



USAF Center for Unconventional Weapons Studies (CUWS) Outreach Journal

Issue No. 1160, 10 April 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: *"Managing China's Missile Threat: Future Options to Preserve Forward Defense"*. Testimony by Evan B. Montgomery, before the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission; published by the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments (CSBA); April 1, 2015; 9 pages.

<http://csbaonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Montgomery-Testimony-Final-31-March.pdf>

In this testimony before the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, Dr. Evan Montgomery discusses the implications of China's offensive missile force. He argues that in the face of an eroding conventional military advantage in the Western Pacific, the United States faces acute challenges to its forward defense posture. Fielding offensive missile forces might partially ameliorate this problem, enhancing deterrence and improving crisis stability. While the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty with Russia prohibits the United States from testing and deploying surface-to-surface ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges between 500 and 5,500 kilometers, Russia has not complied with the Treaty's restrictions and China is not a party to the Treaty. Withdrawing from or revising the Treaty could bolster U.S. Western Pacific defense posture and potentially drive a wedge between China and Russia.

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U.S. Air Force Portal – Washington, D.C.

Missile Testing Unit Validates Strategic Deterrent

By Airman 1st Class Ian Dudley, 30th Space Wing Public Affairs

April 06, 2015

VADENBERG AIR FORCE BASE, Calif. (AFNS) -- The 576th Flight Test Squadron, which conducts Minuteman III launches from Vandenberg Air Force Base, California, holds the unique distinction as the sole intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) test unit in the Department of Defense.

The 576th FLTS gathers valuable flight and equipment data from the ICBM tests, ensuring the weapons system remains operationally effective and reliable.

"I love the missile test mission; this mission is awesome," said Capt. Erik Holmstrom, the 576th FLTS ICBM flight test manager. "We are the only ICBM test squadron in the Department of Defense and it is a tough task to make

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sure you get it right. The tests also demonstrate to our adversaries that this weapon system works and it assures our allies that they don't need to develop nuclear weapons because we have them, and they are very functional."

The unarmed Minuteman III missiles launched from Vandenberg AFB are taken from the missile fields at Malmstrom AFB, Montana; Minot AFB, North Dakota; or F. E. Warren AFB, Wyoming, and brought to Vandenberg AFB.

"The reentry vehicles used on our test launches do not have any nuclear components in them," said Capt. Joe Liles, the 576th FLTS chief of ICBM field test management. "They are virtually identical to them in flight characteristics but the nuclear material is replaced with measurement equipment for gathering flight data."

Testing ICBMs is only a small part of what the flight test squadron does, and when not launching a Minuteman III ICBM, they are maintaining and upgrading the older test equipment and testing other sustainment and weapon system upgrades.

"A lot of people think our mission here is to conduct operational test launches when in fact that is only a quarter of our mission," Liles said. "We are responsible for testing every piece of equipment, either new or an upgrade that touches the Minuteman III weapon system. It could be anything from an upgrade on a communications system or a new vehicle that is built to support the ICBM fleet. We test it, evaluate it and provide our recommendation as to whether it should be used."

Although the 576th FLTS conducts the test launch, the missile launch crew is from the same base as the missile being tested.

"For test purposes we want to make it as operationally realistic as possible, so we bring the real operators, the real people who would use this system here," Liles said. "Another thing we are evaluating is their ability to use this system in the first place. If the operator can't use it then it doesn't work, even if it physically does work."

While the ICBM test mission serves primarily to test the reliability of ICBMs, it also provides a deterrent for potential adversaries.

"Through testing, we are able to accomplish three things," said Col. Kelvin Townsend, the 576th FLTS commander. "First, we are able to validate the reliability, accuracy and performance of the weapon system. Secondly, we demonstrate the capability of America's land-based ICBM force through flight tests. Finally, we are able to identify potential issues with the weapon system early so as to ensure the Minuteman III weapon system is effective and sustainable."

<http://www.af.mil/News/ArticleDisplay/tabid/223/Article/583609/missile-testing-unit-validates-strategic-deterrent.aspx>

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RT (Russia Today) – Moscow, Russia

\$10 Bln Down the Drain? US Spends Billions on 'Ineffective' Missile Defense Systems

April 05, 2015

The US wasted \$10 billion on missile defense projects which were doomed for failure from the beginning, due to a lack of analysis, a report by the Los Angeles Times says. Aside from the astronomical costs, the failures appear to also threaten US security.

America's maritime based X-Band Radar (SBX) was hailed by the US Missile Defense Agency (MDA) as having the potential to become the most powerful radar of its kind in the world.

Henry A. Obering III, a retired director of the Missile Defense Agency, said at a Senate hearing in April 2007 that *"if we place it in Chesapeake Bay, we could actually discriminate and track a baseball-sized object over San Francisco."*

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However, despite all the hype, the SBX proved to be a flop and an expensive one at that. A report by the Los Angeles Times revealed the project eventually cost \$2.2 billion and was doomed to fail from the very beginning, due to insufficient early testing. The system, which was supposed to have been operational in 2005, is now lying idle in Pearl Harbor in Hawaii.

The failure of the SBX was just the tip of the iceberg. It was one of four projects which were abandoned and caused embarrassment for the MDA, while they ended up costing the US tax payer \$10 billion.

The SBX, which is a floating radar system, was designed to spot incoming missiles and track them through space, while it would also guide rocket interceptors to eliminate the threat. The project was so advanced that it could tell the difference between actual missiles and decoy rockets.

The problem with the sea-based radar was its field of vision (25 degrees compared to 90 and 120 degrees of conventional radars) cannot be relied upon to track a number of incoming missiles at the same time.

"Although it can powerfully magnify distant objects, its field of vision is so narrow that it would be of little use against what experts consider the likeliest attack: a stream of missiles interspersed with decoys," the report says.

Another big error of the project designers - they forgot to take into account the earth's curvature. Due to this factor, the SBX would not be able to see a baseball around 2,500 miles away, unless the ball was travelling at an altitude of 870 or more miles above San Francisco. Technical experts told the Los Angeles Times that this is about 200 miles higher than a conventional missile would travel at if it was heading for the US.

"In the practical world of ICBM [inter-continental ballistic missile] threats, this baseball analogy is meaningless," said C. Wendell Mead, an aerospace engineer who served on the National Academy of Sciences panel.

David K. Barton, a physicist and radar engineer who took part in the National Academy review, was also scathing towards the SBX's inability to track missiles. He said the project was useless as the radar system was required to track incoming weapons from *"cradle to grave,"* in order to give rocket interceptors enough time to eliminate enemy missiles – something the project was unable to do.

A series of reports on SBX's effectiveness also proved to be damning. A 2007 test said the *"SBX exhibited some anomalous behavior,"* requiring *"adjusted software,"* according to the Pentagon's Operational Test and Evaluation Office. The same body also noted three years later that the *"SBX exhibited undesirable performances that contributed to the failure to intercept."*

Despite being a colossal waste of tax payers' money, critics also said that it left a hole in the US's defenses. Experts said the money could have been better spent on land based radar systems, which would have had a better capability of tracking long range missiles.

"You can spend an awful lot of money and end up with nothing," said Mike Corbett, a retired Air Force colonel who oversaw the agency's contracting for weapons systems from 2006 to 2009. *"MDA spent billions and billions on these programs that didn't lead anywhere."*

The MDA was set-up during Ronald Regan's presidency and has a budget of \$8 billion and employees just shy of 9,000 people.

Another embarrassing failure for the MDA was Airborne Laser system, canceled in 2012, a decade after it was envisaged. The project would incorporate converted Boeing 747s which would fire laser beams at missiles soon after they were launched.

The only problem with the \$5.3 billion project, was that the lasers could only be fired from a short range, meaning the planes would have to get very close to where the missiles were to be launched from and would be sitting ducks for missile defense systems.

<http://rt.com/usa/246973-defense-usa-billions-wasted/>

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Sputnik International – Russian Information Agency

US Stands on Need for European Missile Defense Regardless of Iran Deal

US State Department official stated that United States will not change its stance on the need for missile defense systems in Europe even after a preliminary deal was struck last week by the P5+1 and Tehran Group on Iran's nuclear program.

07 April 2015

MOSCOW (Sputnik), Alexander Mosesov – The United States will not change its stance on the need for missile defense systems in Europe even after a preliminary deal was struck last week by the P5+1 and Tehran Group on Iran's nuclear program, a US State Department official told Sputnik in an exclusive interview on Tuesday.

“A successful resolution of the nuclear issue with Iran would not obviate the need for ballistic missile defenses. [US] President [Barack] Obama said last Thursday that US sanctions on Iran's ballistic missile program will continue to be fully enforced,” the official said on conditions of anonymity.

The official said that Iran's ballistic missile capability remains a threat and “continues to be a source of concern to us and the international community.”

The United States will continue developing its European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA) plans that include missile defense systems placed in Eastern Europe because of possible ballistic missile threats from Iran, a US State Department official said.

“The United States remains committed to the security of our Allies and Partners against possible ballistic missile threats, including those posed by Iran and its non-state proxies in the region,” the official said on conditions of anonymity.

Last week, a preliminary deal was struck between the P5+1 Group and Tehran on Iran's nuclear program. US President Barack Obama said last week that the deal would not alleviate concerns in regard to Iran.

“Our commitment to the European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA), including the facilities in Romania and Poland, is ironclad,” the official added.

On April 3, NATO spokeswoman Oana Lungescu told Sputnik that the military bloc would go ahead with its plans to deploy a fully-fledged missile defense network in Europe despite the Lausanne deal.

In 2009, the United States and NATO agreed to the European Phased Adaptive Approach to ballistic missile defense in Europe.

Russia has raised concerns over the close proximity of the ballistic missile systems to its borders. Moscow has also expressed concerns that such deployments could upset the strategic balance.

<http://sputniknews.com/us/20150407/1020564234.html>

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RUAviation.com

Russia Warned that It Is Ready to Neutralize US Anti-Ballistic Missile System

Russian Aviation
Tuesday, April 7, 2015

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Russia is able to counter US anti-ballistic missile system, official representative of Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Alexander Lukashovich, said. Despite having such capabilities, Moscow would rather not use it, the representative added, RBC reports.

«In order to keep the strategic balance, we have capabilities to counter US anti-ballistic missile system, but we are not going to use it unnecessarily», the official said. «But just to let members of this system know: Russia has all the capabilities needed to neutralize such threats», Lukashovich warned countries, which are going to place elements of US anti-ballistic missile system in their territory.

Over the last few years Moscow has been protesting against deployment of US anti-ballistic missile systems in Europe close to the borders of Russian Federation. Russia also took countermeasures and placed missile early-warning systems in the most western region of the country – Kaliningrad Region.

Last month Bloomberg reported with reference to some officials that USA might try to pressure Moscow (in light of Ukrainian crisis) by means of expanding its military presence in the Eastern Europe and Scandinavia: deploying air defense and anti-ballistic missile systems, military units of the army as well as surveillance units. In January NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg announced establishment of the alliance’s command centers in six countries: Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

Last September after verbal confrontation between Russia and USA the countries started massive maneuvers. Russia held military exercise aimed at practicing the interaction between Topol missile systems and aviation, while NATO involved thousands of service members in massive maneuvers held in the Western part of Ukraine.

<http://www.ruaviation.com/news/2015/4/7/3041/>

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Sputnik International – Russian Information Agency

US to Continue Opposing Requests to Limit Missile Defense Expansion

US Assistant Secretary for Arms Control Frank Rose said that the United States will continue opposing Russian requests to curb its deployment and development of missile defense systems.

08 April 2015

WASHINGTON (Sputnik) — The United States will continue opposing Russian requests to curb its deployment and development of missile defense systems, US Assistant Secretary for Arms Control Frank Rose said at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

“We continue to oppose Russia’s attempts to impose limitations on our missile defense that would limit our ability to defend ourselves, our allies, and our partners,” Rose stated on Tuesday.

Rose explained that the United States “cannot and will not accept legally binding or other constraints” related to its homeland or regional missile defense systems.

The United States expanded the development and deployment of ballistic missile defense systems following its 2002 withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty.

The ABM Treaty, signed by the United States and then Soviet Union in 1972, aimed to limit the numbers and locations of both countries’ ABM sites.

Former US ambassador to Ukraine and arms control expert Steven Pifer has argued that current Russian requests for limits and reassurances on US ballistic missile defense systems was a resurrection of the ABM Treaty.

