

GAO provided an in-depth classified briefing in April 2015 to congressional defense committee staff on the results of its review of several on-going nuclear command, control, and communications (NC3) modernization programs or efforts within the Department of Defense (DOD). NC3 is a large and complex system comprised of numerous land-, air-, and space-based components used to assure connectivity between the President and nuclear forces. The current NC3 architecture consists of components that support day-to-day nuclear and conventional operations prior to a nuclear event as well as those that provide survivable, secure, and enduring communications through all threat environments. DOD is executing several acquisition efforts intended to modernize elements of NC3. For seven of those efforts, GAO provided information on (1) the acquisition strategy for developing and fielding and how it is expected to address known capability gaps or deficiencies; (2) progress and challenges meeting cost, schedule, and performance goals; and (3) risks, if any, in meeting goals and the actions planned or being taken to mitigate those risks.

U.S. Nuclear Weapons
1. US Nuclear Bombers Lack Satellite Terminals for Atomic Emergencies

U.S. Counter-WMD
1. Putin Rather Sees Threat in US Missile Defense System than Weapons Deployment in Europe
2. Missile Defense Strategy ‘Not Sustainable,’ Salvation Lies In R&D
3. New Russian Cruise Missiles Prompt Pentagon to Build Better Shield for U.S. Cities

U.S. Arms Control
1. Nuclear Weapons States Upgrade Warheads despite Disarmament Moves
2. Vladimir Putin Accused of ‘Nuclear Sabre-Rattling’ as he Promises 40 New Russian Missiles
3. Russia’s Plans to Modernize Nuclear Arsenal Are Legitimate - Deputy PM

Homeland Security/The Americas
1. Faster Than Light: China’s Hypersonic WU-14 Getting on Pentagon’s Nerves

Asia/Pacific
1. China’s latest Hypersonic Vehicle Test seen as ‘Nuclear Deterrent’ amid US Interference
2. U.S. to Deploy Missile Interceptors against N. Korea’s KN-08 ICBMs: Official
3. S.Korea Calls for Dialogue with DPRK without Preconditions
4. **China’s Growing Nuke Arsenal Purely for Self-Defense Purposes:** DM
5. **US Institute: Construction Visible at North Korean Nuke Site; Reactor May Not Be Operating**

**Europe/Russia**
1. **France Tests Nuclear Cruise Missile Weapon System**
2. **Russia to Develop Engines for new Strategic Bombers on Time — Defense Firm**
3. **Russia Developing Fifth-Generation Nuclear Subs — Design Bureau**
4. **Russia to Lay down Seventh Borey-Class Nuclear Sub in late December 2015**
5. **Three people Arrested at Turkish Border for Chemical Smuggling Worth $2.5 Million**

**Middle East**
1. **Iran Seeks to Resume Enrichment if Possible Nuclear Deal Violated:** MP
2. **Talks Snag on ’Undeclared’ Sites**
3. **Araqchi: Termination of Sanctions on Day of Implementing Agreement**
4. **Russia Expert Says Iranian Nuclear Program Deal is Unlikely to Be Reached by End of June**
5. **US Signals First ever U-turn on Iran Sanctions**
6. **Iran to Accept Additional Protocol on Conditions**
7. **Iran Nuke Talks Impeded by Disagreement on All Main Elements**
8. **Iran, EU Diplomats Hold Talks to Coordinate Sessions in Vienna Talks**
9. **Iran Commander Rules Out Inspections of Military Sites**
10. **Senior Cleric: US Needs Agreement More than Iran**
11. **Russia, Saudi Arabia Sign Nuclear Energy Cooperation Deal**

**Commentary**
1. **US Deployments Heralding Arms Race with China and Russia**
2. **The South Asia Nuclear Equation**
3. **Cold War Is Back in Town (Op-Ed)**
4. **Getting Airpower Right: In Defense of the Long Range Strike Bomber**
5. **Russia to Add 40 New ICBMs: Should the West Be Worried?**
6. **Inconvenient Truth Lies Behind Putin’s War Talk (Op-Ed)**
7. **Putin’s Nuclear Saber-Rattling: What Is He Compensating For?**

**Sputnik International – Russian Information Agency**

**US Nuclear Bombers Lack Satellite Terminals for Atomic Emergencies**

*A new Government Accountability Office report says that US satellite terminals to ensure communications with nuclear bombers do not yet exist and have been delayed indefinitely.*

16 June 2015

WASHINGTON (Sputnik) — US satellite terminals to ensure communications with nuclear bombers do not yet exist and have been delayed indefinitely, a new Government Accountability Office (GAO) report said.

“[The] development of key satellite communication terminals for strategic bomber aircraft has been deferred by several years,” the report said. “Further details remain classified.”

The terminals were planned to be part of a massive nuclear command, communications and control (NC3) system, the GAO explained.
The NC3 was supposed to be comprised of numerous land, air and space-based components, the GAO noted, that tie together nuclear forces and their commanders all the way up to the White House with “survivable, secure, and enduring communications through all threat environments.”

The GAO said it focused its review on seven NC3 programs “that pertain to planning, decision making, situation monitoring, force management and force direction.”

The GAO chose to focus on these key NC3 programs because they “are among the largest... in terms of estimated cost and... critical capabilities,” the report said.

In its investigations, the GAO interviewed numerous officials from the US Air Force, the US Strategic Command, the Defense Information Systems Agency, Air Force Global Strike Command as well as Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory and other relevant agencies, it said.

The Government Accountability Office is an independent, nonpartisan agency that works for Congress and investigates how the US federal government spends taxpayer dollars.

http://sputniknews.com/military/20150616/1023409639.html

Return to Top

TASS Russian News Agency – Moscow, Russia

Putin Rather Sees Threat in US Missile Defense System than Weapons Deployment in Europe

The Russian president noted that if someone threatens Russia’s territory, it is to aim its weapons where the threat is coming from

June 16, 2015

NOVO-OGARYOVO, June 16. /TASS/. Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Tuesday he sees no real threat in the West’s statements about possible deployment of weapons in Europe, since the missile defense system deployment is a bigger threat.

"I’d refrain from whipping up emotions. Of course, we will analyze everything but so far I see nothing that might prompt us to do that [take response measures]," he told a news conference. "It’s rather all about political signals to Russia, in its relations with the European Union."

"We are more worried over the deployment of the missile defence system," he said.

Putin said Russia has all the grounds to take response measures. "If anyone threatens Russia’s territory, it must aim its weapons at those countries the threat is coming from," he said. "It is NATO that is approaching our borders, not vice versa."

At the same time, the Russian president stressed that Russia posed no threat to anyone, including Finland. "The best guarantee of Finland’s security is its neutral status," Putin said.

Shortly after reports about Washington’s plans for deploying 1,200 tanks, armored personnel carriers and other military vehicles organic to a force of 5,000 officers and men the United States on Monday declared it had plans for redeploying to Europe a contingent of fifth generation F-22 Raptor fighter jets. Speaking at the 51th international aerospace show at Le Bourget the Secretary
of the US Air Force, Deborah Lee James, said that was necessary to show muscle to Russia. Earlier, the United States stepped up the air patrolling of the Baltic Sea and deployed B-2 and B-52 bombers in Britain.

http://tass.ru/en/russia/801179

Breaking Defense – Washington, D.C.

Missile Defense Strategy 'Not Sustainable,' Salvation Lies In R&D

By Sydney J. Freedberg Jr.

June 18, 2015

CAPITOL HILL: America’s missile defense strategy is “not sustainable,” the deputy director of the Missile Defense Agency said today. We can’t keep buying multi-million-dollar interceptors to shoot down adversaries’ ever-growing arsenals of much cheaper offensive missiles, said Brig. Gen. Kenneth Todorov.

We have to find a better way, Todorov said: lasers, jammers, something. That means MDA must buy fewer Ground-Based Interceptors and invest more in R&D. This shift is beginning in the current 2016 budget plan, he said — although the House Appropriations Committee has cut $60 million from one key program he’s hoping to get back, the Redesigned Kill Vehicle (RKV) — and it will become still more pronounced in the request for 2017.

