makes that route impossible.

According to Republicans such as Cotton, the only deal the Senate would approve is one that completely bans Iranian uranium enrichment. Obama has said that goal is simply not realistic.

So Republicans, dissatisfied with what's emerging from negotiations, are seizing on the vulnerability of a deal that lacks treaty status. Many see that as a more viable path for disruption than the case on administration overreach.

"If Congress doesn't approve this deal, Congress won't accept this deal, now or in the future," Cotton told CNN. In the letter, he informed Iranian leaders that many senators will serve terms longer than Obama, so they would have to reckon with the Senate at some point.

Lawmakers can refuse to lift sanctions down the road or try to choke off funds for the deal's implementation.

The administration acknowledges that Congress will have to get involved at some point. Obama currently has the power to lift or waive certain sanctions against Iran for the duration of his presidency and encourage U.S. international partners to follow suit. But he does not have the power to lift sanctions imposed by Congress, which include some of the most punitive measures against Iran.

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Congressional involvement

"Part of the agreement is going to involve sanctions relief to the Iranian government that is meted out over time," Deputy National Security Adviser Ben Rhodes told CNN. "At some time in the duration of this agreement, Congress will have to be heard on sanctions relief."

Senior U.S. officials have acknowledged that the clamor among lawmakers for a role, as well as their public criticisms, also implicitly highlights the vulnerability of their case and an ultimate agreement.

Tim Kaine, a Democratic senator from Virginia who has signed onto a bill calling for the White House to put any deal up for a vote in Congress, said that Obama is within his rights to do what he is doing -- up to a point.

"It is not a treaty. If it were a treaty, there is a clear process. It would require a two-thirds vote in the Senate."

But Kaine told CNN on Wednesday that lawmakers did have a role to play at the point when sanctions mandated by Congress are bargained away to ensure Iran sticks to limits on its nuclear program.

"Congress has got to weigh in at some point," Kaine said.

<http://www.cnn.com/2015/03/12/politics/iran-nuclear-deal-treaty-obama-administration/>

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Dawn – Karachi, Pakistan

South Asia is Fundamentally Unstable: US Study

By Anwar Iqbal

March 09, 2015

WASHINGTON: Nuclear competition in South Asia is "dangerous" while territorial disputes and cross-border terrorism complicate the situation further, warns a US think-tank.

A study by the prestigious US Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) warns that "domestic pressures add to the growing list of concerns about the region".

The study, "South Asia's Nuclear Powers", examines regional conflicts and nuclear doctrines of three nuclear-capable countries in the region — China, India and Pakistan.

One of the experts mentioned in the study, Gregory Koblentz of George Mason University, Virginia, describes South Asia as a region that is "most at risk of a breakdown in strategic stability due to an explosive mixture of unresolved territorial disputes, cross-border terrorism, and growing nuclear arsenals".

He warns that Pakistan is particularly vulnerable because it faces multiple challenges, including those from militant groups.

"Despite repeated claims by Pakistan that its nuclear facilities are secure, fears persist that a regional terrorist attack will escalate violence, prompting nuclear exchange," the study claims.

International experts also worry about the possibility that if instability grows, Pakistan-based or affiliated militants may acquire nuclear weapons.

"Experts warn of intensified nuclear risks, especially in an age in which non-state actors can develop cyber-security capabilities to exploit nuclear security," the study adds.

It points out that so far "there is no sign of nuclear modernisation abating in China, India or Pakistan".

Another expert, Ashley J. Tellis of Carnegie Endowment, warns that "in the foreseeable future, the Asian reliance on nuclear weapons will increase".

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The study also notes that major nuclear powers have limited tools at their disposal to influence nuclear expansion in Asia, particularly because India and Pakistan are outside the NPT. “Nuclear risk reduction measures are few and far between across the region,” it added.

CFR’s Daniel S. Markey argues that nuclear competition in South Asia represents a classic conundrum of international relations: “Enormously high stakes, conflicting and entrenched interests, and at least in the near term, few realistic avenues for mitigating threats.”

He notes that the possibility of addressing these disputes in a more permanent way is also remote.

The study says the region’s three nuclear powers continue to expand and modernise their weapons programmes.

Motivated by the need to address perceived security threats, each is seeking to expand ballistic missile- and cruise missile-based nuclear delivery systems.

“Such nuclear competition is dangerous given mounting mistrust and a dearth of diplomatic measures in place to reduce risk of confrontation,” warns CFR.

“Pakistan’s chronic political instability, spotty non-proliferation record, and ongoing threats posed by militant forces have focused special concern on the safety of its nuclear materials,” it adds.

It points out that China is gradually increasing the size of its nuclear arsenal. It is also altering the composition of its nuclear forces to build up more mobile systems.