Russia has requested “legally binding” assurances from the United States to guarantee that its domestic and regional missile defense architecture is not aimed at Russian strategic ballistic missiles.

In recent years, the United States has taken significant steps in deploying ballistic missile defense systems throughout Europe under the European Phased Adaptive Approach.

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The program includes the deployment of Aegis ballistic missile defense-capable ships deployed in the Mediterranean Sea and Aegis Ashore interceptor sites in Romania and Poland, scheduled for completion by 2017 and 2018, according to the US Missile Defense Agency.

On Tuesday, Russia's Foreign Ministry Non-Proliferation and Arms Control Director Mikhail Ulyanov referred to the US missile defense developments as "unrestricted" and "unilateral." Ulyanov further asserted that US ballistic missile developments have come at the expense of Russian security interests.

<http://sputniknews.com/military/20150408/1020594431.html>

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The Moscow Times – Moscow, Russia

Fight over Ukraine Darkens Future of Russia-U.S. Nuclear Arms Control

By Matthew Bodner

April 07, 2015

Five years after the United States and Russia signed the New START nuclear arms reduction treaty, the spirit in which it was signed is dead.

Relations between the two countries have crumbled as the crisis in Ukraine prompts mutual accusations and thinly veiled threats of nuclear war.

The New START treaty itself is safe. Officials on both sides have repeatedly stated their commitment to implementing its provisions, while verification procedures are being honored. But the rhetoric of the Ukraine crisis has amplified long-standing apprehensions in Moscow and Washington and halted progress on arms control for the time being.

"While the U.S. continues to strengthen its national security methods, which reduce the level of Russia's national security, to speak of future nuclear disarmament is hardly possible," Mikhail Ulyanov, the Russian Foreign Ministry's senior arms control and non-proliferation official, said in February.

Nuclear Rhetoric

But Ulyanov's concerns go both ways. In the United States, officials and policy experts are becoming increasingly riled by the nuclear rhetoric coming out of Moscow. Their fears are bolstered by a program to modernize all of Russia's nuclear forces by 2020.

Dr. Mark Schneider, an arms control negotiator who worked on New START, said engaging the Russians on further nuclear cuts is completely out of the question.

"The focus must be on deterrence, or we run the risk of [Russian President Vladimir] Putin's first use of nuclear weapons with potential catastrophic consequences," he said.

"I can't read Putin's mind, but I can read what he says and that scares me."

Amid the rhetoric, both sides increased the number of deployed warheads last year after Russia annexed Crimea. Russia has 1643 warheads deployed, one more than the United States, according to the most recent New START report released in October.

The treaty stipulates both sides reduce to 1550 each by 2018.

Arms Control Amid Crisis

New START is the product of U.S. President Barack Obama's policy to reset relations with Russia after coming to office in 2008.



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When Obama met then-Russian President Dmitry Medvedev in Prague in April 2010 to sign the treaty, the leaders heralded it as an important step toward further reducing nuclear arsenals. But that was the last time the two sides sat down to work on nuclear arms control.

Visiting Berlin in 2013, Obama suggested reducing warhead deployments by another 30 percent under New START, but Putin promptly rejected the offer.

"I think at some point, and this may not be for two to three years, the Russians will probably be interested in a dialogue," said Steven Pifer, a former U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine and the head of the Brookings Institution's arms control and nuclear non-proliferation program.

According to Pifer, the historical record shows that Moscow has always been interested in some kind of cap on U.S. and Russian strategic warheads. Arms races are expensive, and Pifer said that Russia may come back to the table as New START's 2021 expiration date approaches.

The View from Moscow

According to Dr. Eugene Miasnikov, director of the Moscow-based Center for Arms Control, Energy and Environmental Studies, "Russia always considered the New START treaty a valuable instrument" since it does limit U.S. nuclear arms.

Russia isn't interested in further cuts. Last month, Deputy Defense Minister Anatoly Antonov, who was part of the Russian New START negotiation team, said Russia "is satisfied with the current situation" with regard to strategic arms limitations.

Still, Moscow has problems with the treaty, namely that it doesn't limit U.S. missile defense or prompt global strike weapons — a U.S. program to develop a new class of hypersonic non-nuclear missiles capable of destroying any target on the globe in under an hour.

"The sides are unable yet to resolve the related issues of ballistic missile defense and conventional strategic arms," Miasnikov said. Sanctions also hurt strategic dialogue, he added.

Russian officials have said that future developments with U.S. missile defense technology or the Prompt Global Strike program might serve as grounds to pull out of the treaty.

The Foreign Ministry's Ulyanov said Tuesday "the reckless deployment by the U.S. of a one-sided missile defense system damages the interests of Russian national security, and at some point may lead us to reconsider our attitude toward the treaty," Russian news agency RIA Novosti reported.

The View From Washington

In Washington, the Obama Administration remains committed to New START, analysts said. But since the treaty's signing, there has been a large camp opposed to its implementation.

"When measured against the most basic metrics for nuclear arms limitation treaties — for example, significant reductions or limits on nuclear weapons and effective verification measures — New START should be judged a failure," said Schneider.

During treaty negotiations, the Russians pushed for a higher cap on nuclear weapons, with fewer verification procedures, and they were given those concessions. The United States cannot cede more, Schneider said, arguing that holes in verification procedures leave room for a large Russian nuclear buildup — a dire threat to U.S. national security.

Pifer takes a more sanguine view: "The New START treaty is more important now than it was 18 months ago," as it promotes transparency and regular dialogue on nuclear issues while East and West revert to Cold War form over the crisis in Ukraine.

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However, these virtues may become harder to defend. Republican congressmen at various times have tried unsuccessfully to stop New START's implementation. Last year the Republican party won a majority in the U.S. Senate.

"I am not sure this will become a serious threat to the treaty, but my guess is that the administration is going to have to devote more time and attention to defending New START against efforts in Congress to undermine it," Pifer said.

<http://www.themoscowtimes.com/business/article/fight-over-ukraine-darkens-future-of-russia-us-nuclear-arms-control/518783.html>

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TASS Russian News Agency – Moscow, Russia

Strategic Bombers' Flights Aimed at Demonstrating Russian Defense Capabilities — Top Brass

According to Deputy Defense Minister Anatoly Antonov, the flights of Russian bombers are a common practice and Russia never violated international agreements

April 09, 2015

MOSCOW, April 9. /TASS/. Regular international flight of Russian strategic bombers are not in violation of any international regulations and are conducted to demonstrate the capabilities of the Russian Armed Forces, a high-ranking military official said on Thursday.

Russian Deputy Defense Minister Anatoly Antonov said that the flights of Russian bombers are "a common practice and we [Russia] never violated international agreements."

"In fact, we are demonstrating the capabilities the Russian Armed Forces have," Antonov said in an interview with Russia's Rossiya-24 television channel.

"We are again conducting regular training flights in order to be ready to cope with certain tasks we are facing," the high-ranking military official added.

In February, strategic bombers Tu-95MS [NATO reporting name: Bear] conducted flights over the Barents and Norwegian Seas, as well as over the north-eastern part of the Atlantic.

In particular, they drilled re-fuelling operations in the air. It was reported earlier that Russian bombers were accompanied by British Typhoon fighter jets in February's flights.

Last month Russia held a surprise combat readiness check of the country's Armed Forces, which also involved Air Force strategic bombers. Russia's strategic command and staff exercises and a surprise check of troops' combat readiness kicked off on March 16 and ended on March 21.

The surprise check started with Russia's Northern Fleet, units and formations of its Western Military District and the Airborne Force and subsequently extended to troops in other Russian regions. It involved 80,000 troops, 10,000 pieces of military hardware, 65 combat ships, 15 submarines and over 200 aircraft and helicopters.

<http://tass.ru/en/russia/788409>

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The Hill – Washington, D.C.

Admiral: Putin's Military 'Far More Capable' than what Soviet Union had

By Kristina Wong

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April 07, 2015

The commander in charge of defending North America from attacks said Tuesday that Russia is sending a message with military flights close to the United States.

"They're messaging us that they're a global power," said Adm. William Gortney, commander of U.S. Northern Command and North American Aerospace Defense Command at a Pentagon briefing.

Gortney said Russia has increasingly conducted long-range flights up around Canada, Alaska and down the English Channel, although he did not specify when.

"The numbers have gone up, but I don't like to give percentages, because one to five is 500 percent [and] that may overstate it. But the numbers have gone up, and where they're flying are different," he said.

So far, the Russian aircraft are still adhering to international standards. But, he added, "we watch very carefully what they're doing."

He said the flights have caused him to question Russia's long-term intent, adding that the U.S. has recently tracked two Russian ships — a spy ship and a logistics ship — near Cuba and Venezuela.

Relations between the U.S. and Russia have been increasingly strained since Moscow's invasion of Ukraine and its annexation of Crimea in March 2014.

Since then, Russia has armed and trained pro-Moscow separatists in eastern Ukraine, U.S. and Western officials say. Russia denies providing military assistance to the rebels.

The U.S., along with the European Union, has levied several rounds of sanctions on Russia for the invasion, and provided Ukraine with economic support, as well as about \$120 million in non-lethal military assistance.

Gortney said Moscow has developed a "far more capable military than the quantitative, very large military that the Soviet Union had."

"Also, they published a new doctrine. You're seeing that bear out. You're seeing them employ that capability and that doctrine in the Ukraine," he said.

Gortney's comments echoed warnings he made last month during a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing.

"This past year has marked a notable increase in Russian military assertiveness," he said in prepared remarks for a March 13 hearing, according to CNN.

He said Russian heavy bomber aircraft flew more patrols outside Russian airspace "than in any year since the Cold War."

Gortney also warned that Russia is continuing to work on its program to deploy "long range conventionally armed cruise missiles" that can be launched from bomber aircraft, submarines and warships.

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

<http://thehill.com/policy/defense/238139-admiral-russia-messaging-us-with-military-flights>

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Yonhap News Agency – Seoul, South Korea

N.K. Believed to be Capable of Firing Nuclear Missile at U.S. Mainland: U.S. Northern Commander

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WASHINGTON, April 7 (Yonhap) -- North Korea is believed to be capable of building a nuclear weapon small enough to fit atop a long-range missile and fire it at the U.S. mainland, the commander of the U.S. Northern Command said Tuesday.

Adm. William Gortney also said at a Pentagon briefing that the U.S. military is very concerned about the North's new road-mobile KN-08 intercontinental ballistic missile because it would be difficult to detect indications of a potential launch.

"Our assessment is that they have the ability to put it on -- a nuclear weapon on a KN-08 and shoot it at the homeland," Gortney told the briefing. "That's the way we think. That's our assessment of the process. We haven't seen them test the KN-08 yet and we're waiting to do that."

It was the latest in a series of similar assessments by U.S. military commanders.

Last month, Adm. Cecil Haney, commander of the U.S. Strategic Command, told a Senate Armed Services Committee hearing that he believes the North has "already miniaturized" some of its nuclear weapons.

In October, Gen. Curtis Scaparrotti, commander of U.S. Forces Korea, said that as USFK commander, he assumes the North has the capabilities to miniaturize nuclear warheads and that the country has "the technology to potentially actually deliver what they say they have."

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

Experts have warned that it is only a matter of time until the North develops nuclear-tipped missiles.

The Northern Command, based at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo., is charged with coordinating homeland defense.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/full/2015/04/08/39/1200000000AEN20150408000300315F.html>

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Want China Times – Taipei, Taiwan

J-11 and J-16 Can Escort PLA's H-6K Bombers: Russian Expert

By Staff Reporter

April 06, 2015

China's newly developed J-11B and J-16 heavy fighters may be deployed for escort missions alongside the PLA Air Force's H-6K strategic bombers operating in the Western Pacific, according to Russian defense expert Vasil Kashin as cited in the Moscow-based Sputnik News.

An unknown number of H-6K bombers from the PLA Air Force conducted the first long-range aircraft exercise over the Western Pacific last month. Arriving at their destination through the Bashi Channel off the southern coast of Taiwan, the bomber proved its capability of launching aerial offensives against Japan. The photos released by the PLA Air Force online indicate that China has at least two regiments of H-6K bombers, according to Kashin.

Since the entire Western Pacific is now within the range of the bombers, the United States, Japan and Taiwan may develop or purchase heavy fighters to engage them, Kashin said. The F-14 Tomcat carrier-based fighter was designed for the US Navy to confront Soviet strategic bombers during the later period of the Cold War. If the US and its allies are going to intercept Chinese bombers in the future, the PLA Air Force is likely to deploy heavy fighters to escort them as well.