“The strategy is not sustainable,” Todorov told reporters this morning after a Peter Huessy breakfast talk, sponsored by the Air Force Association’s Mitchell Institute. As potential adversaries buy ever more missiles, he said, “you can’t continue to buy these interceptors and have enough to necessarily intercept everything that’s out there.”

“Yes, it’s important to have a capability [today] that the warfighter cares about and can rely on and has confidence in, but we’ve also got to think about other ways of getting at the problem,” he continued. “We’ve got to do less procurement, more RDT&E.” (That’s research, development, testing, and evaluation).

So what are the alternatives to expensive interceptors? Todorov was extremely cagey on details in a public setting, as he probably should be. He did confirm the options included laser weapons — which the Navy, Army, and Air Force are all working on — and electronic warfare — i.e. jamming or spoofing the enemy sensors and command systems that give a missile its target.

“There’s a lot of efforts in directed energy,” Todorov told the audience at the breakfast. “That’s front and center.” The Missile Defense Agency is also exploring electronic warfare, in cooperation with the Department of Defense-wide EW effort led by the powerful Deputy Secretary, Robert Work.

For all his candor, Todorov isn’t stepping too far out on a limb here. He was able to cite a recent speech on missile defense by the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Adm. James “Sandy” Winnefeld, who called for stopping enemy missiles "left of launch" — that is, before they’re fired — and for using more “non-kinetic” means — that is, lasers and electronic warfare.

Todorov could also cite the so-called eight-star memo from the Chief of Naval Operations and the Chief of Staff of the Army. Its these two services that provide most missile defense forces, forces that are stretched increasingly thin. Adm. Jonathan Greenert and Gen. Ray. Odierno called for a
“reassessment” of ballistic missile defense in light of “financial pressures.” (The Air Force Chief of Staff didn’t sign, but his service doesn’t actually do much missile defense).

Backing in the Pentagon is great, but you also have to convince Congress. There the MDA’s new approach has run into one stumbling block already: a $60 million cut made by the House Appropriations Committee to the Redesigned Kill Vehicle (RKV), essentially an update to the current smart warhead on the current Ground-Based Interceptor.

The HAC vote isn’t a rejection of the RKV itself, Todorov told reporters, but a way of raising questions about the MDA’s approach to it. “They generally support the idea of it,” he said, “[but] it’s new and right now they want more information on how. Make no mistake, it’s not about the what.”

“It’s time to take the kill vehicle to the next level,” Todorov said, in part because the current Exoatmospheric Kill Vehicle (EKV) can’t take full advantage of new sensors like the Long-Range Discrimination Radar (LRDR).

In the long run, Todorov said, MDA wants to develop space-based sensors. There’s resistance to the idea, he admitted. “It’s critical,” he told reporters, “but it’s really expensive, so right now there’s some antibodies out there.”

What can space provide that cheaper ground, sea, and aerial sensors cannot? “Persistent tracking and discrimination, that’s what we would like to see eventually,” he said, “particularly with some of the threats are now mobile.”

“Space is an excellent option for delivering persistent capability,” Todorov said. “We’ve got SBIRS [Space-Based Infra-Red System] up there today that does a great job of detecting a launch, but we need to take it a step further.” Missile defense requires accurately tracking weapons after they launch — and ideally targeting them before they launch at all.

As a warfighter today, Todorov said, “I sit in the command center waiting for overhead [reconnaissance] to come by, looking at my watch, [thinking] ’we’re blind, we’re blind to what might be happening…. Oh good, we’ve got a satellite coming over in 30 minutes; I can wait till then to get a picture of what’s going on.’”


New Russian Cruise Missiles Prompt Pentagon to Build Better Shield for U.S. Cities

By Douglas Ernst, The Washington Times

Friday, June 19, 2015

The Pentagon is building a better U.S. missile defense shield as officials try to gauge the threat posed by advanced Russian cruise missiles.

Military officials are working on ways to better protect U.S. cities that involves F-16 fighter jets working in concert with sensor-laden aerostat balloons and warships, Defense One reported
Thursday. A critical component of the plan includes new radar sensors for F-16s that patrol Washington.

“We’re devoting a good deal of attention to ensuring we’re properly configured against such an attack in the homeland, and we need to continue to do so,” Adm. Sandy Winnefeld, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said May 19 in Washington, Defense One reported Thursday.

The national security website says that while much attention has been given to ballistic missile threats, short-range cruise missiles pose a unique set of problems.

“Launched by ships, submarines or even trailer-mounted launchers, cruise missiles are powered throughout their entire flight. This allows them to fly close to the ground and maneuver throughout flight, making them difficult for radar to spot,” Defense One reported.

Adm. William Gortney, who leads U.S. Northern Command and North American Aerospace Defense Command, highlighted the Kh-101 cruise missile as the kind of threat the Pentagon was find a way to counter. The weapon is being developed by Russia and has a range of 1,200 miles.

“The only nation that has an effective cruise missile capability is Russia,” the officer said in March, Defense One reported.

The admiral added that the Pentagon’s overarching plan also involves finding ways to quickly identify and destroy a cruise missile’s delivery system before it has a chance to fire.

“The best way to defeat the cruise missile threat is to shoot down the archer, or sink the archer, that’s out there,” Adm. Gortney said at an April, Defense One reported.


The Japan Times – Tokyo, Japan

**Nuclear Weapons States Upgrade Warheads despite Disarmament Moves**

AFP-JIJI

June 15, 2015

STOCKHOLM – Nuclear armed states continue to upgrade their stockpiles despite an international trend toward disarmament, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute reported Monday.

Between 2010 and 2015 the number of warheads fell from 22,600 to 15,850 according to the institute’s annual disarmament report, which said the U.S. and Russia represented the bulk of the reduction.

The institute also pointed to “extensive and expensive long-term modernization programs” in the world’s two largest nuclear powers, which account for 90 percent of the weapons.

“Despite renewed international interest in prioritizing nuclear disarmament, the modernization programs underway in the nuclear weapon-possessing states suggests that none of them will give up their nuclear arsenals in the foreseeable future,” SIPRI researcher Shannon Kile said in a statement.
The other three nuclear armed states legally recognized by the 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty — China (260 warheads), France (300 warheads), Britain (215 warheads) — are “either developing or deploying new nuclear weapon systems or have announced their intention to do so,” according to the Stockholm-based peace institute.

China was the only state among the five global nuclear powers to have a “modest” increase in the size of its arsenal.

While the remaining nuclear states — India (90 to 100 warheads), Pakistan (100 to 120 warheads) and Israel (80 warheads) — have considerably smaller stockpiles, India and Pakistan continue to increase their arsenals while Israel has tested long-range ballistic missiles.

North Korea is believed to be developing its arsenal of six to eight warheads but SIPRI said “technical progress” was difficult to assess.

Reliable information on nuclear stockpiles varied greatly between states with the U.S. getting top marks for transparency in the report, while Britain and France were more restrictive and Russia divulged nothing officially, except in bilateral contacts with the U.S.

In Asia, China revealed little about its arsenal and the only information made public by nuclear rivals India and Pakistan was announcements of missile tests.

The five nuclear powers and members of the U.N. Security Council — U.S., Russia, China, Britain and France — along with Germany, are in ongoing talks with Iran to persuade the Islamic republic not to develop nuclear weapons in exchange for the lifting of international sanctions.

http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/06/15/world/nuclear-weapons-states-upgrade-warheads-despite-disarmament-moves/#.VYHRoiyD5Dx

The Daily Telegraph – London, U.K.

**Vladimir Putin Accused of ‘Nuclear Sabre-Rattling’ as he Promises 40 New Russian Missiles**

*This plan will see the replacement of 13 per cent of Russia’s entire arsenal of inter-continental nuclear missiles in one year*

By Tom Parfitt, Moscow and David Blair

16 June 2015

Nato accused Russia of "nuclear sabre-rattling" on Tuesday when Vladimir Putin promised to deploy at least 40 new inter-continental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) this year.

Russia possesses about 300 ICBMs, so this ambitious plan will see the replacement of 13 per cent of the country’s entire arsenal in one year, representing an almost unprecedented rate of modernisation.