The study quotes from the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission’s 2014 report, which claims that China’s nuclear forces will grow considerably over the next five years, with the introduction of road-mobile nuclear missiles, ballistic missile submarines and multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles.

The study notes that India has an estimated stockpile of 90 to 110 warheads and is expanding its military nuclear capabilities. In 2011, New Delhi spent approximately \$4.9 billion on nuclear weapons, up from \$4.1 billion the previous year, according to Global Zero, a non-governmental disarmament movement.

India possesses a developed strategic nuclear programme and currently fields nuclear-capable aircraft and ballistic missiles controlled by a civilian command structure, the Nuclear Command Authority.

New Delhi has also invested in a ballistic missile defence system, longer-range ballistic missiles, nuclear submarines, MIRVs and ground-, air- and sea-launched cruise missiles, among other systems.

Experts estimate that Pakistan has 100 to 120 warheads and two types of delivery vehicles: aircraft and surface-to-surface missiles.

The study claims that Pakistan has nearly tripled the number of warheads it had a decade ago. And by 2020, Pakistan could have enough fissile material to produce 200 nuclear weapons.

<http://www.dawn.com/news/1168291/south-asia-is-fundamentally-unstable-us-study>

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The News International – Karachi, Pakistan

2,750-km Range Shaheen-III Missile Test-Fired

All of India has come in its range, say defence analysts

Muhammad Anis

Tuesday, March 10, 2015

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan on Monday conducted a successful test launch of surface-to surface-ballistic missile Shaheen-III, which is capable of carrying nuclear and conventional warheads to a range of 2,750 kilometres.

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According to a defence analyst, all of India has come in the range of the Shaheen-III missile, which has the capability of carrying warheads up to a 2,750 kilometer- range. The test launch was aimed at validating various design and technical parameters of the weapon system at the maximum range.

The successful launch, with its impact point in the Arabian Sea, was witnessed by senior officers from the Strategic Plans Division, strategic forces, scientists and engineers of strategic organisations.

President Mamnoon Hussain and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif appreciated the successful test fire of surface-to-surface missile and congratulated the scientists and engineers on their outstanding achievement.

Director General Strategic Plans Division, Lieutenant General Zubair Mahmood Hayat, while congratulating scientists and engineers on achieving yet another milestone of historic significance, termed it a major step towards strengthening Pakistan's deterrence capability.

He appreciated the technical prowess, dedication and commitment of scientists who had contributed wholeheartedly to make the launch a success. He showed his full confidence in the Strategic Command and Control System and the strategic forces' capability to safeguard the security of the motherland against any aggression.

Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) adds: Minister for Defence Production Rana Tanveer Hussain has congratulated the scientists and engineers on successfully launching the Shaheen-III surface-to-surface ballistic missile.

He said that the test fire validates the design and technical parameters of the weapon and also enhances the capability and deterrence capacity of Pakistan. Mumtaz Alvi adds: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's Central Information Secretary Dr Shireen Mazari on Monday welcomed the successful test of the Shaheen-III surface-to-surface missile with an expanded range of 2,750 kms.

She noted this expanded range has now put all Indian strategic centres within range and reasserts deterrence after the Indo-US-Israeli Ballistic Missile Defence Cooperation (BMD). "India's BMD programme threatened deterrence in the Sub-continent and a natural fallout has been a higher level of nuclear weapons and delivery systems in the region. Why the US would deliberately encourage this is mind boggling," Mazari stated in a statement here.

She said unlike India's expansive nuclear and missile programme ranging from SRBMs to ICBMs and BMD with a space-based component, Pakistan has focused on SRBMs and MRBMs, improving CEPs, range, payloads and reliability.

Mazari pointed out that Pakistan had also succeeded in developing a cruise missile as well as in miniaturisation, as reflected in the Nasr missile, so it is moving rapidly to the second strike capability, which will bolster and stabilise deterrence in the Sub-continent.

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-13-36306-2750-km-range-Shaheen-III-missile-test-fired>

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The Times of India – Mumbai, India

Pakistan Has More Nukes than India, Shows New Infographic

Indo-Asian News Service (IANS)

March 10, 2015

WASHINGTON: Pakistan had about 120 atomic weapons, 10 more than India, in its nuclear arsenal last year, according to a new interactive infographic unveiled by the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists.

Designed by the Bulletin, founded in 1945 by University of Chicago scientists who had helped develop the first atomic weapons in the Manhattan Project, the infographic tracks the number and history of nuclear weapons in the nine nuclear weapon states.

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The Nuclear Notebook Interactive Infographic provides a visual representation of the Bulletin's famed Nuclear Notebook, which since 1987 has tracked the number and type of the world's nuclear arsenals.