The state-run Shenyang Aircraft Corporation has already developed heavy fighters such as the J-11B and J-16, based on the Russian Su-27, Kashin said. When necessary, both types of aircraft can be deployed to carry out escort missions for H-6K bombers equipped with CJ-10 cruise missiles.

More aerial refueling aircraft are set to enter service to extend the striking range of the Chinese strategic bombers.

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Yonhap News Agency – Seoul, South Korea

Senior U.S. Official Calls THAAD 'Critical' in Defending against N.K. Threats

By Chang Jae-soon

April 08, 2015

WASHINGTON, April 7 (Yonhap) -- The U.S. THAAD missile defense system is a "critical capability" in defending against North Korea's Nodong and extended-range Scud ballistic missiles, a senior State Department official said Tuesday.

Frank Rose, assistant secretary of state for arms control, verification and compliance, made the remark to reporters, though he said the U.S. has neither made any decision nor begun negotiations with Seoul on whether to deploy a THAAD battery to the South.

"U.S. missile defenses in the Asia-Pacific region are designed to deal with the threat from North Korea, specifically their threat from Nodongs as well as extended-range Scuds," Rose told reporters after missile defense discussions at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

"So the bottom line is: no decision to date. Nor are there any negotiations under way between the U.S. and the ROK on this issue. But what I would say is that in the future, were we to move in this direction, THAAD would be a critical capability to dealing with the threats from North Korea's Nodong and extended-range Scuds," he said.

The U.S. wants to deploy a THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense) missile interceptor battery to South Korea, where some 28,500 American troops are stationed, to better defend against threats from North Korea's ballistic missiles.

But the issue has become one of the most sensitive for the South because China and Russia see a potential THAAD deployment as a threat to their security interests and have increased pressure on Seoul to reject such a deployment.

Rose emphasized that THAAD is not aimed at China.

"I have made very, very clear that U.S. missile defenses are not directed against China, which are very, very clear in the Ballistic Missile Defense Review ... THAAD does not have any capability against China's strategic deterrent. It is a theater missile defense system," he said.

Elaine Bunn, deputy assistant secretary of defense for nuclear and missile defense policy, also said during the discussions that THAAD is all about coping with threats from North Korea, especially its Scud-C and Nodong missiles.

"It's North Korea that drives this ... If we do have consultations with ROK on this, it will be for the U.S. and ROK to decide. So this is just not about China," she said.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/news/2015/04/08/26/0200000000AEN20150408000200315F.html>

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South China Morning Post – Hong Kong, China

Inside North Korea's Nuclear Arsenal: New Research Says 'Hundreds' of Missiles can Target Neighbours

Associated Press (AP) in Washington

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Wednesday, 08 April, 2015

Nuclear-armed North Korea already has hundreds if not thousands of ballistic missiles that can target its neighbours like Japan and South Korea, US researchers said yesterday.

But Pyongyang will need foreign technology to upgrade its arsenal and pose a more direct threat to the United States, the researchers from Johns Hopkins University's US-Korea Institute and National Defence University's Centre for the Study of Weapons of Mass Destruction said.

These are the latest findings of a programme investigating what secretive North Korea's nuclear weapons capability will be by 2020 – in an attempt to shed some light on what kind of threat Pyongyang poses.

What they found was that the potential capability of delivering weapons further makes the reclusive socialist state appear more advanced than other countries at a similar early stage of the development of their nuclear arsenals.

Unlike Iran, the current focus of international nuclear diplomacy, North Korea has conducted atomic test explosions. Its blood-curdling rhetoric and periodic missile tests have set the region on edge and there is no sign of negotiations restarting to coax it into disarming.

"The current force is more than able to accommodate any future growth in the North's nuclear weapons arsenal, including a worst-case projection of 100 nuclear weapons by 2020," the report said.

Aerospace engineer John Schilling and a research associate at the Johns Hopkins institute, Henry Kan, say Pyongyang's current inventory of about 1,000 missiles, based on old Soviet technology, can already reach most targets in South Korea and Japan.

The ballistic missiles that are capable of reaching Japan and South Korea included the Nodong missiles with a range of 1,200-1,500 kilometres and the Scud missiles with a range of 300-600 kilometres, according to the report posted on the institute's website 38 North.

North Korea may be able to launch a limited number of Taepodong long-range ballistic missiles, which are said to be able to reach the US mainland, the report by the The North Korean Futures Project said.

"However, such a weapon would represent more of a political statement than an operational capability," as it has problems such as vulnerability to preemptive attacks due to its installation on a launch pad on the ground and low technical reliability, it said.

North Korea only has "a limited ability" to deliver a nuclear warhead to its target due to a lack of testing, it said.

Meanwhile the chief of the US military's command in charge of mainland defence said North Korea already has the ability to miniaturise a nuclear warhead to be delivered by an intercontinental missile called KN-08.

"Our assessment is that they have the ability to put a nuclear weapon on a KN-08 and shoot it at the homeland," Admiral Bill Gortney, commander of the Northern Command, told reporters at the US Defence Department.

The KN-08, displayed in military parades, is said to be capable of being launched from a road-mobile vehicle and would therefore be difficult to monitor via satellite.

For now, the emphasis is on sanctions and military preparedness. Defence Secretary Ash Carter visits Japan and South Korea this week amid speculation the US wants to place a missile defence system in South Korea against North Korean ballistic missiles, which Seoul is reluctant about as it would alienate China.

The US has already deployed anti-missile radar in Japan.

"North Korea has already achieved a level of delivery system development that will allow it to establish itself as a small nuclear power in the coming years," the researchers wrote in the paper.

But despite the North's 2012 success in launching a rocket into space –the clearest sign yet it has the potential to reach the American mainland –Pyongyang faces greater technical challenges in developing effective intercontinental missiles that could fire a nuclear weapon across the Pacific at the United States.

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Foreign assistance could be critical for overcoming the technological and engineering hurdles it now faces in developing better missiles, including progress on high-performance engines, heat shields, guidance electronics and rocket motors that use solid fuel instead of liquid fuel, the report said.

And that's become tougher as North Korea's international isolation has intensified since its first nuclear test explosion in 2006.

According to a recent estimate by the Washington-based Institute for Science and International Security, the North likely has enough fissile material for at least 10 weapons, and that could increase to between 20 and 100 weapons by 2020.

Whereas the basic designs and production systems are now in place for Pyongyang's nuclear programme, technological innovations on the missile front has been slower, the analysis says.

North Korea has failed to make the kind of advances that Iran and Pakistan have made, although both countries relied on North Korean assistance for missiles in the 1990s.

<http://www.scmp.com/news/asia/article/1760244/inside-north-koreas-nuclear-arsenal-new-research-says-hundreds-missiles>

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Global Times – Beijing, China

N.Korea Parliament Vows Continued Nuclear Weapons Push

Source: Agence France-Presse (AFP)

April 9, 2015

North Korea on Thursday vowed to continue its push to develop nuclear weapons as well as ease chronic food and energy shortages during a rare parliamentary session that was closely watched by observers.

The announcement made following the meeting stuck closely to a New Year's speech by leader Kim Jong-un which stressed the need to improve people's living standards.

According to the official KCNA news agency, Prime Minister Pak Pong-ju told the legislative assembly that 2014 was "a year of shining victories as the foundation for winning a final victory in all fields of building a thriving nation was consolidated."

"The main thrusts for this year are to organize the economic work with a main emphasis on solving the food problem of the people with agriculture, stock-breeding and fisheries as the three pivots, drastically increasing power production and putting metal industry on a Juche (self-reliance) basis," he said.

"It is important to thoroughly carry out the party's strategic line on simultaneously developing economic construction and the building of a nuclear force," Pak added.

The North's Supreme People's Assembly meets only once or twice a year, mostly for day-long sessions to approve budgets or other decisions made by the leadership, and is carefully monitored by observers for any changes to economic policy or a reshuffle of high-ranking officials. Kim Jong-un was absent from Thursday's session, South Korea's Yonhap news agency said.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/916114.shtml>

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Sputnik International – Russian Information Agency

Russian Armed Forces Carry Out Field-Testing of Maneuverable S-400 Missile

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The Russian military has carried out successful field testing of a new rocket with maneuverability capability for the S-400 surface-to-air air defense system, Aerospace Defense Forces told Russian Radio on Saturday.

04 April 2015

"Testing is still underway at present. Three days ago we successfully carried out testing of a maneuverable surface-to-air missile which successfully hit its target," Deputy Commander of Aerospace Defense Forces Major General Kirill Makarov told Russian radio station Russian News Service Saturday.

Makarov clarified that the rocket was tested at a distance of slightly less than 400 kilometers. The deputy commander also noted that the S-400 air defense system is rated as capable of defending against incoming missiles at a distance of up to 250 kilometers.

Earlier this year, Russia's Aerospace Defense Forces spokesman Alexei Zolotukhin stated that in the course of combat readiness exercises conducted in January, units of the Space Defense Forces carried out a successful readiness check against a hypothetical aircraft and missile attack on Moscow, noting that testing succeeded in identifying and destroying the attacking targets.

The 3RS-S-400 Triumf is the latest generation of Russia's service-to-air air defense systems, designed to intercept all types of aerial targets, including combat aircraft, ballistic and cruise missiles.

<http://sputniknews.com/military/20150404/1020483667.html>

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United Press International (UPI) – Washington, D.C.

Russia Relies on Threats of Nuclear Attack

By Ed Adamczyk

April 6, 2015

WASHINGTON, April 6 (UPI) -- A Russian threat to use its nuclear military arsenal exemplifies how dependent the country is on its nuclear capability to advance its interests.

At a meeting in Germany with retired U.S. military and intelligence officials last month, Russian diplomats warned that any attempt to return Crimea, annexed in 2014 by Russia, to Ukraine would be met with force, and Russia has also prominently mentioned its store of nuclear weapons when discussing potential attacks on NATO forces over the Baltic States. A document drawn from notes taken at the Germany meeting said a NATO attempt to return Crimea would be regarded as an attack on Russia, and would "be responded to fully, including through the use of nuclear weapons. In this type of scenario, the United States should also understand it would also be at risk."

The Russian delegation to the meeting noted conditions in the Baltic States – Estonia, Lithuania and Estonia, each a NATO member – are "the same conditions that existed in Ukraine and caused Russia to take action there."

The nuclear posturing by the Kremlin plays well to Russian population, many of whom recall the Soviet Union's days as a superpower. The Russian military is presently outclassed by NATO troops in Europe, with less manpower, inferior weapons and fewer allies; hence, a reliance on nuclear scaremongering.

Russia has also recently increased military reconnaissance flights and engaged in encounters with NATO ships and fighter planes. The Russian ambassador to Denmark, last month, threatened Denmark with a nuclear attack if it decides to support a European missile defense shield, and at a Russian youth camp last year, President Vladimir Putin boasted, "It is best not to mess with us when it comes to a possible armed conflict. I want to remind you that Russia is one of the leading nuclear powers."

During the Cold War, the Soviet Union's nuclear capability was acknowledged without the bluster and threats that now emerge from the Kremlin.

"It's not just a difference in rhetoric," said Bruce G. Blair, a Princeton University nuclear arms expert, told the Wall Street Journal. "It's a whole different world."

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"The fact that this nuclear option was on the table for consideration is a very clear indication that there's a low nuclear threshold now that didn't exist during the Cold War."

Blair described Putin's actions as the riskiest since the Cuban missile crisis.

http://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2015/04/06/Russia-relies-on-threats-of-nuclear-attack/7601428336631/

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The Moscow Times – Moscow, Russia

Firefighters Put Out Blaze on Russian Nuclear Submarine

April 08, 2015

Firefighters have put out a blaze on a nuclear submarine that was undergoing repairs at a shipyard in Russia's northern province of Arkhangelsk on Tuesday.

There were no weapons on board, the vessel's nuclear reactor had been shut down prior to the blaze and nobody was hurt, said the state-owned United Shipbuilding Corporation which runs the Zvyozdochka shipyard where the 155-meter (500 ft) 949 Antei (NATO classification Oscar-II) submarine was being repaired.

"There is no threat of environmental or radioactive contamination as the result of the incident," it said. The dry dock where the vessel had been repaired was flooded with water to help put out the blaze.

A source told TASS news agency that the active zone of the reactor had been unloaded at the start of repairs a few years ago.

The fire started near the stern during welding work that caused insulation materials to catch fire.