The older weapons will be withdrawn and succeeded by new SS-27 missiles, each capable of delivering between four and six strategic nuclear warheads. If loaded to full capacity, these new ICBMs could deliver 240 nuclear warheads – more than Britain’s entire arsenal.
Speaking at the opening of “Army 2015”, an exhibition of weapons outside Moscow, Mr Putin said: “This year the size of our nuclear forces will increase by over 40 new inter-continental ballistic missiles that will be able to overcome any, even the most technologically advanced, missile defence systems.”

Mr Putin’s announcement came after Poland and Lithuania said they were negotiating with America over a plan to store US heavy weapons, including Abrams main battle tanks, within their borders. The plan calls for the US army to “pre-position” the weapons and equipment – but not troops – for one brigade in six countries along Nato’s eastern flank.

The US air force is also considering whether to send its most advanced jet fighter, the F-22 Raptor, on rotational deployments in Europe.

Anatoly Antonov, the Russian deputy defence minister, said the Kremlin was obliged to respond to these moves. “There’s a feeling that our colleagues from Nato countries are pushing us towards an arms race,” he added.

Earlier, Russia’s foreign ministry described the plan to store US heavy weapons in Eastern Europe as an answer to a “perceived Russian threat” that was a “myth”.

A statement from the foreign ministry accused America of “fuelling tensions and nurturing its European allies’ anti-Russian fears” to create a pretext for expanding its “military presence and hence strengthen its influence in Europe”.

The ministry added: “There is growing risk that the US military strategy on Nato’s ‘eastern flank’ will take on a life of its own, disregarding realities and Europe’s political interests.”

But Jens Stoltenberg, the Nato secretary general, condemned Mr Putin’s announcement of 40 new missiles. “This nuclear sabre-rattling by Russia is unjustified, destabilising and it is dangerous,” he said.

John Kerry, the US secretary of state, joined the condemnation, saying: "Nobody should hear that kind of announcement from the leader of a powerful country and not be concerned about what the implications are."

Russia’s intervention in eastern Ukraine – and the annexation of Crimea – have unnerved Nato’s members in Eastern Europe. Poland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have all asked America and the other allies to deploy troops inside their respective territories. The plan to store enough heavy weapons for one brigade represents a compromise proposal.

After his speech, Mr Putin toured the arms fair and inspected a new commercial line of clothing recently launched by the army, including a £600 “victor’s jacket”. The label features the words of Tsar Alexander III: “Russia has only two reliable allies – the army and the fleet.”


Return to Top
Sputnik International – Russian Information Agency

**Russia’s Plans to Modernize Nuclear Arsenal Are Legitimate - Deputy PM**

*Plans to upgrade Russia’s nuclear arsenals do not contradict its international commitments on global security, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin said.*

17 June 2015

MOSCOW (Sputnik) — Plans to upgrade Russia’s nuclear arsenals do not contradict the country’s international commitments on global security, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin has stressed.

"Russia’s plans to modernize nuclear potential in no way contradict our international obligations," Rogozin wrote in his Twitter blog on Wednesday in response to comments by NATO Supreme Allied Commander, Gen. Philip Breedlove.

Breedlove said earlier on Wednesday that Russia’s plans to add 40 new intercontinental ballistic missiles to its nuclear arsenal was "not a way that responsible nuclear nations behave."

The plan was announced by Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday.

On Wednesday, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg stated in Washington that Russia’s "recent use of nuclear rhetoric, exercises and operations are deeply troubling." Breedlove confirmed on Tuesday that the alliance was considering “prepositioning” heavy military equipment on its eastern flank.

Russia’s relations with NATO deteriorated sharply following the start of the Ukrainian armed conflict in 2014 when the military alliance froze contacts with Moscow, claiming that Russia had been militarily involved in the fighting in eastern Ukraine. The Kremlin has denied the allegations.

Over the past year, NATO has increased its number of air patrol missions along the Russian borders.

In January, Stoltenberg announced plans to boost the bloc’s military presence in Eastern Europe, also increasing the number of warships in the Black Sea.

Russia has repeatedly expressed concern over the buildup of NATO forces in Eastern Europe, saying that it is an aggressive step that could increase tensions and destabilize the region.


**RT (Russia Today) – Moscow, Russia**

**Putin: Unilateral US Withdrawal from ABM Treaty Pushing Russia toward New Arms Race**

June 19, 2015

Global decisions like the US pulling out of a treaty banning strategic anti-ballistic missile defenses are pushing the world towards a new Cold War, Russian President Vladimir Putin said. Military conflicts have a far lesser impact, he added.
“Not military conflicts but global decisions like the US unilateral withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty lead to a Cold War,” Putin said. “This more in fact pushes us to a new round of the arms race, because it changes the global security system.”

Putin made his comments at a key plenary session at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum.

The 1972 ABM treaty between the US and Soviet Union ensured that neither side tried to neutralize its foe’s nuclear deterrence by building an anti-missile shield. The US unilaterally withdrew from it in 2002, as the Bush administration claimed it needed protection from “rogue states” such as North Korea and Iran. Moscow believes that the US is actually building a global anti-missile system to undermine the defenses of Russia and China.

The Russian president’s comments came in response to a question whether he felt that the Ukrainian armed conflict was pushing Russia and the US towards a Cold War-like confrontation.

Putin warned the US against trying to use the language of ultimatums in its relations with Russia.

“The problem is that they are constantly trying to impose their standards and decisions on us with no regard to our interests,” he explained. “In essence they say: ‘we are better’ as if the US knows better what is good for us. Well, let us decide for ourselves what our interests and needs are as dictated by our history and culture.”

He accused Washington of meddling in Russia’s internal affairs and sticking to an arrangement that pits Russia either with America or against it.

“This is no dialogue. It’s an ultimatum. Don’t speak the language of ultimatums with us.”

Ukraine is another example of how the US is causing trouble by maintaining its arrogant approach to international politics, Putin said.

“They should not have supported the anti-constitutionalists’ armed coup that in the end led to a violent confrontation in Ukraine, a civil war in fact,” he said. “We are not the cause of all those crisis events that Ukraine is experiencing.”


Sputnik International – Russian Information Agency

Faster Than Light: China’s Hypersonic WU-14 Getting on Pentagon’s Nerves

China’s new hypersonic weaponry may have the potential to neutralize US strategic missile defenses due to its unparalleled capability of maneuvering to avoid tracking by radars and interceptors, military expert Franz-Stefan Gady emphasized.

14 June 2015

Beijing has recently conducted a fourth test of its hypersonic glider vehicle (HGV), called WU-14 by the Pentagon, which is purportedly aimed at overcoming US missile defense; the distinguishing feature of this test is that the WU-14 has performed so-called “extreme maneuvers,” US expert in civil-military relations and cyber diplomacy Franz-Stefan Gady elaborated.

The WU-14, which is capable of delivering either conventional or nuclear warheads, was launched into space by an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) booster, and then returned to Earth’s atmosphere, gliding at up to Mach 10 speed (around 7,680 miles per hour).
During the gliding phase the WU-14 HGV is conducting "extreme maneuvers" in order to evade interception and at the same time extending the range of the missile.

Unlike conventional "reentry vehicles" which go down through the atmosphere "on a predictable ballistic trajectory," a hypersonic glider is virtually impossible to intercept by conventional missile defense systems, the expert explained.

Citing US defense and national security reporter Bill Gertz, the expert suggested that the WU-14 "threatens to neutralize US strategic missile defenses with the unique capability of flying at ultra-high speeds and maneuvering to avoid detection and tracking by radar and missile defense interceptors."

However, US high-ranking military officials have yet neither confirmed nor denied that the W-14 HGV pose a threat to US domestic missile defense systems.

According to the expert, the WU-14 is likely to be carried by China’s famous "carrier killer" — the DF-21 intermediate range ballistic missile. A DF-21 equipped by a WU-14 HGV ("rumored to be called the DF-26") may extend the missile's range to over 3,000 km (2,485 miles).

"I suspect that the HGV is intended more for anti-ship or other tactical purposes than as a strategic bombardment system against American cities," Dean Cheng of the Heritage Foundation remarked as cited by the expert, "An HGV might help resolve difficulties of hitting maneuvering targets with a ballistic missile."

Still, Franz-Stefan Gady underscored that the development of such an anti-ship HGV by China could take up to 20 years, due to a number of technical challenges.