Having reached a peak of over 65,000 in the late 1980s, the number of nuclear warheads has dropped significantly to a little over 10,000, but more countries now possess them, it shows.

According to the infographic, the United States and Russia both have about 5,000 weapons each.

France has 300, China 250, the United Kingdom 225 and Israel 80. North Korea has only conducted nuclear tests in 2006, 2009 and 2013.

"I don't think people truly understand just how many of these weapons there are in the world," said Rachel Bronson, executive director of the Bulletin.

"The Interactive is a way to see, immediately, who has nuclear weapons and when they got them, and how those numbers relate to each other. It is a startling experience, looking at those comparisons."

The authors of the Nuclear Notebook are Hans M. Kristensen and Robert S. Norris, both with the Federation of American Scientists.

In the most recent edition of the Nuclear Notebook, the authors discuss the Notebook's 28 year history and describe how sometimes host countries learned of foreign nuclear weapons on their soil from the Nuclear Notebook.

Over 28 years of weapons analysis, the Nuclear Notebook column has revealed surprise nuclear activity and spot-on arsenal estimates while becoming a daily resource for scholars, activists and journalists.

"We wanted a way to communicate those numbers visually, because the world we live may be data-driven, it's also visual," said John Mecklin, editor of the Bulletin.

"The new infographic makes this vital information even more accessible."

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/pakistan/Pakistan-has-more-nukes-than-India-shows-new-infographic/articleshow/46513011.cms>

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Al-Monitor – Washington, D.C.

OPINION/Gulf Pulse

Saudi Arabia Prepares for Iranian Nuclear Deal

By Bruce Riedel

March 8, 2015

Saudi Arabia is quietly preparing for an international nuclear agreement with Iran that it fears will rehabilitate its Shiite Persian rival. King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz Al Saud's approach eschews the public spectacle of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's speech to Congress (indeed, the Saudis don't want any association with Israel) and instead focuses on regional alliances to contain an emergent Iran.

The Saudis publicly welcomed US Secretary of State John Kerry's assurances in Riyadh last week that Washington will not accept a bad nuclear deal with Iran, and that a deal will not inaugurate a grand rapprochement between Washington and Tehran. They remain deeply skeptical about the negotiations, however, and are preparing for any outcome in the P5+1 process.

The Saudis recognize that a successful deal between Iran, the US, Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany will enjoy broad international backing and United Nations endorsement. Riyadh has no interest in being isolated in a dissenting minority with Netanyahu against a deal backed by a global majority. The royal family despises Israel, and Netanyahu is regarded as a war criminal by most Saudis. Any hint of mutual interest with Israel is unpalatable in the kingdom.

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So the Saudi approach is to strengthen its regional alliances for long-term confrontation with Tehran. Most immediately, this means strengthening the unity of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). It has strong allies in Abu Dhabi and Manama. In Riyadh's eyes, there are two weak links in GCC collusion against Iran: Oman and Qatar. Neither is likely to give up their bilateral lucrative ties to Iran, but Salman is pressing both to adhere to GCC unity and not facilitate Iranian subversion.

Yemen is the key GCC battlefield. The victory of the Iranian-backed Zaydi Shiite Houthis in seizing control of most of north Yemen, including Sanaa, has led the Saudis and the GCC to move their embassies to Aden, where they are trying to back the tattered remnant of the Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi regime in south Yemen. The inauguration of Sanaa-Tehran air flights last month, a first, only underscores the extent of Iran's success in achieving a key goal in the kingdom's backyard and in its historically weak underbelly. The Saudis are on the defense in Yemen.

Egypt is Riyadh's key Arab partner. The kingdom played an important role in bringing Gen. Abdel Fattah al-Sisi to power, and Salman met him a week ago to coordinate closely on regional issues, especially Iran. Cairo is too preoccupied with its own domestic terror threat from the Islamic State (IS) and spillover from Libya's disintegration to be very helpful against Iranian machinations elsewhere, however, and is more of a liability (especially financially) than an asset, albeit one Saudi Arabia is determined to keep afloat.

The Shiite government in Baghdad is regarded as a long-lost Arab partner. The Saudis expect Iran to emerge as the big winner in the war with IS, no matter how long it takes and how bloody it is. The Saudis know history, geography, demography and sectarian affiliation favor Iran in Iraq. They believe that President George W. Bush made a colossal error in 2003 and that President Barack Obama has made an "unholy alliance" today with Iran in Iraq. The only option now is to contain the Shiite breakthrough here, too.

Syria has been lost to Iran as well, but Riyadh still hopes to oust Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. The Saudis are pouring money into the Lebanese army, as a potential brake on Hezbollah, along with the French. Salman also recently met with Jordan's King Abdullah to coordinate with Amman on Syria and with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan as well.