A blaze in 2011 nearly led to a nuclear disaster as it engulfed a nuclear-powered submarine carrying atomic weapons, a leading Russian magazine reported months later, contradicting official assurances that it was not armed.

In August 2000, during his first term as president, Vladimir Putin faced criticism for not acting quickly over the sinking of a nuclear-powered submarine on which all 118 people aboard died.

<http://www.themoscowtimes.com/opinion/news/article/firefighters-put-out-blaze-on-russian-nuclear-submarine/518788.html>

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Xinhua News – Beijing, China

Putin Sees Growing Military Threats from Outside

(Xinhua)

April 09, 2015

MOSCOW, April 9 (Xinhua) -- Russian President Vladimir Putin warned Thursday that there are growing threats to the country's national security.

"We see some countries increasingly render their policy toward unlimited offensive actions. As a result, the conflict potential grows in the regions of strategic importance for Russia," Putin said at a meeting with senior military officers, adding that "new threats emerge and Moscow cannot ignore."

To counter these threats, Russia is going to strength its military institutions as well as enhance cooperation with "peace-loving countries," said the president.

Putin added that Russian armed forces will increase frequency of drills this year, including strategic joint exercises with other countries, and beef up military presence in Crimea and the Arctic.

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Russian armed forces conducted over 3,500 military drills last year and launched in late March a round of large-scale combat readiness drills across the country amid increasing NATO military deployment near Russian borders.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-04/09/c_134138160.htm

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TASS Russian News Agency – Moscow, Russia

Russia to Triple Production of Missiles for Air and Missile Defense in 2015 — Source

The defense-industrial complex has been ordered to step up the production of missiles manufactured for air defense and missile defense complexes by 200%, a source at the Defense Ministry has told TASS

April 09, 2015

MOSCOW, April 9. /TASS/. Russia's defense-industrial complex will triple the production of missiles for air defense and missile defense complexes this year in contrast to 2014 parameters, a reliable source at the Defense Ministry has told TASS.

"The defense-industrial complex has been ordered to step up the production of missiles manufactured for air defense and missile defense complexes by 200%, which is to considerably increase the capabilities of the newly-created arm of the Russian armed forces — the Air and Space Force," the source said, adding that the production of missiles would grow by thousands.

"Alongside this the task was set to increase production rates and at the same time reduce the deployment deadlines for new systems and complexes of the air and anti-missile defense in various regions of the country, including Crimea and the Arctic," the source said.

The deputy commander of Russia's Air and Space Defense Force, Major-General Kirill Makarov, said last week the risk of a potential global strike by the United States was the main reason behind the measures for strengthening the air and anti-missile defense. He said the development of air and anti-missile defense systems was a priority.

<http://tass.ru/en/russia/788218>

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The Guardian (U.K. Edition) – London, U.K.

What's the Future of Trident? An Expert Guide

Post-election constraints suggest plans to build four nuclear-powered submarines in 2016 may, conveniently, be waylaid by an inquiry

By Ewen MacAskill, Defence and intelligence correspondent

Thursday, 9 April 2015

Labour and the Conservatives have publicly recommitted themselves to the renewal of Trident, pledging that it is a red line, set in concrete and, as David Cameron told the Commons in March this year, "non-negotiable".

So that's that then? Renewal of Britain's nuclear deterrent a done deal? Only until after the votes have been counted. Trident's future is still uncertain.

What is Trident?

Trident is a sea-based nuclear weapons system based in the river Clyde in Scotland. Introduced in the 1990s, it was acquired by the Thatcher government to replace the submarine-based Polaris system, which had been in use from 1968.

The UK's current fleet of four Trident submarines are due to retire in the late 2020s. There are three parts to Trident – the submarines, missiles and warheads – with the submarines alone taking up to 17 years to develop.

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The Conservatives have long argued that replacing Trident in its current form is the best option, but the Lib Dems say alternatives should be considered. Labour supports Trident renewal, although a number of MPs on the left of the party have historically opposed it.

The Tories and Labour will both insist throughout the election that they will renew Trident. But after polling day the real debate will start. The Vanguard-class submarines that carry the nuclear warheads and missiles came into service in the early 1990s and are due to be phased out. MPs are scheduled to vote by a deadline of March 2016 to release the massive funds for their replacement, known as the Successor.

Construction on the first of these is planned to begin in Barrow-in-Furness in autumn 2016 in order to be operational by 2028. The four Vanguards are scheduled to be phased out by 2032. But there are still two big stumbling blocks that could prevent Trident renewal.

1. Political reality

Labour, in order to form a minority government, is increasingly likely to find itself negotiating with the Scottish National party or the Greens or Plaid Cymru or a mix of them, all opposed to renewal. The Labour leadership, too, will face a revolt of its own backbenchers, who, surveys suggest, are overwhelmingly opposed to renewal.

2. Spending

Just as problematic for both Labour and the Conservatives is making such an investment at a time when spending faces further squeezes, with the defence budget especially vulnerable.

The former Labour defence secretary Des Browne, now Lord Browne of Ladyton, predicts that the 2016 deadline will be the first casualty.

“This 2016 deadline is artificial,” says Browne, who is in a good position to know, having been in charge of the Ministry of Defence in 2007 when the Commons first voted in principle for renewal. “In 2006, I was told by the experts that we had to start building replacement submarines for Trident then. Some of the same experts advised the coalition government that this could be delayed to 2016. This delay suited the politics of coalition and has destroyed my faith in the expert advice.”

So what will happen?

When faced with a big dilemma, the time-honoured tradition of politicians is to order an inquiry, and that is what Browne expects.

“My bet is that the incoming government, when faced with the stark financial reality of the spending necessary in times of continued austerity, will reach for a review to find an affordable alternative and will get the experts to support a further extension,” Browne says.

What will help concentrate minds is a Treasury memo that will greet the incoming prime minister and defence secretary. That memo will set out in detail the cost of replacing Trident as planned but also, crucially, a series of cheaper alternatives. There will be no recommendations: it is for ministers to choose.

What are the costs?

The most commonly quoted estimate of the cost of the Trident programme is the one used by groups such as the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND): more than £100bn over the lifetime of the deterrent. The MoD estimate is smaller but the figures are still eye-popping. The MoD estimate, based on 2006-07 prices – and, oddly, not updated, not even in its annual report published in December 2014 – is £15bn-£20bn: £11bn-£14bn for the subs, £2bn-£3bn for warheads and £2bn-£3bn for infrastructure. Unlike the CND estimate, the MoD’s does not include annual running costs.

The Commons library, in a paper published in March this year, The Trident Successor Programme: an update, happily uses a Treasury GDP deflator to bring the 2006-07 prices into line with 2013-14 prices. This puts the cost of

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the Trident replacement at £17.5-£23.4bn, including the subs at £12.9bn-£16.4bn. More than £2bn has already been spent in preparation.

The Commons library exists to offer parliamentarians objective information. In typical po-faced style, it sums up the coming debate. “Given the financial commitments associated with the replacement of the nuclear deterrent, questions have continued to be asked about the rationality of such spending at a time of austerity and further expected cuts across the MoD’s entire budget,” the report says.

With the army already cut back to 82,000, the lowest level since the Boer war, and the MoD braced for more budget cuts to below 2% of GDP after the election, ministers are going to have to make tough calls. To retain a nuclear weapons capability they may have to make more cuts in troop numbers, taking the army down to 60,000, or mothball or sell one of two aircraft carriers under construction, or reduce the number of planes for each carrier.

What does the military say?

Senior military staff tend to be indifferent to the nuclear deterrent. A senior military officer, asked about replacement for Trident, was cautious, not wanting to go on the record close to a general election.

But he distanced himself from it, saying it was a political judgment and nothing to do with him – an extraordinary admission given the nuclear deterrent is supposed to be one of the pillars of British defence. The army, in particular, tends to be unenthusiastic, not just because it could mean more cuts in troops but because nuclear weapons are not something it can train with or ever expect to see used.

Could we abandon nuclear weapons?

The one option not on the table is abandonment of nuclear weapons. Some anti-nuclear campaigners cling to a hope that budget constraints might lead to disarmament. The optimism is partly based on the idea that if the US were forced to choose between the UK having a nuclear weapon or a sizeable army, the Pentagon would opt for the latter.

But the US made it clear to a British defence minister on a visit to Washington that this was not the case. The Pentagon wants the UK to have both a nuclear force and a strong conventional force. But if compelled to choose, defence chiefs told their British counterpart, they valued the UK for only three things in terms of security: the British special forces and British intelligence – and that Britain remains part of the nuclear club.

What happens next?

The post-election debate will not be about disarmament but about whether there is a credible nuclear deterrent that is smaller and much cheaper than the one planned at present. Are subs needed at all? Could nuclear weapons be delivered by stealth planes? Could the number of warheads be reduced further?

One of the biggest questions is whether Britain needs to maintain a nuclear-armed submarine on patrol at all times – continuous at-sea deterrence (CASD). Labour is prepared to contemplate a reduction from four to three submarines if there were technological advances that would allow the UK to maintain CASD. The Liberal Democrats are pressing for the nuclear fleet to be cut to three subs, or even two.

Sir Menzies Campbell, former Liberal Democrat leader and head of the British delegation to the Nato parliamentary assembly, echoes Browne’s prediction that there will a post-election review.

“I have no doubt that both the Conservative and Labour parties will maintain throughout the course of the election campaign their determination to build four submarines and 160 warheads,” he says. “But I am equally sure that within a week of the election being over, whoever is secretary of state for defence will instigate a further review of Trident and its impact upon the overall budget.”

Paul Ingram, executive director of the British American Security Information Council, a thinktank which aims to stimulate debate on nuclear weapons, is another who thinks the 2016 deadline is artificial.

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"There remain serious options for any future nuclear deterrent that could deliver a more appropriate level of nuclear deterrent, and annually save hundreds of millions of pounds," Ingram says. "A new government must initiate a further independent study of those options before finally committing to the massive Trident replacement project."

He argues that such a study should examine whether the life of the Vanguard subs could be extended by swapping some components and "stop going on assumptions that are already well over a decade old and based upon previous generations of submarine".

Additional reporting by Josh Halliday

<http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/apr/09/tory-labour-renew-trident-threat-reality-nuclear-election>

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Defense News – Tysons Corner, VA

Tories Commit to 4-Boat Trident Missile Fleet

By Andrew Chuter

April 9, 2015

LONDON — Britain's Conservative Party will commit to building four Trident missile-armed submarines to replace the Vanguard-class boats currently providing the UK's nuclear deterrence.

Defence Secretary Michael Fallon said the pledge to build four submarines will be included in the Tories' manifesto due to be released soon, ahead of the May 7 general election.

The Labour Party, the only other party large enough to form a government here, supports the renewal of the nuclear deterrent, known as the Successor program, but has not firmly committed to whether the new fleet would involve three or four boats.

In an article in The Times, Fallon mainly launched a personal attack on Labour Party leader Ed Miliband, but the article did for the first time contain a firm commitment by the Tories to a one-for-one replacement of the Vanguard fleet to guarantee continuous at-sea deterrence.

Fallon said Miliband would be "willing to stab the UK in the back" by doing a deal with the Scottish National Party (SNP) on Trident to gain power just as he had "stabbed his own brother in the back" to secure the Labour Party nomination as leader.

With a coalition or minority government expected to result from the election, the increasingly popular SNP has emerged as a potentially key player if Labour beats the Tories to form the next government.

The SNP says not replacing the Vanguard submarines is a red line issue if it is to support a Labour minority government. Britain's nuclear submarines are currently based at Faslane in Scotland.

The reference to family warfare relates to a fierce fight between Ed and his brother David for leadership of the Labour Party in 2010, which resulted in the former unexpectedly winning due to backing by some of Britain's most powerful unions.

The British Parliament is planned to vote next year on whether to proceed with the Successor program. As things stand, there is a large majority in favor of retaining the nuclear deterrent.

Responding to Fallon's remarks about a possible deal between Labour and the SNP, Vernon Coaker, Labour's shadow defense secretary, said Miliband had made clear national security was not up for negotiation.

"We support renewal of Trident along with a renewed focus on multilateral disarmament. Labour is committed to maintaining a minimum, credible, independent nuclear deterrent, delivered through a continuous-at-sea deterrent. This is not up for negotiation with any party," said Coaker.



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In a radio interview Thursday, Douglas Alexander, the shadow foreign secretary, wasn't clear cut on the issue of boat numbers planned for construction by BAE Systems' submarine yard in northwest England.

Alexander said technological advances might enable the task to be carried out by three boats rather than four.