"For now, this is good news for the United States Navy which apparently will have difficulties fielding one of the most effective countermeasures to HGVs — directed energy weapons systems — for some time," the expert pointed out.

http://sputniknews.com/military/20150614/1023358426.html

South China Morning Post – Hong Kong, China

**China’s latest Hypersonic Vehicle Test seen as 'Nuclear Deterrent' amid US Interference**

By Minnie Chan

Saturday, 13 June, 2015

The defence ministry on Friday confirmed it had tested a supersonic nuclear delivery vehicle in a move the United States has called an "extreme manoeuvre" amid tensions in the South China Sea.

Last Sunday’s launch of the hypersonic glide vehicle - which the US has dubbed the "Wu-14" - was the People Liberation Army's fourth test of the weapon in 18 months.

"The scheduled scientific research and experiments in our territory is normal, and those tests are not targeted at any country and specific goals,” the ministry said in response to the South China Morning Post's query.

http://sputniknews.com/military/20150614/1023358426.html
But military observers said the frequency of the tests showed Beijing was reinforcing its nuclear deterrent in response to Washington's continued interference in China's territorial disputes in the region.

US intelligence officials had described the tests as "extreme manoeuvres", according to US-based online paper The Washington Free Beacon.

The latest test took place a day before Central Military Commission vice-chairman Fan Changlong left for a week-long visit to the US.

Experts say the launch was timed to raise Fan's bargaining power in discussions with the US, as well as to express Beijing's disapproval of Washington's sustained interference in the South China Sea.

"The test is aimed at helping Fan increase the People's Liberation Army's bargaining power on the negotiation table when he deals with his US counterpart," Macau-based military observer Antony Wong Dong said.

Fan met US Defence Secretary Ash Carter in Washington on Thursday. Concerns over the disputed islands in the South China Sea were the focus of their meeting, state media reported.

The Wu-14 test was probably a response to a US spy plane's flight over the South China Sea last month, said Professor He Qisong, a defence policy specialist at the Shanghai University of Political Science and Law.

"The Wu-14 ... is designed to penetrate US missile defence systems, meaning the PLA is capable of defending China's territorial sovereignty," He said. "But such a test is only a nuclear deterrence. Neither China nor the US wants to declare war over the South China Sea issues."

Tensions have risen between the world's two largest economies, after Washington called for "an immediate and lasting halt" to China's placing of mobile artillery on its reclaimed islands and Beijing revealed plans to expand its naval power and counter US surveillance.

The successful Wu-14 test - which was more complicated than the previous three - showed China was making good progress, The Washington Free Beacon quoted Chinese weapons experts as saying.

The Wu-14, which carries nuclear warheads, can travel at 10 times the speed of sound.


The Korea Observer – Seoul, South Korea

U.S. to Deploy Missile Interceptors against N. Korea's KN-08 ICBMs: Official

By Yonhap News

June 15, 2015

WASHINGTON, June 14 (Yonhap) — Defending against North Korea's new road-mobile intercontinental ballistic missiles is the main purpose of the United States' planned additional deployment of ground-based missile interceptors, a senior U.S. official has said.
Frank Rose, assistant secretary of state for arms control, verification and compliance, made the remark at an international missile defense conference in Barcelona on Friday, according to a transcript provided by the department.

"The Obama Administration has continued the efforts to defend the United States’ homeland against potential limited intercontinental ballistic missile attacks from states like North Korea and Iran," Rose said.

"As part of this effort, in March 2013, the administration announced it would deploy an additional 14 ground-based interceptors, increasing the total number to 44 by 2017. This deployment will ensure that we stay ahead of the new road-mobile ICBM threat from North Korea," he said.

Rose was apparently referring to the North’s KN-08 missile. Even though the missile has not been tested yet, U.S. military officials have increasingly voiced concerns about the missile as it is harder to keep an eye on as it can be launched from mobile launchers.

In April, Adm. William Gortney, commander of the U.S. Northern Command, said the North is believed to be capable of miniaturizing nuclear warheads to put on its new KN-08 intercontinental ballistic missile and fire it at the U.S. mainland.

Rose also said that the U.S. is developing “a new radar that will provide persistent sensor coverage and improve discrimination capabilities against the North Korean threat” and is redesigning the kill vehicle for the ground-based interceptor.

Last month, the Pentagon unveiled a plan to deploy a long-range discrimination radar in Alaska by 2020, saying it will increase the capacity of the ground-based midcourse defense inventory of interceptors in Alaska and California.

“At the same time, we have made clear, both in our policy and in the capabilities we have deployed, that our homeland defense is not intended to affect the strategic balance with Russia and China,” Rose said.

China and Russia have voiced strong opposition to the potential U.S. deployment of a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense missile defense battery in South Korea, claiming the deployment would hurt their security interests.


Xinhua News – Beijing, China

**S.Korea Calls for Dialogue with DPRK without Preconditions**

(Xinhua)

June 15, 2015

SEOUL, June 15 (Xinhua) -- South Korea on Monday called for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) to return to the dialogue table without any preconditions in response to the DPRK's
government statement that urged the South side to form an atmosphere conducive to improving inter-Korean relations.

Seoul's Unification Ministry said in a statement that the DPRK should immediately stop acts of escalating military tensions on the peninsula as Pyongyang itself mentioned an atmosphere to ameliorate the north-south relations.

The ministry said that Pyongyang should come to the inter-governmental dialogue table without proposing any unfair preconditions and should respond to Seoul's call for private-sector exchanges that contribute to recovering homogeneity between people of the two Koreas.

The DPRK issued a government statement, carried Monday by the official KCNA news agency, saying that there is no reason that dialogue and negotiations are not launched if the atmosphere of trust and reconciliation is formed between the two Koreas.

Urging South Korea to implement the June 15th Joint Declaration, the DPRK called on the South side to suspend its joint annual war games with the United States, stop slandering each other and remove legal and regulatory mechanisms that impede inter-Korean exchanges and cooperation.

The joint declaration, which contains a consensus on reunification of the two Koreas, was signed on June 15, 2000 when then South Korean President Kim Dae-jung and his DPRK counterpart Kim Jong Il met in Pyongyang.

In response, the South Korean ministry said that it has made clear several times its position of honoring all inter-Korean agreements made in the past, including the June 15th Joint Declaration.

Seoul has maintained a position that all issues of mutual interest, including how to fulfill inter-Korean agreements, should be resolved through a broad range of negotiations launched by sincere dialogue offers, the ministry said.

On Dec. 29 last year, then South Korean Unification Minister Ryoo Kihl-jae offered talks with his DPRK counterpart, toward which Pyongyang has kept mum.


Global Times – Beijing, China


By Jiang Jie, Global Times

June 16, 2015

China’s defense ministry said that the country has always pursued a nuclear strategy that is solely for self-defense, after an international security report pointed out a "modest" increase in the size of China's nuclear arsenal at a time when the total number of nuclear weapons in the world is decreasing. According to a report released by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute on Monday, the number of nuclear warheads that China possessed in 2015 was estimated to be 260. The number was 250 last year.

China has always kept its nuclear capabilities at the minimum level required for its self-defense needs and does not participate in nuclear arms races, emphasized a white paper on military strategy issued by the Ministry of National Defense in May. "China firmly pursues a nuclear strategy
solely for self-defense and adheres to a policy that rejects preemptive nuclear strikes under all circumstances,” the white paper read.

The Ministry of National Defense on Monday told the Global Times that the country has always adhered to such a stance.

Meanwhile, the white paper pointed out that China will work to develop its nuclear weapon systems and to enhance its capabilities to deter other countries from using or threatening to use nuclear weapons.

The total number of nuclear weapons in nine nuclear-armed countries - the US, Russia, the UK, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea - has dropped to around 15,850.

The US and Russia now possess 7,260 and 7,500 nuclear warheads respectively, compared to 7,300 and 8,000 respectively last year.

"Both the quality and quantity of China's nuclear arsenal is inadequate, which is incompatible with our national strength and security needs, especially when the nation is under strategic pressure in the international political sphere,” a Xi'an-based analyst affiliated with the military that requested anonymity told the Global Times.

However, China will not undertake a massive expansion of its nuclear arsenal partly due to the advancement of conventional weapons as well as international anti-nuclear advocacy, the expert said.