Riyadh's most crucial ally is Pakistan, the only Muslim nuclear weapons state. Last year, for the first time, the Saudis publicly displayed their vintage Chinese-made intermediate-range ballistic missiles — the only ones they have that can reach Tehran — at a military parade. In the reviewing stands was Pakistani Chief of Army Staff Gen. Rahul Sharif, the man who controls Pakistan's nuclear arsenal. It is the fastest growing nuclear arsenal in the world, and the Saudis have been helping to pay for its development since the 1970s. It was a very calculated signal.

Salman, in late February, summoned the Pakistani prime minister, Nawaz Sharif, to Riyadh. The highly unusual and urgent public invitation was linked in the Pakistani press to "strategic cooperation" against Iran. Salman visited Islamabad a year ago as crown prince and gave Sharif a \$1.5 billion grant to reaffirm the Saudi-Pakistani strategic accord. Sharif spent three days in the kingdom last week in response to the king's invitation. He received a royal reception.

One immediate result of the talks is a plan for Pakistan to move its embassy in Yemen to Aden.

The speculation in Islamabad is that the king sought assurances from Sharif that, if the Iran negotiations produce either a bad deal or no deal, Pakistan will live up to its longstanding commitment to Saudi security. That is understood in Riyadh and Islamabad to include a nuclear dimension.

Sharif also visited the kingdom in January of this year. He was apparently told that then-King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al Saud was at death's door, and Sharif came to pay his respects and meet with Salman before the king died. No other leader was given this advance notice — another sign of the critical importance of the Saudi-Pakistani axis.

The exact details of what the Pakistani nuclear commitment to the kingdom includes is, of course, among the most closely held secrets of our world. Both Riyadh and Islamabad prefer to maintain ambiguity and deniability.

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The Saudis have not given up on Obama; the United States is still their oldest ally. Washington is too important to irritate with speeches. The Saudis prefer a more subtle approach.

Bruce Riedel is director of the Intelligence Project at the Brookings Institution. His most recent book is "What We Won: America's Secret War in Afghanistan, 1979-1989."

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/03/saudi-arabia-prepares-for-iran-nuclear-deal.html#>

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Arms Control Wonk.com

OPINION/Blog

Triangular Nuclear Competitions

By Michael Krepon

9 March 2015

A serious competition between two nuclear-armed rivals is very hard to stabilize. When one rival increases its nuclear capability, the other does, too. Then both rivals feel less secure – even when they possess secure retaliatory capabilities. It's even harder to stabilize a triangular nuclear competition. Isosceles triangles don't exist in the nuclear business, and three unequal sides do not make for stable geometry.

Triangular competitions are never static. Gregory Koblenz characterizes three-sided competitions as "trilemmas." Like two-party competitions, they can only be stabilized when disputes are resolved or set aside, direct trade increases, and rivals tacitly agree to restrain their nuclear capabilities.

Stabilization requires roughly balanced strategic modernization programs, conventional capabilities and national trajectories. These conditions were absent during the Cold War. The triangular competition among United States, the Soviet Union and China was particularly unstable because it involved shifting allegiances. Moscow and Beijing colluded at first, and then became bitter rivals, even engaging in a border clash. Once Beijing acquired a minimal deterrent, it dropped out of the nuclear competition, focusing instead on domestic and economic priorities. Today's triangular competition among the United States, China, and Russia is also unstable. Russia is helping China to compete, even though Moscow understands that Beijing will pose as much of a strategic concern in the future as the United States.

The triangular nuclear competition among China, India and Pakistan is inherently unstable, with features that were not present during the Cold War. The Chinese and Indian legs of the triangle are growing taller, but unevenly. Pakistan's leg is shrinking despite the growth of its nuclear arsenal, because of weak social and economic indicators. Pakistan measures its strategic requirements against India, while India measures against both its nuclear-armed neighbors. Even if Pakistan were to drop out of the nuclear competition, which is unlikely, India will continue to measure itself against China. China and Pakistan are becoming closer, while Washington gravitates increasingly toward New Delhi. Now add border disputes and violent extremist groups in Pakistan to ongoing nuclear modernization programs, disparate conventional military capabilities and national trajectories.

Nuclear weapons do not stabilize this geometry. Border disputes are certainly not dampened by off-setting nuclear capabilities. In two cases – India and Pakistan as well as the Soviet Union and China – border clashes occurred after the weaker rival acquired a usable nuclear deterrent. On the other hand, border disputes do not necessarily accelerate nuclear competitions. China did not ramp up its nuclear capabilities because of its border dispute with the Soviet Union; nor has the nuclear dynamic between India and China been affected by their unresolved border. Pakistan, in contrast, has upped its nuclear weapon requirements to deal with a border dispute with a rival than enjoys convention military advantages.