The number of boats to be built by the cash-strapped Ministry of Defence is of critical importance to what happens elsewhere in the equipment procurement program.

The Royal United Services Institute think tank recently estimated that by 2024, when Successor spending reaches its peak, it will account for 37 percent of the entire equipment program and remain at that rate until the end of the decade.

The current plan is to have the first of the new submarines operational around 2028 to replace the Vanguard fleet.

In March, the Conservative-led coalition government announced £285 million (US \$420 million) of contracts to fund the latest phase of design work on the Successor submarines. Most of that money went to BAE.

In a speech scheduled for April 10, Fallon will lay out the Tory thinking on defense if it wins the May election.

<http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/naval/2015/04/09/conservatives-say-4-boats-planned-for-nuclear-deterrent-fleet/25514811/>

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

Obama: Iran Deal Blocks 'Every Pathway' to Development of Nuclear Weapon

President applauds 'historic understanding' in weekly address as Republican opposition to nuclear agreement remains strong

By Lauren Gambino in New York

Saturday, 4 April 2015

President Barack Obama on Saturday again called the nuclear accord reached with Iran this week a “good deal”, as he continued to face fierce opposition on the issue from Republicans.

In what the president called a “historic understanding”, Iran agreed on Thursday to a framework deal that would dramatically constrain its nuclear program in return for the gradual lifting of economic sanctions.

“This framework is the result of tough, principled diplomacy,” Obama said in his weekly address to the nation. “It’s a good deal – a deal that meets our core objectives, including strict limitations on Iran’s program and cutting off every pathway that Iran could take to develop a nuclear weapon.”

Under the broad deal, which was negotiated with other world powers, Iran is allowed to keep its nuclear facilities, which it insists are for peaceful uses and which will be subject to enhanced inspections. The deal is not yet final.

Opposition in Washington has been brewing since the start of the talks nearly 18 months ago. But with a final deal in sight, Republicans and some Democrats are demanding a say in the decision to relieve sanctions.

Obama has repeated that the deal will be called off if Iran balks at any stage, saying the deal is not based on “trust” but rather “unprecedented verification”.

On Saturday, former governor of Arkansas Mike Huckabee, a possible presidential candidate in 2016, added his voice to Republican opposition to the deal saying he doubted anything from Iran was verifiable, and criticizing Secretary of State John Kerry and the Obama administration over the way the negotiations played out.

“We’re expecting something good from bad people,” he said on CNN.

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Huckabee, who has advocated for stronger sanctions against Iran, scoffed that there had been “more pressure” this week for sanctions against Indiana, which was recently forced to clarify a law that activists said allowed businesses to deny services to gay people.

Earlier this week, former Florida governor Jeb Bush, who is seen by many to be the leading contender for the Republican presidential nomination, said: “Nothing in the deal described by the administration this afternoon would justify lifting US and international sanctions, which were the product of many years of bipartisan effort. I cannot stand behind such a flawed agreement.”

His brother, President George W Bush, rallied the international community to impose many of the sanctions currently in place.

Since the deal was struck on Thursday, Obama has met several key legislators to sell them on the merits of the deal. The White House has also sought to quell proposed legislation it believes could undermine negotiations.

A bill brought by the Republican chair of the Senate foreign relations committee, Bob Corker, would prevent sanctions relief for 60 days, providing Congress space to review the deal, which is due to be completed at the end of June.

Corker – who was not among the 47 Republican signatories of a controversial open letter last month – said his bill would be put to a committee vote on 14 April, giving the Obama administration the two-week Easter recess to persuade Democrats not to support it. Other Republicans are seeking to effectively render the nuclear agreement a treaty requiring ratification by the Senate.

The White House has said Obama will veto Corker’s bill if it passes – a veto could be overridden with a two-thirds majority vote, not an impossibility given the strong sentiments in Congress.

In his Saturday address, the president also sought to paint a picture of the alternatives to a nuclear deal, stressing that an accord reached through diplomatic efforts presented the best opportunity the world had for blunting Iran’s nuclear ambitions and avoiding another military conflict in the Middle East.

The three options, Obama said, were to bomb the nuclear facilities and launch a third war in the Middle East, maintain the status quo and hope for the best, or seek “a robust and verifiable deal like this one that peacefully prevents Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon”.

He insisted the framework would cut off every pathway that Iran could take to a nuclear weapon.

“Our work – this deal – is not yet done,” Obama said. “Diplomacy is painstaking work. Success is not guaranteed. But today we have an historic opportunity to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons in Iran, and to do so peacefully, with the international community firmly behind us.

“And this will be our work in the days and months ahead in keeping with the best traditions of American leadership.”

<http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/apr/04/obama-iran-deal-nuclear-weapon>

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Tasnim News Agency – Tehran, Iran

No Easy Path to Ratification of Additional Protocol: Iranian MP

April 05, 2015

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – A senior Iranian lawmaker said adopting the Additional Protocol of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) comes within the purview of the parliament, adding that he expects no easy path towards its ratification in the legislature.

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Speaking to reporters in Tehran on Sunday, Chairman of the Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Commission Alaeddin Boroujerdi said if and when Tehran is required to adopt the Additional Protocol under a final nuclear deal with world powers, the lawmakers will decide on it.

"It is not time now for discussions on this issue (ratifying the Additional Protocol)," he explained.

Boroujerdi noted that there are plenty of opposing views in the Majlis (Iran's parliament) about adopting the Additional Protocol and that the road towards such a measure in the Majlis will be "definitely not an easy one."

His comments came after Iran and the Group 5+1 (Russia, China, the US, Britain, France and Germany) on April 2 reached a framework agreement on Tehran's civilian nuclear program after intensive negotiations in Lausanne, Switzerland, with both sides committed to push for a final, comprehensive accord until the end of June.

The framework provides a series of solutions that will be the basis of a comprehensive joint plan of action.

According to the framework agreement, "a set of measures have been agreed to monitor the provisions of the JCPOA (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action) including implementation of the modified Code 3.1 and provisional application of the Additional Protocol."

The Additional Protocol allows reinforced and unannounced inspections of a country's nuclear facilities by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and requires that information be provided on all activities regarding the nuclear fuel cycle.

Iran, a signatory of the NPT, voluntarily implemented the additional protocol between 2003 and 2005, but ceased to apply it after its nuclear case was sent to the United Nations Security Council.

The Additional Protocol substantially expands the IAEA's ability to check nuclear facilities by providing the agency with authority to visit any facility, declared or not, to investigate questions about or inconsistencies in a state's nuclear declarations. States party to the NPT are not required to adopt an additional protocol, although the IAEA is urging all to do so.

<http://www.tasnimnews.com/english/Home/Single/701680>

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FARS News Agency – Tehran, Iran
Sunday, April 05, 2015

Iranian President: Only Termination, Not Suspension, of Sanctions Agreed with World Powers

TEHRAN (FNA) - Iranian President Hassan Rouhani dismissed the US officials' claims that Tehran and the world powers have agreed on the suspension of the sanctions against Iran, reiterating that boycotts and embargos will be lifted forever under a final deal.

"During the negotiations, we have always planned for the termination of the economic, financial and banking sanctions and we have never negotiated on their suspension, otherwise, no understanding would be made," Rouhani said on Sunday.

Stressing that good steps have been taken during the nuclear negotiations with the Group 5+1 (the US, Russia, China, Britain and France plus Germany), he said, "We will have a difficult path ahead in the stage of drafting the final deal."

Rouhani blasted certain countries which think that Iran's success equals to the country's hegemony over the region, and said, "The Islamic Republic of Iran has not and is not after aggression against another country and our contemporary history shows this reality, but we will defend our rights against anyone who seeks to violate the people's rights."



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Iran and the G5+1 started their new round of talks in Lausanne, Switzerland, late in March to narrow their differences over Tehran's nuclear energy program ahead of a July 1 deadline.

After nine days of hard work, the seven nations reached an understanding which laid the ground for them to start drafting the final nuclear deal.

On Saturday, Iran's deputy lead negotiator Seyed Abbas Araqchi dismissed as "wrong interpretation" the recent statements made by US State Department's Spokeswoman Marie Harf about the Lausanne statement issued by Iran and the G5+1.

Harf said on Friday that "we expect for the anti-Iran sanctions suspension piece to happen generally within the first year, but again, if Iran takes these steps more quickly, then the suspension can come more quickly." Harf added that "Iran will receive sanctions relief" only after the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) verifies that Tehran has taken steps to implement the "agreement reached in Lausanne, Switzerland on Thursday.

"This is a wrong impression about the Lausanne understanding," Araqchi told the state-run TV on Saturday.

"The Lausanne statement explicitly states that the sanctions will be annulled; all nuclear-related economic and financial sanctions will be removed in the first stage," Araqchi stressed.

He said the contents of the White House factsheet about the Lausanne agreements are wrong, and the statements made by the (US State Department) spokeswoman are wrong too," Araqchi added.

He reiterated that economic sanctions and restrictions against Iran will be removed in the first stage of the implementation of the agreement.

"And if the Americans have an impression other than this, well it will surely be the topic of negotiations in the next round of the talks," Araqchi added.

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13940116000903>

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Tasnim News Agency – Tehran, Iran

Iran's Zarif Briefs Influential Parliamentary Commission on Lausanne Statement

April 06, 2015

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, who is also the country's chief nuclear negotiator, briefed members of an influential parliamentary commission over details of a framework agreement with world powers on Tehran's nuclear energy program.

Hossein Naqavi Hosseini, the rapporteur for the parliament's national security and foreign policy commission, told Tasnim that during the Sunday session, Foreign Minister Zarif hinted at the "unreliable" nature of the US throughout the whole stages of negotiations.

The session was held after Iran and the Group 5+1 (Russia, China, the US, Britain, France and Germany) on April 2 reached a framework agreement on Tehran's civilian nuclear program after more than a week of intensive negotiations in Lausanne, Switzerland, with both sides committed to push for a final, comprehensive accord until the end of June.

According to Naqavi Hosseini, Zarif once again made it clear that the whole sanctions the UN Security Council had previously imposed on Iran will be entirely annulled immediately after a new resolution is passed as a result of the final, comprehensive deal.

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“If a deal is reached, the case will be referred to the United Nations Security Council which will approve the resolution under the Article 41 of Chapter 7 that annuls all previous resolutions,” the MP quoted Zarif as saying, noting that all those happen before the parties even begin to implement the comprehensive agreement.

After the parties to the deal start to meet their commitments, the EU sanction will be terminated and application of the US secondary sanctions will be ceased, since termination of the latter will require the US Congress ratification, Zarif has reportedly explained.

According to the Lausanne statement, “the EU will terminate the implementation of all nuclear-related economic and financial sanctions and the US will cease the application of all nuclear-related secondary economic and financial sanctions, simultaneously with the IAEA-verified implementation by Iran of its key nuclear commitments.”

<http://www.tasnimnews.com/english/Home/Single/702291>

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The Times of Israel – Jerusalem, Israel

Saudi Arabia Welcomes Iran Framework Deal

While its media cries betrayal, monarchy officially says it hopes agreement will help rid region of weapons of mass destruction; hails Palestinian ICC bid

By *Times of Israel* staff

April 6, 2015

Saudi Arabia’s cabinet said Monday that it welcomes the understandings reached between Iran and world powers in Lausanne, Switzerland, last week regarding the future of Tehran’s nuclear program.

In a statement published by the official Saudi Press Agency, the kingdom “expressed hope that a final, binding and definitive agreement would be reached leading to the strengthening of security and stability in the region and the world.”

The statement marked a stark contrast with Saudi media reports on the deal, which have expressed a sense of betrayal over the framework accord.

The cabinet urged clearing the region of all weapons of mass destruction, and in an apparent reference to Tehran’s involvement in Syria, Lebanon and Yemen, appealed for “good neighborliness and non-interference in the affairs of Arab states.”

Iran and Saudi Arabia, the foremost Shiite and Sunni Muslim powers in the Middle East, have had troubled relations in recent years after taking different sides in the Syrian civil war. Before the framework agreement was announced, Saudi Arabia expressed fears that if too much of Iran’s nuclear program is left intact, it will still have the ability to obtain an atomic bomb.

Relations have been further strained by the conflict raging in Yemen, where a Saudi-led coalition has waged more than a week of airstrikes against Iran-backed Shiite rebels.

King Salman expressed similar sentiments with regard to the framework deal Thursday in a phone conversation with President Barack Obama, according to the official Saudi Press Agency.