"The modest increase is so far not in conflict with our nuclear strategy. We can strengthen the survivability of our nuclear weapons through modernization or increase the number of intercontinental missiles without expanding the scale of the whole nuclear arsenal," said Wu Riqiang, an associate professor at the Renmin University.

http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/927242.shtml

Minneapolis Star Tribune – Minneapolis, MN

US Institute: Construction Visible at North Korean Nuke Site; Reactor May Not Be Operating

By MATTHEW PENNINGTON, Associated Press (AP)

June 17, 2015

WASHINGTON — Recent satellite imagery shows not only construction work at North Korea’s nuclear complex, but also signs that its existing reactor is not fully operating, a U.S. research institute said Wednesday.

The Nyongbyon complex is North Korea's only publicly known nuclear facility. International monitors were expelled in 2009, but commercial satellite photos offer a partial window into its operations.
The U.S.-Korea Institute at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies says an image from late May shows construction next to its uranium enrichment facility, and work on what appears to be a structure related to the electricity supply of a still-incomplete light-water reactor.

Its existing plutonium reactor appears to be operating at low power levels or was not operating on the day the image was taken. The reactor was restarted in 2013 after a years-long shut-down, as North Korea backtracked on a commitment of previous aid-for-disarmament negotiations, raising fresh alarm over its nuclear ambitions.

The reactor can be used to produce fissile material for nuclear weapons. The institute's assessment says the reactor appeared to have been operating irregularly since fall 2014.

"While North Korea has not conducted a nuclear or a long-range missile test recently, Pyongyang is clearly determined to push forward with its nuclear programs," said Joel Wit, a former State Department official and editor of the institute's website, 38 North.

"However, the fact that the North has had trouble operating its 5-megawatt reactor highlights the reality that everything is not likely to go smoothly," he said.

International concern is growing over North Korea's weapons development, which continues apace, even as the impoverished nation struggles to feed itself. North Korea said Wednesday it has been hit by its worst drought in a century, resulting in extensive damage to agriculture.

There's speculation the North may be planning a rocket launch to mark the 70th anniversary this October of the ruling Korean Workers Party. The United States is concerned about such launches because technology used for rockets may help North Korea develop a missile capable of reaching the U.S.

North Korea has been building the light-water reactor at Nyongbyon since 2010. It says it is for electricity generation. The 38 North analysis says the reactor has appeared externally complete for some time but isn't operating yet. The May 24 satellite image of the site suggests that electrical equipment is probably being installed.

The analysis by William Mugford, a retired U.S. government satellite imagery analyst, also detects what it says could be the construction of thick-walled rooms designed for the remote handling of radioactive nuclear material for either civilian or military purposes next to the uranium enrichment facility at Nyongbyon.

North Korea revealed the facility to visiting U.S. academics in late 2010, showing it has a second way to produce fissile material for bombs in addition to its plutonium reactor.


Return to Top
Defense World.Net – Ghaziabad, India

**France Tests Nuclear Cruise Missile Weapon System**

Source: Our Bureau  
Saturday, June 13, 2015

The Ministry of Defense of France announced on Friday the successful testing of a new nuclear, air-launched cruise missile.

The nuclear cruise missile weapon system, Air-Sol Moyenne Portée Amélioré (ASMPA; medium-range air to surface missile), by MBDA, is an enhanced variant of ASMP.

A two-seat Rafale fighter of the 01/091 "Gascogne" Fighter Squadron took off on Thursday for a test that brought together all the characteristic phases of an airborne nuclear strike mission which culminated with the firing an ASMPA missile, without a nuclear warhead, at its target at the Missile Test Center in Biscarrosse, the Ministry of Defense said.

Reserved for strategic air forces of France, it carries a thermonuclear load of approximately 300 kilotons (power equivalent to twenty times the Hiroshima bomb) at a distance of about 500 km.

It entered operational service in 2010, replacing the missile Medium Range Air-Ground (ASMP), which improves performance while taking up the essential characteristics.

The ASMP has a range of between 50 and 186 miles. It entered service in 1986.

[TASS Russian News Agency – Moscow, Russia](http://www.defenseworld.net/news/13159/France_Tests_Nuclear_Cruise_Missile_Weapon_System#.VXzcgHA8KrU)

**Russia to Develop Engines for new Strategic Bombers on Time — Defense Firm**

*The plans to restart production of Tupolev Tu-160 supersonic strategic bombers are unlikely to delay the development of engines for the 5th-generation bomber*

June 15, 2015

LE BOURGET /France/. June 15. /TASS/. Russia’s plans to restart production of Tupolev Tu-160 (NATO reporting name: Blackjack) supersonic strategic bombers are unlikely to delay development of engines for the PAK DA 5th-generation aircraft, United Engine-Making Corporation Head Vladislav Masalov said on Monday.

"There is a shortage of financing and we intend to safeguard our position that the work on the power unit must be fulfilled on time and be carried out at an advanced pace of 3-5 years rather than conducted concurrently with the work on the aircraft as is usually the case," the company’s head said.
"We hope that the situation with the PAK DA will not be revised because of the decision to restart the production of the bombers. I expect that we'll keep working relations on this program with the UAC [United Aircraft-Making Corporation]," Masalov said.

The work on developing engines for the PAK DA new strategic bomber is currently proceeding on schedule, he said.

"We have a contract on fulfilling a technical design. We're fulfilling our contractual obligations under this project on time. This year, some operations are planned, including engine prototype gasdynamic trials maximally close to the operational conditions aboard the aircraft," he said.

At the same time, the United Engine-Making Corporation head declined to talk about the specifics of the new engine the corporation was developing for the PAK-DA bombers.

Russia is currently developing a new strategic bomber dubbed PAK DA (prospective aviation complex of long-range aviation). The new bomber is expected to make its first flight in 2019 and become operational in the Russian Air Force approximately in 2023-2025.

Russia Air Force Commander-in-Chief Viktor Bondarev said earlier the decision to restart the production of Tu-160M bombers would not affect the plans for the development of PAK DA new strategic aircraft.

http://tass.ru/en/russia/800742

Russia Developing Fifth-Generation Nuclear Subs — Design Bureau

According to him, the new boats will be built within the timeframe approved by the military shipbuilding programme for the period until 2050

June 16, 2015

PARK PATRIOT (Moscow region), June 16. /TASS/. Russia's Malakhit Marine Engineering Design Bureau (St. Petersburg) is already working on the project for the construction of fifth-generation nuclear submarines, the company's CEO Vladimir Dorofeyev told TASS on Tuesday.

"The work on the fifth generation of submarines is already underway. The project will be implemented after the Yasen nuclear submarine construction project is completed," he said.

According to him, the new boats will be built within the timeframe approved by the military shipbuilding programme for the period until 2050.

Dorofeyev said that the fifth-generation submarines will be based on the network centric system. The boats’ dimensions and speed, although remaining significant parameters, will cease to be of prime importance. "The reactor [of the subs] will be certainly based on new principles, but there will be no revolution, and it is not needed after all," he added.

According to him, another important feature will be the new submarine's coating and new technology of its production.
In March, Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Navy Viktor Chirkov told reporters that the navy men had already commissioned the defence industry to develop fifth-generation nuclear submarines.

http://tass.ru/en/russia/800956

TASS Russian News Agency – Moscow, Russia

Russia to Lay down Seventh Borey-Class Nuclear Sub in late December 2015

The Borey-class ballistic-missile submarines are to become the backbone of the Russian Navy's strategic nuclear deterrent for the next few decades.

June 16, 2015

PATRIOT PARK/Moscow Region/, June 16. /TASS/. The seventh Borey-class nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine will be laid down in late 2015, the director general of Russia's Sevmash shipyard told TASS on Tuesday.

"This year, on December 21, a Borey project submarine is planned to be laid down," Mikhail Budnichenko said.

The Borey-class ballistic-missile submarines are to become the backbone of the Russian Navy's strategic nuclear deterrent for the next few decades. Eight such submarines are expected to be built up to 2020, and three of them have been already handed over to the Navy. The vessels will be armed with up to 16 Bulava submarine-launched ballistic missiles, which have range of over 8,000 kilometers.