If domestic political compulsions do not permit the resolution of border disputes, the most promising way to stabilize a triangular competition is through direct trade and tacit agreements. The most important tacit agreement available to China and India would be to end aggressive patrolling along their disputed border. The most important tacit agreement for India and Pakistan would be to refrain from inserting or supporting violent

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extremists in Kashmir and Baluchistan. Tacit agreements not to play with fire in these disaffected regions would be necessary but insufficient to reduce deterrence instability. For example, a quiet Line of Control dividing Kashmir will not reduce the risk of conflict if violent extremists based in Pakistan attack iconic Indian targets elsewhere. To guard against this possibility, the intelligence cooperation between India and Pakistan – agreed in principle but poorly implemented in practice – could help defuse nuclear-tinged crises and military clashes.

Tacit agreements are also possible with respect to nuclear weapon-related programs. All three states are on course to increase their nuclear arsenals. Over the next decade, China and India could decide to place more than one warhead atop single missiles and to field ballistic missile defenses. These capabilities will be hard and expensive for Pakistan to acquire. Increases in deterrence instability will grow proportionately along with the extent to which Beijing and New Delhi decide to embrace multiple warhead missiles and missile defenses. Improved missile accuracy and multiple warheads could lead to increased targeting lists that take on a war-fighting character.

A tacit agreement between Beijing and New Delhi not to field missile defenses, or to deploy them only for narrow missions, could serve useful purposes. Tacit agreements to forego nuclear war-fighting capabilities and to adhere to well-established, non-offensive Chinese and Indian nuclear postures could also dampen deterrence instability amidst strategic modernization programs.

China and India have ample resources for the growth of their nuclear capabilities. Pakistan does not. The wisest choice of the weakest competitor, as the Soviet Union and China demonstrated in different ways during the Cold War, is not to engage in a nuclear competition. Pakistan is on a different course, however, because of prior investment decisions. Even as Pakistan's nuclear capabilities grow, it will fall further and further behind an India led by governments that are more inclined to compete.

However many nuclear weapons Pakistan has, deterrence stability will be elusive unless Pakistan and India improve relations. China and India have a modicum of deterrence stability, despite their growing arsenals, improved conventional capabilities and economic dynamism because they have set aside their territorial dispute while increasing direct trade and investment. With two strong, risk-taking leaders, they might even be able to address their border dispute. After decades of deferring a settlement, this would come as a surprise.

In contrast, there is little evidence that India and Pakistan will try to resolve the Kashmir dispute, or that spoilers would accept an agreement, even if one could be reached. Absent a Pakistani strategy to adopt Beijing's approach toward New Delhi, India and Pakistan will face conditions of significant deterrence instability in the years ahead.

Michael Krepon is Co-founder of the Henry L. Stimson Center and the author or editor of thirteen books and over 350 articles. Prior to co-founding the Stimson Center, Krepon worked at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency during the Carter administration, and in the US House of Representatives, assisting Congressman Norm Dicks.

<http://krepon.armscontrolwonk.com/archive/4509/triangular-nuclear-competitions#more-5269>

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Eurasia Review – Albany, Oregon

OPINION/Op-Ed

Pakistan's Shaheen III Ballistic Missile: A Deterrent Strengthener – Op-Ed

By Beenish Altaf

March 9, 2015

Deterrence as described in the movie *Dr. Strangelove* (1964) is described as “Deterrence is the art of producing, in the mind of the enemy, the fear to attack.” In this regard, the purpose of Islamabad in its March 9, 2015 missile test is to ensure a counter strike capability that limits the threat of India's conventional limited war.

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Pakistan conducted a successful test launch of the Shaheen-III Surface to Surface Ballistic Missile, which is capable of carrying nuclear and conventional warheads to a range of 2,750 KMs, on Monday. The test launch was aimed at validating various design and technical parameters of the weapon system at a maximum range.

According to an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) press release, the successful launch with its impact point in the Arabian Sea was witnessed by senior officers from Strategic Plans Division, strategic forces, scientists and engineers of strategic organizations. Strategic Plans Division Director General Lieutenant General Zubair Mahmood Hayat, while congratulating the scientists and engineers on achieving yet another milestone of historic significance, termed it a major step towards strengthening Pakistan's deterrence capability.

Hayat appreciated the technical competency, dedication and commitment of scientists who contributed whole heartedly to make this launch a success. Moreover, he expressed his full confidence in the Strategic Command and Control System and the Strategic Forces' capability to safeguard security of the mother land against any aggression. The successful test launch and achievement of this milestone was also warmly appreciated by the President Mamnoon Hussain and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, who congratulated the scientists and engineers on their outstanding achievement.