Saudi Arabia’s cabinet also hailed the International Criminal Court’s acceptance of the Palestinians as full members last week. “The cabinet stressed that the accession of the State of Palestine to the International Criminal Court strengthens its presence in the international field to preserve the rights of the Palestinian people,” the statement added.

The framework deal announced Thursday envisions a final agreement that would pare back Iran’s nuclear program for at least a decade in return for sanctions relief. Iran and six world powers, including the United States, hope to reach a final agreement by June 30.



Following the agreement's signing, Obama spoke with the leaders of Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates to share details on the framework agreement reached with Iran, the White House said in a statement, according to Reuters. Obama invited the leaders of the Gulf states to meet with him at Camp David later this year to discuss the final deal.

AFP, AP contributed to this report.

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/saudi-arabia-welcomes-iran-framework-deal/>

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Xinhua News – Beijing, China

U.S. Energy Secretary Calls Iran Nuke Deal "Forever Agreement"

(Xinhua)

April 07, 2015

WASHINGTON, April 6 (Xinhua) -- The nuclear deal that world powers are negotiating with Iran is not a decade-long pact to curb Tehran's nuclear program, but a "forever agreement", U.S. Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz said Monday.

"It's not a fixed-year agreement; it's a forever agreement in a certain sense, with different stages," Moniz told reporters at a White House briefing.

The preliminary accord was sealed Thursday following eight days of intense negotiations between Iran's foreign minister and his counterparts from Britain, China, France, Russia, the United States plus Germany in the Swiss city of Lausanne.

The framework deal provides "unprecedented access and transparency" to Iran's nuclear program, said Moniz, a nuclear physicist who played a key role in negotiations in Switzerland.

At the briefing, White House spokesman Josh Earnest also said that tough inspections on Iran's nuclear program would be in place "in perpetuity."

Playing down concerns that the U.S. and Iran have different narratives about the framework deal, Moniz underlined that the two sides are on the same page about the accord.

The U.S. and Iran emphasize "very strongly" that they talk about the same agreement, Moniz said, adding that what each side chooses to emphasize may be different.

"There's no doubt that right now there's a different narrative, but not in conflict with what's written down," Moniz said. "It's just selective."

Iranian officials have stressed the benefits to Iran of last week's negotiations, anticipating sanctions related to its nuclear program "will be lifted immediately if a final deal is agreed."

On Monday, Earnest made clear that the sanctions on Iranian economy would only be phased out gradually if Tehran complies with a final deal.

"It is the strong view of the administration that it would not be wise and it would not be in the interests of the international community to simply take away sanctions, take away all of the sanctions on day one," Earnest said.

U.S. President Barack Obama has defended framework nuclear deal with Iran as a "once in a lifetime opportunity" to curb the spread of nuclear weapons in the Middle East.

"This is our best bet by far to make sure Iran doesn't get a nuclear weapon," Obama said in an interview with Thomas L. Friedman, an Op-Ed columnist for The New York Times.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-04/07/c_134127768.htm



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Mehr News – Tehran, Iran
April 8, 2015

Def. Min.: Inspection of Military Centers among Redlines

TEHRAN, Apr. 08 (MNA) – Iran’s defense minister has said no agreement should suppose inspection of military centers as legitimate; it is a redline.

Brig. Gen. Hossein Dehqan was quoted by Defense Ministry official website as saying that contrary to the false claims made by foreign media that Lausanne joint statement would allow inspection of Iran’s military centers, “I would say that no such a deal has been signed.”

“Such media propaganda does not serve national interests; rather, it prepares the grounds for the enemies to continue their excessive demands,” said the defense minister. “Precise and accurate assessment of nuclear negotiations along with fair criticism and benevolently reminding the pitfalls are welcome as positive; the overall measures taken by the Leader of the Islamic Republic, government, and the strong will by our negotiators are in the path allowing no way to impose anything on the nation,” he emphasized.

Dehqan was reacting to a report in British daily Guardian which wrote in a report that inspection of military centers was a part of the joint statement in Lausanne; “such a concession made would not be accepted, since it is a redline for us,” said the minister, who believed that overhasty optimism and pessimistic view of the affairs are two extremes which would infest any attempt to secure our national interests,” he added.

“Our nuclear negotiators, supported by the sagacious guidelines of the Leader and public support from the nation, are resolved to secure the nuclear rights in the highest possible level through self-confidence and a rational approach to negotiations,” Dehqan concluded.

<http://en.mehrnews.com/detail/News/106554>

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FARS News Agency – Tehran, Iran
Thursday, April 09, 2015

Supreme Leader Stresses Conditions of Final Deal with Powers

TEHRAN (FNA) - Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei specified conditions for a final nuclear deal with the world powers, and underlined that Iran doesn’t allow any inspection of its defensive and military centers.

"They (the foreigners) shouldn’t be allowed at all to penetrate into the country's security and defensive boundaries under the pretext of supervision, and the country's military officials are not permitted at all to allow the foreigners to cross these boundaries or stop the country's defensive development under the pretext of supervision and inspection," Ayatollah Khamenei said, addressing a large number of Iranian people in Tehran on Thursday.

Elaborating on his position on the recent nuclear statement issued by Iran and the Group 5+1 (the US, Russia, China, Britain and France plus Germany) in Lausanne, Switzerland, he said, "I am neither in favor nor against it since nothing has happened yet and no binding issue has occurred between the two sides."

Ayatollah Khamenei underscored that he will support a final deal which would guarantee the Iranian nation's honor and interests, and added, "I am not indifferent to the negotiations but I have not interfered in the details of the negotiations by now and will not interfere in the future either."

Stressing that the underway talks between Tehran and the world powers are merely limited to the nuclear issue, he advised the Iranian officials and negotiators not to trust the other side as their untrustworthiness was seen in the recent remarks by US President Barack Obama after the joint nuclear statement.

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Ayatollah Khamenei stressed the necessity for continued progress in the country's nuclear Research and Development (R&D) and development of the nuclear industry, and said another important issue in the final deal is that "the sanctions should be removed completely on the same day (of the implementation) of any agreement".

In relevant comments on Wednesday, Iran's Defense Minister Brigadier General Hossein Dehqan also categorically rejected as a "lie" a Guardian report alleging that Tehran had granted access to its military facilities under the recent framework agreement with the world powers.

"No such agreement has been made; principally speaking, visit to military centers is among our redlines and no such visit will be accepted," Gen. Dehqan stressed on Wednesday, rejecting "the report by foreign media outlets, such as the Guardian" as "untruthful allegations".

The Iranian defense minister reiterated that the Supreme Leader's guidelines, government's strategy and the negotiating team's resolve have placed the Iranian diplomacy on a path that it would never allow the opposite parties to the talks impose their will on the Iranian nation.

Iran and the G5+1 started their new round of talks in Lausanne, Switzerland, on March 26 to narrow their differences over Tehran's nuclear energy program ahead of a July 1 deadline.

After nine days of hard work, the seven nations reached an understanding last Thursday which laid the ground for them to start drafting the final nuclear deal.

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13940120000820>

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Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) – Tehran, Iran
09 April 2015

Iran Will Sign No Deal unless all Sanctions Lifted the Same Day

Tehran, April 9, IRNA – President Hassan Rouhani said Thursday that Iran will sign no deal unless all economic sanctions on the country be lifted on the same day the deal takes effect.

The president made the remarks in a ceremony to mark the 9th National Nuclear Technology Day.

'Today we say that the path of moderation, logic, negotiation, peace, tranquility, human dignity and regional stability have overcome extremism, pressure, violence and sanction,' Rouhani said.

The world has chosen to respect the Iranian nation and to gradually put aside sanctions, pressure and threat, Rouhani said.

'We are not seeking to defeat anyone in the negotiations... We are after protecting our rights. We prefer win-win deal.'

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/81565365/>

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Mehr News – Tehran, Iran
April 10, 2015

Iran Would Extend Time if Needed: Araghchi

TEHRAN, Apr. 10 (MNA) – The senior member of Iran's negotiation team said if needed, Iran will extend the time to reach a good deal as introduced by Leader.

Seyed Abbas Araghchi, talking to IRIB Channel 1 news, expressed his gratitude to Ayat. Khamenei for his precise and wise statements and directives on nuclear negotiations and Lausanne Statement. "I would like to thank our Leader for putting trust on the team. This is encouraging," added he.

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“During the whole process of negotiations the Leader has guided the team by defining the framework and redlines and we have tried to move within the frame and we will follow the same method in future as well,” Araghchi stressed.

He said: “As Ayatollah Khamenei noted, we have a very difficult task ahead and it is to agree on details of the decided solutions of Lausanne Statement within three months.”

“We are not in a situation of agreement or guaranteed agreement. We are looking for a deal ideal for Iran, preserving the rights, honor, and independence of Iran and certainly we will continue in this direction,” Araghchi underlined.

The Deputy FM, meanwhile emphasized that Iran will not limit the issue to the time; “Iran will work hard to reach an agreement within the specified time of three months or even sooner, but if the deal would not meet the criteria the Leader has introduced for a good deal, we would extend the time.”

“We welcome fair and logic criticism and we try to share the ideas to reach solutions to be used in coming rounds of negotiations for a final agreement,” he concluded.

<http://en.mehrnews.com/detail/News/106564>

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Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) – Tehran, Iran
10 April 2015

No Halt in Work of Iran N-Facilities: Salehi

Tehran, April 10, IRNA - Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Ali-Akbar Salehi said on Thursday evening that none of Iran's nuclear facilities will be stopped.

Speaking to the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB), Salehi underscored that definitely Iran will also pursue fuel cycle.

Salehi also briefed the Iranian nation on the outcome of negotiations between Iran and the six world powers - known as the P5+1, on the country's nuclear issue.

On April 2, Iran and the P5+1 group of world powers adopted a joint statement after marathon talks in Lausanne calling, among other things, for the removal of the UNSC sanctions against the Islamic Republic.

The statement was read out in a joint press conference in the Swiss city by the EU high representative, Federica Mogherini, and Zarif.

In the framework of the agreement, none of Iran's nuclear facilities as well as the previous activities will be stopped, shut down or suspended and Iran's nuclear activities in all its nuclear facilities including Natanz, Fordow, Isfahan and Arak will continue.

These comprehensive solutions will guarantee the continued enrichment program inside the Iranian territory and according to this, Iran will be allowed to go on with industrial production of nuclear fuel which is meant for running its nuclear power plants.

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/81565660/>

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The Times of India – New Delhi, India

Test of Missile Interceptor for Aerial Shield Fails

Tamil News Network (TNN)

April 7, 2015

Issue No.1160, 10 April 2015

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NEW DELHI: India's development of a ballistic missile defence (BMD) shield is still years away from becoming operational, with yet another test of its interceptor missile flopping on Monday morning.

Sources said the advanced air defence (AAD) interceptor missile was fired from Wheeler Island off the Odisha coast but plummeted into the Bay of Bengal soon after. "The mission was aborted barely three seconds after the launch since the interceptor missile went awry. Fortunately, the target was only an electronically simulated missile and not a real one," said a source.

The previous test of this BMD system in April last year had also failed. DRDO has been promising a BMD shield for New Delhi, to be followed by Mumbai and other cities, for several years now but without much success.

As earlier reported by TOI, after the last somewhat successful test of an interceptor missile in November 2012, DRDO had grandly promised that a two-tier missile shield would be deployed for New Delhi by 2014. But the deadline went by without any progress.

DRDO's experimental two-tier BMD system is supposed to track and destroy ballistic missiles both inside (endo) and outside (exo) the earth's atmosphere. Phase-I of this BMD system, with interceptors flying at 4.5 Mach high-supersonic speeds to intercept enemy missiles, is meant to tackle hostile missiles with a 2,000-km strike range. Phase-II will be geared for taking on 5,000-km range missiles, virtually in the class of ICBMs (intercontinental ballistic missiles), with interceptors at hypersonic speeds of 6-7 Mach.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Test-of-missile-interceptor-for-aerial-shield-fails/articleshow/46830839.cms>

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The Economic Times – New Delhi, India

Nuclear-Capable Dhanush Missile Successfully Test-Fired

By Press Trust of India (PTI)
9 April 2015

BALASORE (ODISHA): India on Thursday successfully test-fired its nuclear-capable Dhanush ballistic missile with a strike range of 350 km from a naval ship off the Odisha coast.

The surface-to-surface Dhanush, a naval variant of India's indigenously-developed Prithvi missile, was test fired from a ship in the Bay of Bengal off Odisha coast by the Strategic Force Command (SFC) of the defence force.