The construction of the series now continues under the improved Borey-A project, and the first submarine of this class was Knýaz (Prince) Vladimir that was laid down in 2012. Last year, two submarines of the series - the Knýaz Oleg and the Generalissimo Suvorov - were laid down at the Sevmash shipyard, based in Severodvinsk, northern Russia.

http://tass.ru/en/russia/800959

Hürriyet Daily News – Istanbul, Turkey

Three people Arrested at Turkish Border for Chemical Smuggling Worth $2.5 Million

ARTVİN - Doğan News Agency

Friday, June 19, 2015

Two smugglers of Georgian origin have been arrested at Turkey's northeastern border for attempting to smuggle caesium and a mercury-like substance, with a combined estimated market value of $2.5 million.
Customs and law enforcement officers caught the suspects after the alarm of the x-ray body scanner was triggered on June 19, as the smugglers tried to enter the country through the Sarp border crossing in the northeastern province of Artvin.

Further screening revealed that the suspects were carrying 1.24 kilograms of caesium in two glass tubes and 48.23 grams of the mercury-like substance in six tubes, as well as nine precious stones of different sizes and colors.

After the police questioned the suspects under custody, a 60-year-old Turkish citizen was also detained for his involvement with the smugglers.

All three suspects were taken a court, which ruled for their arrest.

Reports indicate that the tubes containing caesium and the mercury-like substance were turned over to officials of the Turkish Atomic Energy Authority.

Smuggling of “orphaned” radioactive sources has become widespread since the collapse of central authority in former USSR states with the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

The Black Sea region has since become an important route in chemical smuggling, with 630 incidents reported between 1991 and 2012, according to a report prepared for the EU Non-Proliferation Consortium.

While the first incident in Turkey occurred in 1993, Turkey is the country with the third highest number of recorded incidents, after Russia and Ukraine, the report also states.


Tasnim News Agency – Tehran, Iran

Iran Seeks to Resume Enrichment if Possible Nuclear Deal Violated: MP

June 14, 2015

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – A senior Iranian lawmaker said the parliament is working on a bill based on which the country can resume uranium enrichment activities in case a possible final agreement on Tehran’s peaceful nuclear program is violated by the other side.

Alaeddin Boroujerdi on Saturday said the parliament’s national security and foreign policy commission has already passed the bill following Washington’s talk of a gradual, instead of immediate, removal of anti-Iran sanctions once Tehran will have honored commitments under a final nuclear agreement.

He also noted that a lasting accord needs to recognize Iran’s right to continue Research and Development (R&D) activities in the nuclear field, something that Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei has also underlined.

Iran and Group 5+1 (Russia, China, the US, Britain, France and Germany) have been negotiating to hammer out a lasting accord that would end more than a decade of impasse over Tehran’s peaceful nuclear program.
On April 2, they reached a framework nuclear agreement in Lausanne, Switzerland, with both sides committed to push for a final, comprehensive accord until the end of June.


Albuquerque Journal - Albuquerque, NM

Talks Snag on ‘Undeclared’ Sites

By Paul Richter, Tribune Washington Bureau

Sunday, June 14, 2015

WASHINGTON – Over the past 20 months, world powers seeking a nuclear deal with Iran have worked out tentative agreements to monitor and secure the country’s known nuclear facilities to prevent it from building a bomb.

But as negotiations head for a June 30 deadline, diplomats are still at odds over a tougher issue: how to keep tabs on military bases and other sites where the Iranians might secretly work on a weapon.

The six-nation diplomatic bloc negotiating with Iran wants United Nations nuclear inspectors to be able to poke around so-called undeclared facilities if they suspect nuclear work is going on. Such “challenge inspections” raise sensitive issues of national sovereignty and pride that in the past have set off years-long struggles with Saddam Hussein’s Iraq, North Korea and Iran itself.

With Iran’s known enrichment facilities at Natanz and Fordow, and as a heavy-water reactor at Arak, under international oversight, the country’s leaders would almost certainly look elsewhere to conduct any secret nuclear work, said Gary Samore, former nonproliferation advisor to President Barack Obama.

“It’s the undeclared sites that are the real threat,” he said.

Stretching the deadline

Many Western officials say a comprehensive deal with Iran is still likely even though talks may stretch past the current deadline. But they acknowledge that challenge inspections are among the issues that could still sink the talks.

Several months ago, U.S. officials thought they had agreement in principle on a compromise plan: The U.N.’s nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency, would have wide latitude to investigate undeclared sites, but Iran would be able to dispute those requests in an international forum.

But Iran’s negotiators backtracked after supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei began insisting he would never allow foreigners into Iran’s military bases.

The five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council – the United States, Britain, France, Russia and China – and Germany are negotiating with Iran for a deal that would ease tough international sanctions if Iran agrees to restrictions, including strict monitoring and inspections, aimed at preventing it from obtaining a nuclear weapon.
Iran denies any interest in building a bomb, but the major powers have reason to distrust it. The uranium enrichment facilities at Natanz and Fordow were built and operated in secret until revealed by outsiders.

In public, U.S. officials have said inspectors must be given “anywhere, anytime” access to sites where nuclear work is suspected. The administration will not accept a deal unless access is granted “to whatever Iranian sites are required to verify that Iran’s program is exclusively peaceful – period,” Deputy Secretary of State Antony Blinken said in a speech last week.

**Flexibility on access**

In the negotiating rooms, however, U.S. diplomats aren’t demanding immediate access. Rather, they’ve signaled that they’re willing to allow a panel some time to consider Iranian objections and weigh the evidence before allowing a challenge inspection to proceed.

The world powers have studied a proposal to have inspection requests judged by a commission, with voting representatives from the six powers, Iran and possibly the European Union.

Access would be granted if a majority of the eight supported an International Atomic Energy Agency request for access. That means that Iran alone – or Iran backed by Russia and China – wouldn’t have the votes to stop an inspection if the United States and the other commission members favored it.

The proposal calls for a maximum of 30 days for deliberations by the commission on IAEA requests for inspections.

That could be enough time for Iran to conceal some recent nuclear activities if it wanted to, Samore said. But it wouldn’t be enough time to hide evidence of the uranium enrichment facilities Iran would need to create the fissile material required for a bomb.

**Sanctions and incentive**

If Iran refused to cooperate or was found to have cheated, sanctions could be quickly reimposed. That approach would provide “a strong mechanism” to ensure access, said a Western diplomat who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the private talks. “And that’s what we need.”

Some outside experts, including some who have urged a tough approach to Iran, agree. “This would be very impressive,” said Samore, who heads a group called United Against Nuclear Iran.

It would be more intrusive than any U.N. inspections regime except those imposed on Iraq after the Persian Gulf War of 1991, when it was a conquered nation, Samore said. The inspectors ultimately dismantled Iraq’s chemical and biological weapons programs as well as an unexpectedly large nuclear development infrastructure, Samore said.

http://www.abqjournal.com/598429

Return to Top
Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) – Tehran, Iran
16 June 2015

Araqchi: Termination of Sanctions on Day of Implementing Agreement

Tehran, June 16, IRNA – Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi said on Monday that sanctions will be entirely lifted on the day that the final agreement will take effect.

He said that the nuclear talks are getting to the last minutes of two years of tough task.

Araqchi said that the Iranian team will leave for the venue of nuclear talks and will be stationed there until July 1 to work on the texts remained within the parentheses.

He said that differences which are more major and or key value will remain until the last days, decision on which will be made by the foreign ministers.

'We have decided to end the talks on July 1, but we will definitely not sacrifice a good and desirable agreement for keeping that date and if necessary, a few days longer, or even shorter, can be the final date of the talks, which is not the focal point of the negotiations.'


Return to Top

TASS Russian News Agency – Moscow, Russia

Russia Expert Says Iranian Nuclear Program Deal is Unlikely to Be Reached by End of June

The expert said the Americans had taken a rigid position on anti-Iranian sanctions

June 16, 2015

MOSCOW, June 16. /TASS/. Iran and the P5+1 group of international mediators (the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and Germany) are unlikely to finally sign a comprehensive agreement on the Iranian nuclear program by the deadline of June 30, Vladimir Yevseyev, director of the Russian Center for Socio-Political Studies, a think tank, said on Tuesday.