Ironically, New Delhi's immense investment in conventional arms, and the upgrading of its anti-missile program (Ballistic Missile Defense) as well as its latest doctrinal transformation have indulged Pakistan to respond in the form of TNWs in one or the other, which is necessary for the restoration and maintaining of the credibility of its nuclear deterrence.

For this reason Pakistan previously had successfully tested on November 13 the Shaheen-II (Hatf-VI) Ballistic Missile that was capable of carrying nuclear and conventional warheads to a range of 1500 kilometers. The other successful test launch was of the Intermediate Range Shaheen 1A (Hatf IV) Ballistic Missile on November 17. It was aimed at re-validating various design and technical parameters of the weapon system. The Shaheen1A Missile is capable of carrying nuclear and conventional warheads to a range of 900 Kms whose impact point as declared, was in Arabian Sea.

Then there have been a wide range of missiles tests, including nuclear-capable tests, ranging from the Hatf-IX tactical missile with a range of 60 kilometers to Hatf-IV, in recent months as part of efforts to strengthen its nuclear arsenal to counter India's conventional superiority. On November 17, the intermediate range Shaheen 1A (Hatf IV) ballistic missile (900km) was test-fired; on November 13, intermediate range Shaheen-II (Hatf-VI) (1500km) was tested; On September 26, short range surface-to-surface missile Hatf IX (NASR) (60km) was test-launched; On May 8, short range surface-to-surface ballistic missile Hatf III (Ghaznavi) (290km) was test-fired, while on April 22, short range surface-to-surface ballistic missile Hatf III (Ghaznavi) (290km) was tested.

Primarily, the ongoing race between India and Pakistan at a tactical level is to show each other's capabilities as well as their abilities, but in this particular tactical level race Pakistan is not acting, but rather it is reacting. As such, this ongoing race is becoming a burning point of concern not only for the whole region, but also for the entire globe. Pakistan doesn't want to involve itself in a dire and unending race, but the behavior of Indian strategists, government and decision makers is compelling Pakistan to react with its full force accordingly.

However, these successful tests clearly show the capabilities as well as abilities of Pakistan. At each and every level, whether it is technological, tactical or strategic the readiness and robustness of Pakistan cannot be challenged. All efforts, which are being done by India to gain conventional military superiority, are in vain. Therefore, it is not easy task to counter Pakistan's military abilities, especially its nuclear capabilities. These aggressive moves that are being made by India have a big potential to bring South Asia to the brink of instability that would result in destruction.

Nevertheless, the posture of Credible Minimum Deterrence has remained a principle option of Pakistan's nuclear policy. This principle is based on the concept that Pakistan's nuclear policy is driven by its perceived threat to its security from India and is therefore India centric. Deterrence is the sole aim and a small arsenal is considered adequate for satisfying it. So, it could be concluded that it is only when states feel threatened they opt for

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defending their territory and sovereignty that actually compels them to maximize and enrich their security measures under the perceived threat of vulnerability.

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<http://www.eurasiareview.com/09032015-pakistans-shaheen-iii-ballistic-missile-a-deterrent-strengthened-oped/>

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Bulletin of the Atomic Scientist – Chicago, IL
OPINION/ Analysis

Where Does the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Stand on Nuclear Negotiations?

By Ariane Tabatabai
March 11, 2015

US and Iranian negotiators in ongoing nuclear talks must deal not only with their counterparts across the table, but also with the challenge of second-guessing another country's internal political dynamics. This game reached absurd levels this week when, in an attempt to derail the talks, a group of Republican US Senators sent an "open letter" to Iran claiming that any deal could be undone by a future president. President Barack Obama mocked what he described as an "unusual coalition" between the US and Iranian hardliners. Indeed, the efforts undertaken by vocal hawks in both countries make a sensitive and fragile process even more so.

While Iranians observe this American rift, perhaps wondering who's in charge, the US team likewise tries to decipher the landscape in Tehran. In Washington, a question I'm often asked is "who are we actually dealing with?"

The options that come to mind are Supreme Leader Ali Ayatollah Khamenei (whose influence on the negotiations I wrote about [here](#)), the moderate government of President Hassan Rouhani, and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, or IRGC.

The IRGC is perhaps the most perplexing of all these major stakeholders. In the West, its name is synonymous with anti-Americanism and undermining US influence and interests, either directly or through proxies in the Middle East. But what is the IRGC, really, and where does it stand on the ongoing negotiations?