"The launch was part of an exercise by the armed forces and the missile reached the designated target with high precision," a DRDO scientist said.

"The missile launch and its flight performance was monitored from DRDO telemetry and radar facilities in the Odisha coast," he said.

The single-stage, liquid-propelled Dhanush having 350 km range has already been inducted into the armed forces and is one of the five missiles developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) under the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP), defence sources said.

The trial was conducted by the SFC of the defence force in co-operation with DRDO.

Dhanush missile is capable of carrying conventional as well as nuclear payload of 500 kg and hit both land and sea-based targets.

The previous trial was successfully conducted on November 14 last year.

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/nuclear-capable-dhanush-missile-successfully-test-fired/articleshow/46864757.cms>

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The New York Times – New York, NY
OPINION/ Editorial

Nuclear Fears in South Asia

By THE EDITORIAL BOARD

April 6, 2015

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The world's attention has rightly been riveted on negotiations aimed at curbing Iran's nuclear program. If and when that deal is made final, America and the other major powers that worked on it — China, Russia, Britain, France and Germany — should turn their attention to South Asia, a troubled region with growing nuclear risks of its own.

Pakistan, with the world's fastest-growing nuclear arsenal, is unquestionably the biggest concern, one reinforced by several recent developments. Last week, Pakistan's prime minister, Nawaz Sharif, announced that he had approved a new deal to purchase eight diesel-electric submarines from China, which could be equipped with nuclear missiles, for an estimated \$5 billion. Last month, Pakistan test-fired a ballistic missile that appears capable of carrying a nuclear warhead to any part of India. And a senior adviser, Khalid Ahmed Kidwai, reaffirmed Pakistan's determination to continue developing short-range tactical nuclear weapons whose only purpose is use on the battlefield in a war against India.

These investments reflect the Pakistani Army's continuing obsession with India as the enemy, a rationale that allows the generals to maintain maximum power over the government and demand maximum national resources. Pakistan now has an arsenal of as many as 120 nuclear weapons and is expected to triple that in a decade. An increase of that size makes no sense, especially since India's nuclear arsenal, estimated at about 110 weapons, is growing more slowly.

The two countries have a troubled history, having fought four wars since independence in 1947, and deep animosities persist. Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India has made it clear that Pakistan can expect retaliation if Islamic militants carry out a terrorist attack in India, as happened with the 2008 bombing in Mumbai. But the latest major conflict was in 1999, and since then India, a vibrant democracy, has focused on becoming a regional economic and political power.

At the same time, Pakistan has sunk deeper into chaos, threatened by economic collapse, the weakening of political institutions and, most of all, a Taliban insurgency that aims to bring down the state. Advanced military equipment — new submarines, the medium-range Shaheen-III missile with a reported range of up to 1,700 miles, short-range tactical nuclear weapons — are of little use in defending against such threats. The billions of dollars wasted on these systems would be better spent investing in health, education and jobs for Pakistan's people.

Even more troubling, the Pakistani Army has become increasingly dependent on the nuclear arsenal because Pakistan cannot match the size and sophistication of India's conventional forces. Pakistan has left open the possibility that it could be the first to use nuclear weapons in a confrontation, even one that began with conventional arms. Adding short-range tactical nuclear weapons that can hit their targets quickly compounds the danger.

Pakistan is hardly alone in its potential to cause regional instability. China, which considers Pakistan a close ally and India a potential threat, is continuing to build up its nuclear arsenal, now estimated at 250 weapons, while all three countries are moving ahead with plans to deploy nuclear weapons at sea in the Indian Ocean.

This is not a situation that can be ignored by the major powers, however preoccupied they may be by the long negotiations with Iran.

http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/06/opinion/nuclear-fears-in-south-asia.html?_r=1

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The Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) – Barton, Australia
OPINION/ The Strategist

Does the U.S. Navy Need Nukes in Asia?

By Rod Lyon
April 7, 2015

One of the advantages of modern technology is that it offers good access to distant conferences. Internet users already have access, for example, to a mixture of transcripts, audio files and videos from the Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference held in Washington in late March. The collection's worth a browse for anyone interested in nuclear issues. But I'd like to concentrate today on just two of the panels: one on what allies want from extended assurance and a second on what they should expect from the same.

I think the first of those sessions was comparatively disappointing. The panel was composed of three ambassadors: an Australian, a South Korean and a German. Ambassadors are by nature centrists, skilled at blurring unpopular messages. And extended nuclear assurance is a tough topic. The overall result was an audience left with only a thin appreciation of what allies want. True, in just about every US ally nowadays there's a spectrum of views about where nuclear weapons fit in the future of their alliance relationship. But even an unpacking of that spectrum and the associated political drivers animating its diverse components might have made for a more interesting panel.

I also think the question of what allies want from extended nuclear assurance can be answered simply and directly. Allies want credible signals from Washington that the US' willingness to run nuclear risks on their behalf remains strong during a transformational strategic environment. Their anxieties on that question are quickened by the pace of transformation, a growing ambivalence in US declaratory policy, and the multi-decade shrinkage in the US theatre- and tactical-range nuclear arsenal.

The second panel, composed of three non-ambassadors, was more engaging. In one particularly thoughtful burst on the Asian environment, Brad Glosserman (of the Pacific Forum CSIS) outlined a set of things that he believed allies *shouldn't* expect. That list included 'details' about US deterrence arrangements, forward-deployed US nuclear weapons, a comprehensive US strategic doctrine for Asia, clarity in the US-China relationship, and an end to political dysfunction in Washington.

I'm not sure there's much demand here in Australia for greater details about US nuclear-weapon systems and arrangements. Nor do I think the final three points on the list are particular expectations in Canberra. Yes, a more comprehensive US strategic doctrine for Asia would be nice but, as Brad points out earlier in his presentation, the rebalance already offers a US leaning forward in Asia. But there is, I think, both in Canberra and in other allied capitals, an interest in strengthening the credibility of US extended nuclear assurance. Credibility turns on clear signals of commitment. And commitment might well include a greater level of forward deployment.

That's where I part company with Brad. So far, the reach-back model of US theatre- and tactical-range nuclear weapons in Asia turns solely upon air-delivered munitions flown into the theatre during crises. There aren't land-based nuclear weapons already situated on the territories of America's Asian allies. And the US Navy hasn't carried non-strategic nuclear weapons since the early 1990s. It's that absence of naval-based weapons that concerns me. The Asia-Pacific's still, for most American allies, primarily a maritime theatre. If the US Navy isn't going to be a contributor to extended nuclear assurance, that's going to leave a substantial gap in the fabric.

Nuclear weapons deployed on naval vessels—and, no, I'm not just talking about strategic ballistic missiles deployed on submarines—would offer a variety of gains. They would increase US nuclear presence in the region, while minimizing the possibility of terrorist seizure of the weapons. They would allow the same set of weapons to play a strategic role across a set of different bilateral alliances in the Asia-Pacific. Mobile platforms help offset the theatre's vast size. And naval basing allows the US to exploit its naval strength in a maritime strategic environment.

It's been clear for some time that the US Navy's not a fan of nuclear weapons. At the tactical level, it's long been believed that it has significant advantages in relation to a conventional conflict—in acoustics, for example—that

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would be lost in any crossing of the nuclear threshold. But if the Asian strategic environment continues to darken, reintroducing nuclear weapons onto naval vessels might be the easiest way to strengthen US extended nuclear assurance in Asia. Maybe the environment doesn't require a full return of numbers and types of naval nuclear weapons deployed during the Cold War. Still, crossing off the list of possible US actions in the Asia-Pacific even a small increase in such weapons seems too hasty.

Rod Lyon is a fellow at ASPI and executive editor of The Strategist.

<http://www.aspistrategist.org.au/extended-nuclear-assurance-and-the-us-navy/>

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Cicero Magazine – Berlin, Germany

OPINION/Features

Reading Chinese Nuclear Deterrence

By Lt. Col. Paul Darling

April 7, 2015

Throughout the Cold War, China remained secondary to the Soviet Union in American strategy and thinking. Ironically, the Asia-Pacific region was where the Cold War got the hottest in places like Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia and was home to a relatively minor nuclear power, China, which often proved the most antagonistic to American interests. Now, after the Soviet Union devolved into a weakened Russian Republic, the rise of Chinese power has caused the United States to “rebalance” to the Asia Pacific region and toward China in particular. Ignored the first time around, understanding and responding to Chinese nuclear strategy are vital aspects of the “Asia pivot.”

It would be comforting to simply assume that the nuclear policies successful in deterring a major war between the U.S. and the Soviet Union will apply again to China. While communism provides a façade of similarity, advancing technologies and cultural differences demand that this assumption be re-examined and challenged. Successful deterrence is a communicative art that, in the nuclear arena especially, defies simplistic solutions. America must take an approach based upon a new, specific examination of Chinese policy.

Nuclear Deterrence

Nuclear deterrence strategy is a difficult subject, and understanding and responding to Chinese strategy today requires at least a basic understanding of its general principles. The “first strike strategy”, whose effectiveness is measured by how much damage an enemy can do to their target after the first strike, requires accurate missiles, an active missile defense to destroy what is missed, and passive “civil defense” as a final layer to protect civilians against those missiles that “leak” through. “Second strike” strategies focus on nullifying the three pieces of first strike to such a degree that the damage that can be inflicted after the enemy's first strike is so horrific as to render a first strike unthinkable.

Required for both strategies is a rock solid command and control (C2) system that ensures no accidental or unauthorized launches, but remains survivable after any attack and able to wield the surviving retaliatory capability. First strike remains an operationally offensive capability to meet a strategic defensive policy; namely status quo maintenance. Second strike is an insurance policy for an aggressive nation to ensure their conventional conquests are unchallenged by a nuclear sword of Damocles. Many have argued convincingly that the lack of effective first strike capability by either the Soviet Union or the United States during the cold war, the “MAD” (Mutual Assured Destruction) equilibrium is what kept the Cold War from going hot and led to the relative stability of the post-WWII global scene.

Modern Chinese Strategy

Chinese strategy, while borrowing heavily from Marxist-Leninism on the surface, remains grounded in Sun Tzu and Mao Tze Tung. The terminology used in modern Chinese strategy will be instantly recognized by any

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Sovietologist. A key difference being that the core of Soviet thought was the inevitability of both an existential conflict between Capitalism and Marxism and the inevitability of the ultimate global triumph of Marxist ideology. This led to a patient policy that did not seek to challenge the western interests in the absence of certain success. China, however, currently retains a more nationalistic point of view. Domestic stability and expansion of near territorial claims in the name of China, not global communism, is their stated priority. Moreover, China's Communist Party now apparently perceives China as the victim of "hegemons" seeking to establish dominion over China and her interests. The inevitable triumph of China is not an assumption, but rather a goal to be actively pursued. So while patient in their own way, Chinese patience may not be same model the United States faced from the Soviets during the Cold War.

Chinese nuclear policy reflects both similarities with and differences from the Soviet and American models. China has a "no first use" policy which, if true, requires it focus on a second strike, counter-value nuclear strategy. China's claimed capability reflects this strategy. With less than 50 ICBMs capable of reaching the United States and topped with large, single warheads, China's inventory is best suited for targeting large cities. China does not have a significant force of inter-continental bombers and its submarine fleet remains small and inexperienced. China's vastly improved and demonstrated space capabilities, however, indicate that they are capable of rapid advancement of their nuclear delivery technology. Consequently its current status could be quickly and dramatically improved.

Confusing the issue is that China deliberately obfuscates its nuclear capabilities. Western deterrence theory has been built upon a foundation of improved openness in order to facilitate arms reductions with both the Soviet Union and Russia. America's nuclear delivery TRIAD capability of ICBMs, SLBMs and bombers remains open and unclassified. The same cannot be said of China's capabilities. Their actual numbers of ICBMs and warheads is unknown. While orthodox analysis estimates low numbers, some estimates have the Chinese capability an order of magnitude greater. China eschews any strategic arms limitation talks which would necessitate an ability to verify their capability. Why China chooses to do so could be either from a fear of displaying weakness or desire to keep a stronger capability secret.