He said the Americans had taken a rigid position on anti-Iranian sanctions. "Anti-Iranian sanctions will not be lifted, they will be suspended. This is the United States’ position. The reasoning is as follows: if the sanctions are completely lifted it will be difficult to re-impose them. That is why the United States and the European Union will only suspend the sanctions," he said at a roundtable meeting at the Syrian embassy in Moscow.

In this case, the Iranians, as they say, will not sign the comprehensive agreement, the expert noted. "If anything is to be signed, it will be a framework agreement. But it is unlikely to happen by the end of June," he said. "The Americans are speaking about a possible postponement to mid-July, but there are forecasts about later dates."

According to Yevseyev, the problem is rooted in the fact that the sanctions lifting mechanism had not yet been agreed. "Apart from that, there is a certain gap in positions concerning centrifuge storing. But what is most important, the issue of removal low-enriched uranium in the form of hexafluoride has not been agreed with Russia," he said.
"This issue has not yet been agreed and it looks like this situation may remain in a suspended state for yet some time more," he said.

http://tass.ru/en/world/801154

Press TV – Tehran, Iran

US Signals First ever U-turn on Iran Sanctions

Wednesday, June 17, 2015

Secretary of State John Kerry has acknowledged for the first time that a final nuclear deal would not require Iran to detail its past activities in order to lift sanctions on the country.

"We’re not fixated on Iran specifically accounting for what they did at one point in time or another," he said by video from Boston where he is recuperating from a broken leg.

"We know what they did," Kerry added. "We have no doubt. We have absolute knowledge with respect to the certain military activities they are engaged in. What we are concerned about is going forward."

Economic sanctions lie at the heart of nuclear negotiations between Iran and the P5+1 group of countries.

U.S. and European officials had previously signaled to maintain sanctions as long as the International Atomic Energy Agency had not issued a clean bill of health for Iran’s nuclear program.

Tehran has made it clear that it would not settle for anything short of complete removal of sanctions if a final deal were to be signed.

Iran is also cooperating with the IAEA and has pledged to clarify everything about what the West calls military dimensions of the country’s nuclear activities in the past.

Kerry said, “The possible military dimensions, frankly, gets distorted a little bit in some of the discussion.”

Iran says it is nuclear activities are purely civilian, aimed at generating electricity. Years of scouring of the country by IAEA inspectors, meanwhile, has not produced any trace of diversion.

IAEA chief Yukio Amano again verified non-diversion of Iran’s nuclear program in the latest report this month, though sticking to the agency's usual political line that it could not provide assurances about possible undeclared material.

Iran and P5+1 are currently holding their last stretch of nuclear talks before their self-imposed June 30 deadline to reach a deal.

Kerry, who will head to Vienna next week, said the talks “remain tough”.

http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2015/06/17/416268/iran-sanctions-nuclear-talks-kerry

Return to Top
Mehr News Agency – Tehran, Iran
Wednesday, June 17, 2015

Iran to Accept Additional Protocol on Conditions

TEHRAN, Jun. 17 (MNA) – Secretary of the Expediency Council Mohsen Rezaei said Iran would only sign up to the Additional Protocol on the condition that no military site inspection was to be allowed.

Secretary of the Expediency Council Mohsen Rezaei made the remarks at the conference of ‘Iran’s Nuclear Program: Opportunities, Challenges, Procedures’ that took place on Wednesday at Imam Hossein University, Tehran.

The US has been pushing for IAEA’s inspections of Iran’s military sites under the pretext of the Additional Protocol. A number of senior Iranian officials have stressed however that to meet the requirements of the IAEA, there is no need for Iran’s military and defense installations to come under the IAEA inspection.

On May 20, Ayatollah Khamenei said Iran will not allow any inspections by foreign countries of its military sites. He also stressed that foreigners will not be permitted to question Iranian scientists in the nuclear domain. During a press conference on Saturday, President Rouhani also reassured that Iran would not allow inspection into its military installations.

Noting that the economic sanctions have had both constructive and destructive effects on Iran’s economy, Rezaei added that sanctions can transform the country’s economy just as the Sacred Defense during the war with Iraq transformed Iran’s defense capabilities.

Rezaei maintained that the main sanctions against Iran have been imposed by the US Secretary of Treasury, saying the Americans expected the economy of Iran be crippled within a year but are now surprised that this did not happen.

“We can have the American side seeking negotiation by reducing unemployment, inflation and advancing our economy,” he said.

He further noted that in case of a nuclear agreement, some sanctions would be lifted but not all, calling for collective efforts to correct the country’s bureaucracy and invite the people to participate in the nation’s economic affairs.

The 8th round of nuclear negotiations between representatives of Iran and 5+1 took place today at deputy-level in the Austrian city of Vienna.

After reaching a mutual understanding in Lausanne in April, Iran and 5+1 agreed to a June 30 deadline to reach a final deal over Tehran’s nuclear program.


Return to Top
Gulf News.com – Dubai, U.A.E.

**Iran Nuke Talks Impeded by Disagreement on All Main Elements**

*Talks deadline is likely to be extended to July 9, diplomats say*

Associated Press (AP)

June 17, 2015

Vienna: Iran and six powers are still apart on all main elements of a nuclear deal with less than two weeks to go to their June 30 target date and will likely have to extend their negotiations, two diplomats said.

Their comments enforce concerns that obstacles to a pact remain beyond the public debate on how far Iran must open its nuclear programme to outside purview under any deal.

Iran’s supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has for weeks rebuffed US demands that UN nuclear monitors have access to military sites and nuclear scientists as they monitor Tehran's commitments under a deal and probe allegations of past work on atomic arms.

Negotiators are concerned about a lack of headway on all issues. Russian chief delegate Sergey Ryabkov said on Friday “the rate of progress ... is progressively slowing down.”

Negotiators have been meeting five days a week in Vienna over the past few weeks. The two diplomats are familiar with the progress of the talks and spoke shortly before a planned five-day round reconvened on Wednesday. They demanded anonymity because they are not authorised to discuss the confidential negotiations.

Ways of implementing specific parts of the deal are supposed to be contained in four or five annexes to the main text of an agreement.

The diplomats described the draft of a main document as a patchwork of text and dozens of blank spaces because of stubborn disagreement on up to ten elements crucial to any deal. Those details are to be included in four or five annexes, which remain incomplete.

Both sides remain publicly committed to June 30. Still, the diplomats said all nations at the table recognise that a delay up to July 9 is not a deal-breaker.

If US Congress receives a deal by July 9, it has 30 days to review it before US President Barack Obama could suspend congressional sanctions. Postponement beyond that would double the congressional review period to 60 days, giving both Iranian and US opponents more time to work on undermining an agreement.

Any deal would cap nearly a decade of international efforts to restrict Iranian nuclear programmes that could be turned toward making weapons.

Tehran denies any interest in — or work on — atomic arms, but wants negotiations with the United States, Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany to conclude with an end to sanctions imposed over its nuclear programme.

The talks focus on ways to implement commitments by both sides reached in a preliminary deal in April. Iran agreed then to slashing the size of its uranium enrichment programme for at least ten years, as well as re-engineering a nearly built reactor to minimise its output or plutonium — like enriched uranium a potential pathway to nuclear weapons.
It also has agreed to give experts of the UN's International Atomic Energy Agency unprecedented monitoring authority to ensure that Tehran is adhering to its commitments, as well as more leverage in following up on the allegations of past nuclear weapons work.

Tasnim News Agency – Tehran, Iran

**Iran, EU Diplomats Hold Talks to Coordinate Sessions in Vienna Talks**

June 19, 2015

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Iranian negotiators and European Union’s representative held a bilateral meeting in Vienna to coordinate the upcoming sessions in the fresh round of talks between Tehran and world powers over the country’s nuclear energy program.

Seyed Abbas Araqchi and Majid Takht Ravanchi, deputies to Iranian foreign minister, held their meeting with European Union’s Deputy Foreign Policy Chief Helga Maria Schmid.

The two sides held talks in the Austrian capital of Vienna on Friday to plan and coordinate the sessions to be held between negotiators from Iran and world powers.

Iran and the Group 5+1 (Russia, China, US, Britain, France, and Germany) delegations are currently in the European capital ahead of the June 30 deadline for reaching a comprehensive agreement on Tehran’s nuclear program.