Guardians of the revolution. After toppling the Shah of Iran in 1979, the country's new regime established the IRGC as a paramilitary force. The Islamic Republic's goal was to provide an alternative to the traditional military, which the revolutionaries saw as pro-monarchy and untrustworthy. The new government executed some of the top commanders and generals who had served under the shah, and others fled the country. The Iranian military, once one of the top five powerhouses in the world, essentially collapsed.

The subsequent Iran-Iraq War, which lasted from 1980 to 1988, was devastating for Iran but turned out to be an opportunity for the new regime led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini and the Revolutionary Guards he deployed to the front lines. During the revolution, Khomeini had led only one of many factions, but during the Iran-Iraq war he consolidated his power. The war also allowed the IRGC to establish itself as a new military, and it came out of the eight-year conflict empowered.

Since then, the IRGC has co-existed with the military but remains a separate entity. It undertakes some of Tehran's most important operations. The Basij—a large internal security force under the authority of the IRGC—is often at the forefront of responses to domestic unrest, for example during the 2009 crackdown on protests against the disputed reelection of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Outside the country, too, it is the IRGC that leads many of Iran's most vital operations, including the current fight against the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). The elite Quds Force, also a branch of the IRGC, is particularly active throughout the Middle East. It is responsible for a

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number of covert operations and provides funding, training, and intelligence to Iranian proxies in the region, including Hamas and Hezbollah.

The IRGC is connected to Iranian nuclear affairs two ways: in its relationship to the regime of economic sanctions that are imposed on the country as punishment for nuclear activities, and in its direct involvement in the country's nuclear and missile programs.

Travelers to Iran are often surprised to see the country's infrastructure. Tehran doesn't look like the capital of a state that has been under sanctions for more than three decades. Its three-level bridges, long underground tunnels, metro, and highways even put some US cities to shame, for which Iranians have the IRGC to thank. The paramilitary organization has turned obstacle into opportunity by becoming a major economic player, picking up business where the private sector hasn't been able to deliver because of sanctions. The Guards have a number of firms, including the engineering company Khatam ol-Anbia, which the government hires as a contractor. The IRGC also fills gaps left by foreign companies no longer doing business in Iran, sometimes through smuggling: the Guards import goods that other companies can't touch due to sanctions, as well as goods, like alcohol, that are banned by the regime.

The IRGC, thus, benefits from sanctions. To be clear, the number one entity the United States wants to weaken is actually one of the foremost beneficiaries of the current sanctions regime.

Nonetheless, the IRGC wouldn't necessarily be damaged by a lifting of sanctions. As an organization it has proven to be highly adaptable over the years, and companies linked to the IRGC now operate beyond Iranian borders, drawing income from abroad. As such, the IRGC's commercial activities will likely remain unaffected by the outcome of the talks.

Guardians of the bomb. There is evidence that the IRGC is involved in Iran's nuclear program, even if the extent remains unclear. The Islamic Republic's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, is the commander of the armed forces and has direct supervision over the IRGC. Many analysts agree that the IRGC would likely have control over any nuclear arsenal, should Iran be able to produce one, but that the final say on whether to use the weapons would lie with the supreme leader.

Currently, the IRGC is the foremost player in Iran's defense programs, including the country's contentious missile program, which poses a security concern to regional and international players. (Tehran made it clear from the beginning of the nuclear negotiations that the missile program was off the table, and it's safe to say that Foreign Minister Javad Zarif's team doesn't have a mandate to discuss it.) Beyond missiles, which could theoretically be used for either conventional or atomic weapons, the IRGC's concrete involvement in the nuclear program has several layers. First, some of the country's key contentious facilities were built on IRGC bases. This includes the Fordow enrichment site. Second, the IRGC is behind many operations involving dual-use materials, or those that have regular civilian uses but can also be used in missile and nuclear programs. Because the IRGC has a foothold in both civilian and defense projects, it uses a number of these items for both purposes. Third, a number of IRGC members are also scientists who have been involved in the nuclear program. These include Fereydoun Abbasi, the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran under former President Ahmadinejad.

The IRGC and nuclear talks. In the United States, many are quick to equate Iranian hardliners with the IRGC, but the truth is more nuanced than that. Some of the most vocal critics of the negotiations are not linked to the paramilitary organization at all. The IRGC's stance on the talks is, not surprisingly, very similar to that of its commander in chief, Khamenei, whose statements suggest that he is cautiously supportive. When Tehran and the world powers concluded their interim deal in November 2013, IRGC commanders expressed their support for the process and for Zarif's team, while emphasizing the importance of respecting Khamenei's guidelines.