The deception inherent in both Chinese strategy and nuclear policy also can extend to its oft stated, "No first use policy." Strategic arms have often been equated to "nuclear weapons." Both American and Soviet/Russian war planners flirted with tactical nuclear weapons. But the destruction inherent in even these "low yield" weapons is so great and the public perception of any nuclear use being repugnant that they remain in the hands of the highest policy makers and thus remain strategic by definition. Rather than making nuclear weapons tactical, both China and the United States have started to see high-technology, conventional weapons as strategic. This blending of the conventional and nuclear at the strategic level brings nuance to the Chinese declaration of "no first use." It could be that no first use of strategic weapons means a high tech conventional attack on a strategic target would be *causus belli* to use other strategic weapons. Moreover, public statements by Chinese officials have openly brought into doubt the "no first use" when concerned with areas of conflict such as Taiwan.

Chinese nuclear strategy and capabilities are, at best, a series of assumptions that leave open room for doubt for both hawks and doves. The transparency that many believe brought stability to the cold war remains an elusive goal when dealing with Chinese nuclear deterrence.

Nuclear Deterrence & Modern China

Hans Morgenthau reminds us we must view these principles from a current Chinese perspective. Despite our primary focus on the Soviet Union, China was keenly aware that any nuclear capability effective against the Soviet Union would be overwhelming if directed against China. Furthermore, American capabilities were often explicitly directed against China. The U.S. nuclear arsenal was seen as a check on Soviet aggression in Western Europe and they were also used during the Korean conflict, not against North Korean troops, but as a lever against China. President Eisenhower and CIA Director Allen Dulles attributed the threat to use nuclear weapons as the primary tool to break the stalemate with China in Korea. China was ultimately forced to accept not only the *status quo ante bellum*, but also a humiliating abandonment of their policy of forced repatriation for communist prisoners. From 1954-1958, China was again subjected to the threat of nuclear retaliation several times.

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The purpose of the highly-contentious area defense “Sentinel” system was explicitly stated by Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara to counter the Chinese nuclear threat, not the Soviet one. While this public proclamation could be seen as simply verbally assuaging Soviet and domestic concerns of destabilizing the nuclear balance it can also be seen *prima facie* as an undue U.S. fear of Chinese nuclear intentions. Several times during the Cold War, deterrence implicitly designed against Soviet capabilities was publicly focused on China.

Today, both the Russian and American nuclear inventories are greatly reduced. On the U.S. side, the first strike ICBM force has been slashed to only 450 warheads. While incapable of severely reducing the Soviet land based retaliatory capabilities, it provides an intimidating threat against the most likely Chinese capability. Several U.S. warheads could be targeted against each Chinese ICBM. The Chinese are developing mobile ICBMs utilizing a tunnel system to mitigate this threat, but the Chinese can never be sure how well U.S. intelligence has penetrated the secrets of Sino nuclear deterrence.

The improving GMD (Ground-based Mid-Course Defense) system is unquestionably a cause for concern for China. John Holum, former U.S. State Department chief of arms control, stated, “The Chinese see missile defense as part of a grand design aimed at China.” Only a decade ago, the five interceptors were a minimal threat to China’s deterrence. But now the Obama administration, far from a hawk on missile defense, has promised to increase the current inventory to 44, nearly matching China’s entire ICBM fleet. That is an order of magnitude larger inventory in only ten years. Publicly, the U.S. says the deterrence is designed against emerging threats such as North Korea and Iran. But publicly the U.S. also said Sentinel was directed against China. Has the public deception now flipped? It is hard to justify 44 interceptors to counter the current or even future estimated North Korean nuclear capabilities. Both their warheads and their missiles are of questionable quantity and quality. The current GMD system is designed to counter warheads specifically, not missiles. The single warhead capability which China supposedly possesses is more easily countered by GMD than Multiple, Independently-Targeted Re-entry Vehicles (MIRVs) previously used by the United States and currently used by Russia. The West Coast based system in California and Alaska is well-situated to provide defenses against a North Korean launch. But the geographical proximity of China to North Korea cannot be ignored by either party. We can deny GMD is focused on China in all honesty. But China cannot ignore the simple fact that, accidentally or otherwise, GMD poses a direct threat to their second strike deterrence.

The terrorist attacks of the post-Cold War era have given impetus to the development of greatly improved domestic response capabilities. Their title is no longer civil defense, which described their purpose, but rather now describes the threats they defend against: Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE). Since 1996, the United States has invested heavily in the US military and civilian first responder CBRNE defensive capability. Every major city’s fire department is trained in radiological response. The US DoD has likewise invested greatly in National Guard CBRNE capabilities. Each state and territory has at least one full time response team and each of the ten Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regions have a robust National Guard unit dedicated to search and rescue, medical support and radiological decontamination. While no one can say these teams were designed as part of a Herman Kahn-ian first strike plan, the fact is these teams do support that 50 year old concept. As pure coincidence, FEMA was created by combining the various civil defense organizations created in response to Kahn’s ideas.

You cannot talk about American strategy against China without talking about Air Sea Battle (ASB), the conventional operational concept developed partially, if not mostly, to counter Chinese expansionism. The details of ASB change as required, but the original, and most bellicose, description came from the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Analysis (CSBA) which describes utilizing advanced conventional strike capabilities to target not only China’s conventional military, but also its command and control. The new TRIAD may now be applied to target the heart of all nuclear deterrence; its trigger. So while ASB may specifically decline a nuclear integration, if successful in its implied operational objective of isolating the political control of its enemies’ military, it would effectively and surgically neuter its nuclear deterrence as well. Remember, too, China sees conventional high tech warfare as a part of modern nuclear combat.

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Here we have four separate elements of the U.S. defense establishment— seemingly developed independently — combining to counter China’s current estimated nuclear deterrence. If the heart of stability is found in the sanctity of both parties’ second strike force, then we are rapidly approaching an increasingly unstable future *vis a vis* China. From this assumption, predictive analysis is possible.

How Will China Respond?

The *sine quo non* of super power sovereignty is effective nuclear deterrence. China must respond in the face of openly stated American capabilities and operational concepts. The U.S. 44-GMD-interceptor capability can expect to be countered through an increased warhead count, either through more ICBMs or the development of a MIRV capability. While a Chinese nuclear submarine force is being developed, U.S. Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) has an 80 year history of success. It would be questionable for China to invest its deterrence capability in submarines so early in its own history of submarine warfare. To increase survivability, China is already investing in endo-atmospheric hypersonic capabilities for its warheads. This could conceivably nullify GMD’s abilities, though its technological viability is still questionable.

China may continue to openly state a “no first use” policy, but expect Chinese opaqueness to render the truth of these statements questionable. American policymakers must be sure to be as inclusive as possible in determining exactly what no first use means with every conceivable nuance taken into account. Finally, China may utilize the brute force mechanism of simply building an unassailably large arsenal of missiles. A new arms race may be the only technologically viable mechanism available for China to maintain a reliable second strike. And as long as ASB maintains its insistence upon striking the Chinese mainland, a more decentralized nuclear command and control mechanism is a logical counter. The combination of larger nuclear forces and an increasingly decentralized command structure might be the price China must pay.

Two of these elements (ASB and the 44 interceptor fleet) remain years away from operational status. China currently has a window where their current nuclear deterrence remains relatively strong. China may take this near-term opportunity and accelerate its forceful advancement of territorial claims in the Asia-Pacific region. Rather than improve its nuclear deterrence, China may simply move quickly to establish a new *status quo* in a conventional manner before the US has its more robust first strike capability established. China’s recent actions in the Spratleys and Senkaku islands could reflect this strategy. American current and planned actions should elicit a Chinese response. Whether this will be near term conventional aggressiveness or a long term buildup of their nuclear forces (or both) is unknown.

What Can America Do?

Should the United States adjust its policies to assuage Chinese concerns? One has to ask which parts of this four-headed hydra (civil defense, ASB, missile defense and ICBMs) the United States would be willing to abandon. Our civil defense capabilities are clearly required in the wake of successful and attempted terrorist attacks both in the United States and abroad. Its linkage to our nuclear posture is a vestige of a generation past. It is by far the weakest aspect of any first strike capability and one that most likely enjoys the highest level of public support. Our ICBM force is an established part of America’s TRIAD of nuclear deterrence. Anything short of complete removal of this leg will do little to change the balance of deterrence and is a political decision that appears unreasonable in the near future. And it doesn’t eliminate the use of submarine launched missiles in a first strike role.

GMD is likewise a political winner with admittedly vocal detractors. The bedrock of all deterrence is rationality amongst all players. To eliminate GMD would require an assumption of rationality from all current and would be nuclear powers. Iran and North Korea may behave rationally, but are their underlying grand strategies equally rational? Henry Kissinger identified that communicating suicidal tendencies has a rational role for weaker powers. U.S. policymakers would be betting the lives of hundreds of thousands of Americans on the rationality of the current and any future North Korean dictator. The number of interceptors, rather than the program itself, is the most likely mechanism to adjust China’s possibly negative perspective. A shift of funds from operational interceptors to more robust testing could be reassuring for both the United States and China.

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Finally, ASB must be reappraised from a nuclear deterrence perspective. A fair assumption on the part of China is that, should the U.S. utilize the thousands of strike fighters and bombers being justified, in part, to support the ASB concept, their command and control elements will be targeted to isolate them from their deployed forces or destroyed completely. That these C2 elements might also control China's nuclear deterrence cannot be ignored. Even if the United States adopts a clearly limited strategy, this does not mean that the Chinese fear of India or Russia taking advantage of their weakness is removed. We must see the targeting of high level C2 elements in China as a nuclear level provocation and treat it as such.

Thus far, China has eschewed meaningful participation in strategic arms limitation talks. Two of its three largest threats, Russia and the United States, are providing a free ride for China as current strategic arms treaties demand openness and verification of nuclear capabilities. China knows what each has with nothing given up on their part.

In the face of a growing American capability, this will not change. Should the U.S. wish to entice the Chinese to a more open nuclear posture, all aspects of our nuclear deterrence, even those which we do not consider a nuclear threat to China, must be part of the discussion. Whether we say it or believe it, GMD and ASB, as well as civil defense and, of course, our nuclear TRIAD, all pose legitimate threats to Chinese nuclear deterrence. As Sun Tzu reminds us, "If you besiege an army, you must leave an outlet." We must likewise be aware of the pressure we exert on China's nuclear deterrence and leave an outlet if we wish to duplicate the successful deterrence we enjoyed in the Cold War in a 21st century multi-polar nuclear environment.

Lieutenant Colonel Paul Darling is an Alaskan Army National Guardsman assigned to the National Guard Bureau Joint Staff as a strategist. The views presented here are his own and do not represent the views of the Alaska Army National Guard or the U.S. military.

<http://ciceromagazine.com/features/china-america-and-modern-nuclear-deterrence-strategy/>

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Want China Times – Taipei, Taiwan
OPINION/Article

H-6K Bombers Add to PLA's Strategic Deterrent

By Tsai Yi

April 10, 2015

The People's Liberation Army Air Force deployed its H-6K bombers for deep-sea flight training last week. The H-6K has a combat radius of 3,500 kilometers, which currently meets the strategic requirement of "active defense."

If China adopts US operational tactics to refuel in air twice during a mission, then the combat radius could be extended to 5,000 km, a bombing range that covers all of Asia and extends to Australia.

Each bomber can carry 12 tons of weapons and six CJ-10 Long Sword cruise missiles, which have an estimated range of 2,500 km and can strike targets 6,000 km away with precision.

Reports have said that China is now developing a cruise missile with a range of more than 4,000 km.

By 2020, when China's Beidou Navigation Satellite System (BDS) completes its global deployment and the country's long-range stealth cruise missiles enter service, China will be able to strike targets nearly 10,000 km away.

In addition to being able to serve as a platform for strategic strikes, the bomber can also serve as a platform for anti-ship guided missiles.

To strike against powerful aircraft battle groups, China has developed an anti-ship missile, the YJ-100, that has a range of 600 km.

The H-6K bomber, which can also strike underwater targets with rocket torpedoes, can be deployed at coastal air bases facing the East China Sea and the South China Sea to deal with military threats from the United States and Japan.

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They could also be deployed in southwestern China to conduct precise long-range strikes of Indian air and sea bases and US military bases at Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean.

The H-6K is not a state-of-the-art bomber and cannot penetrate enemy air defense networks. But it is a high cost/performance ratio strategic weaponry platform.

The commissioning of the H-6K and its long-distance flight training indicates that China has formed a strategic air force that together with the country's land-based intercontinental strategic missiles and sea-based intercontinental strategic missiles, will form a powerful strategic deterrent.

Tsai Yi is the CEO of the Center of East Asian Integration Studies. Translated by Want China Times.

<http://www.wantchinatimes.com/news-subclass-cnt.aspx?id=20150410000067&cid=1703>

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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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