Since then, IRGC commander Gen. Mohammad Ali Jafari has come out in support of (link in Persian) the negotiations again. Much like Khamenei, he has made comments that cautiously back the talks, while reminding the public that Washington isn't trustworthy. In other words, the IRGC is somewhere between the Rouhani government and the hardliners trying to undermine its efforts to reach a deal.

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The IRGC is often reduced to a caricature in the debates on Iran's nuclear program. It is depicted as a monolithic group of fanatics driven by a desire to develop a nuclear weapon and use it. Its role in the program itself, to be sure, remains fairly obscure, but its stance on the ongoing negotiations is clearly relatively centrist. Because the IRGC, like Khamenei, has various constituents and interests to balance out, it is not as opposed to the prospect of a nuclear deal with the six powers as many believe it to be.

Ariane Tabatabai is a visiting assistant professor in the Security Studies Program at the School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University.

<http://thebulletin.org/where-does-islamic-revolutionary-guard-corps-stand-nuclear-negotiations8084>

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The Diplomat – Tokyo, Japan

OPINION/Asia Defense

Does Pakistan Have a Sea-Based Second-Strike Capability?

Much about Islamabad's sea-based nuclear deterrent remains a mystery, including its future submarine force.

By Franz-Stefan Gady for *The Diplomat*

March 13, 2015

Back in 2012, Pakistan announced the creation of a Naval Strategic Force Command and hinted that the country now possessed a sea-based second nuclear strike capability.

Today, almost three years later, Pakistan's alleged maritime deterrent continues to puzzle analysts. The overall consensus of opinion is that the country has not acquired a sea-based second nuclear strike capability just yet. Another thing that most experts agree is that the delivery vehicle of an ocean-launched Pakistani nuclear warhead would be a submarine-launched variant of the Hatf-7 (Babur) cruise missile.

According to a 2013 policy brief on Pakistan's nuclear weapons program, Pakistan already indicated in 2005, when the missile was first tested, that the system was designed to deploy in submarines. The Hatf-7 is a medium-range subsonic cruise missile with a reported range of 700km (430mi).

Yet, the *Washington Post* notes, that Western experts, "are divided over whether Pakistan has the ability to shrink warheads enough for use with tactical or sea-launched weapons." Jeffrey Lewis, a nuclear and nonproliferation scholar is a skeptical: "They may have done so, but I can't imagine it's very reliable," he states.

Shireen M. Mazari, a nuclear expert and the former director of the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad, a Pakistani-government-funded think tank, acknowledged that the 2012 announcement may have been too premature: "We are on our way, and my own hunch is within a year or so, we should be developing our second-strike capability," he said in an interview with the *Washington Post* in September 2014.

One expert notes that in order to achieve a sea-based second-strike capability, "Pakistan will require a significant expansion of its submarine fleet [surface vessels would be too easy to detect], which will impose an enormous burden on the struggling Pakistan economy." In 2013, the Pakistani government had to agree to a \$ 6.6 million IMF bailout with various strings attached to what the country is allowed to spend money on.

According to a December 2014 article in *India Today*, a Sino-Pak strategic submarine project launched in 2010 – and suffering from various setbacks according to other sources – will "transform the Pakistan Navy into a strategic force capable of launching a sea-based nuclear weapons strike."

The article furthermore notes that,

"Pakistan will build two types of submarines with Chinese assistance: the Project S-26 and Project S-30. The vessels are to be built at the Submarine Rebuild Complex (SRC) facility being developed at Ormara, west of Karachi. Intelligence sources believe the S-30 submarines are based on the Chinese Qing class submarines-3,000-tonne conventional submarines which can launch three 1,500-km range nuclear-tipped cruise missiles from its conning



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tower. A Very Low Frequency (VLF) station at Turbat, in southern Balochistan, will communicate with these submerged strategic submarines.”

According to *globalsecurity.org*, the Wuhan-based China State Shipbuilding Industrial Corp (CSIC) signed a contract in April 2011 to deliver six Type 032 Qing-class conventional attack submarines by 2016/2017. “Each can carry three CJ-10K submarine-launched, 1,500km-range land attack cruise missiles (LACM) capable of being armed with unitary tactical nuclear warheads,” the article notes. Yet, *globalsecurity.org* emphasizes that the reports on this Sino-PAK contract “must be taken with a grain of salt.”

To make matters more complicated, most reports note that the submarines purchased will be six Type 041 *Yuan*-class vessels. Pakistan’s current submarine fleet consists of two upgraded French DCNS Agosta-70 and three Agosta 90Bs (equipped with air independent propulsion).

Franz-Stefan Gady is an Associate Editor with The Diplomat.

<http://thediplomat.com/2015/03/does-pakistan-have-a-sea-based-second-strike-capability/>

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ABOUT THE USAF CUWS

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

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

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

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

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