Senior diplomats from China and Russia also joined the talks between Iran, the US, and the European Union (EU) on Friday.

Earlier on Thursday, experts and diplomats from Iran and the six world powers including Araqchi, Takht Ravanchi, Schmid, and US Under-Secretary of State Wendy Sherman held two rounds of meeting.

The fresh round of diplomatic negotiations to draft the text of the comprehensive deal has started in Vienna since Wednesday and will continue steadily until the self-imposed deadline of June 30.

The foreign ministers of Iran and the sextet are expected to hold a meeting between June 25 and 30, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov announced on Friday.

Tehran and the six world powers are negotiating to hammer out a lasting accord that would end more than a decade of impasse over Tehran’s civilian nuclear program.

On April 2, the two sides reached a framework nuclear agreement in Lausanne, Switzerland, with both sides committed to push for a final deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), until the end of June.
Iran Commander Rules Out Inspections of Military Sites

Friday, June 19, 2015

A senior Iranian commander has reaffirmed that the Islamic Republic will not allow access to or inspections of its military sites under a potential nuclear agreement with six world powers.

On Friday, Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Hassan Firouzabadi said any visits to or inspections of Iran’s military sites “are forbidden,” stressing that “everyone should heed this red line.”

“National interests and security necessitate that outsiders and those who have spared no effort in opposing the Islamic establishment not be granted access to our military centers under any protocol or agreement,” he added.

On May 20, Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said Iran will not allow any inspections by foreign countries of its military sites. The Leader also stressed that foreigners will not be permitted to interview Iranian scientists in the nuclear domain.

Iranian negotiators have also reaffirmed that no such visits or interviews will be accepted as part of a deal between Iran and the P5+1.

Negotiators from Iran and the five veto-wielding members of the UN Security Council – the US, Britain, France, Russia and China – plus Germany are in talks on the text of a final deal over Iran's civilian nuclear activities. They face a self-defined deadline of June 30.

http://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2015/06/19/416597/Iran-Firouzabadi-Nuclear-Talks-Jazayeri-Araqchi

Senior Cleric: US Needs Agreement More than Iran

TEHRAN (FNA) - Tehran’s Provisional Friday Prayers Leader Ayatollah Mohammad Ali Movahedi Kermani underlined that the US is in need of a nuclear agreement more than Iran, and stressed that any final deal should include removal of all sanctions against the country.

Addressing the Iranian team of negotiators, Ayatollah Movahedi Kermani said, "You should make the other side, specially the US, understand that the Iranian nation insists on removal of the coercive sanctions."

Movahedi Kermani, who was addressing a large and fervent congregation of people on Tehran University campus on Friday, noted that the US government needs striking a final agreement more than Iran.

In May, Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei reiterated Iran's opposition to the inspection of sensitive military sites and interview with the country's nuclear scientists.
"As said before, no permission will be given for inspection of any military centers and talks with the nuclear scientists and other sensitive fields of study and intrusion into their privacy," Ayatollah Khamenei said, addressing the Iranian cadets at Imam Hossein University - a renowned military academy of the IRGC - in Tehran.

"I will not allow the aliens to hold talks and interrogate the dear and distinguished scientists and sons of this nation," he stressed.

Ayatollah Khamenei also referred to the nuclear talks underway between Iran and the world powers, and said one of the challenges facing the talks is the other side’s bullying and excessive demands.

But he stressed that the enemies should know that the Iranian nation will not bow to the pressures and excessive demands.


The Moscow Times – Moscow, Russia

Russia, Saudi Arabia Sign Nuclear Energy Cooperation Deal

Reuters

June 19, 2015

KHOBAR, Saudi Arabia — Saudi Arabia and Russia have signed an agreement to cooperate on nuclear energy development, a Saudi government body in charge of such projects said.

The government body, the King Abdullah City for Atomic and Renewable Energy, announced the cooperation deal on its website on Thursday but gave no further details.

Saudi-owned al-Arabiya TV, citing unnamed sources, said the kingdom planned to build 16 nuclear reactors which Russia would play a significant role in operating.

The Saudi atomic and renewable energy body has already signed nuclear cooperation deals with countries able to build reactors, including the United States, France, Russia, South Korea, China and Argentina.

It is not clear if this new deal, announced on Thursday, will take cooperation with Russia to a more advanced level.

Saudi Oil Minister Ali al-Naimi was due to meet his counterpart Russian Energy Minister Alexander Novak in St Petersburg on Thursday to discuss a broad cooperation agreement.

In 2012, Saudi Arabia said it aimed to build 17 gigawatts (GW) of nuclear power by 2032 as well as around 41 GW of solar capacity. The oil exporter currently has no nuclear power plants.
Nuclear and solar power stations would reduce the diversion of Saudi Arabia's oil output for use in domestic power generation, leaving more available for export.


Want China Times – Taipei, Taiwan

OPINION/Op-Ed

US Deployments Heralding Arms Race with China and Russia

By Tseng Fu-sheng

June 14, 2015

The United States and Japan have successfully conducted the first live-fire test of Raytheon’s new Standard Missile-3 (SM-3) Block IIA missile that is being jointly developed by the two countries. The United States contributed a little over US$2 billion to the program, which began in 2006 and is set to see the missile fully deployed in 2018, while Japan provided around US$1 billion. It marks the first successful case in which the US and Japan have shared the cost of developing and modifying ballistic missile defense technology.

During the Obama administration, the US has been actively developing a global ballistic missile defense system to protect its territory from missile attacks and building up its missile defense capabilities in regions to shield its overseas military bases and NATO allies, as well as its allies in East Asia and the Middle East.

As part of its global defense strategy, Washington also plans to deploy three AN/TPY-2 ballistic missile defense radars in Japan to provide improved early warning and tracking of any missile launched from China or North Korea at the United States or Japan.

In addition, the US aims to use SM-3 interceptors to support the European missile defense plan and will strengthen the deployment of Aegis ballistic missile defense systems in the Asia-Pacific. The two-tier integrated missile defense system consists of sea-based systems to be deployed on Aegis destroyers and a land-based Patriot system.

US deployments in the Asia-Pacific are characterized by a two-tier security architecture built by a networking of alliances (Japan-US-Australia; Japan-US-South Korea).

In the first tier, the US is collaborating with Japan and Australia to create a missile defense system comprising the Aegis/Standard SM-3 missile for ship-based, theater-wide missile defense, and the Patriot PC-3 missile for point defense, aimed at responding to missile threats from China, North Korea and Iran.

The US deployment has made China and Russia chafe at the prospect of being contained by the military superpower and they have been building up their military power in response. An arms race seems to have intensified between the China-Russian alliance and the US-Japan alliance, making the security situation in the Asia-Pacific and Europe ever more complex. China and Russia have taken measures including devising national defense and military strategies and strengthening bilateral cooperation in weapons development.
China has also sought to expand its aircraft carrier fleet while developing a wide range of weapons systems, including drones, airborne early warning (AEW) aircraft and nuclear submarines.

Tseng Fu-sheng is an adviser to Taiwan’s National Policy Foundation. Translated by Want China Times.


The Diplomat – Tokyo, Japan

OPINION/Features

The South Asia Nuclear Equation

Recent remarks by a Pakistani general have reopened the debate on South Asia’s nuclear stability.

By Kunal Singh for The Diplomat

June 15, 2015

For 15 years, since its inception in February 2000, General Khalid Kidwai served as Director General of Pakistan’s Strategic Plans Division. Now an adviser to Pakistan’s National Command Authority, Kidwai was a speaker at the recent biennial Carnegie Nuclear Policy Conference. Offering a glimpse into Pakistan’s strategic thinking, he explained Pakistan’s shift from a strategy of “minimum credible deterrence” to “full spectrum deterrence.” During his talk, Kidwai justified Pakistan’s induction of battlefield nuclear weapons with operational ranges as low as 60 kilometers on the pretext of a non-existent “Cold Start” doctrine.

Kidwai’s remarks have re-opened the debate over South Asia’s nuclear stability. A Stimson Center essay by Jeffrey McCausland has expanded on the dangers of Pakistan incorporating tactical nuclear weapons (TNWs). For instance, Pakistan’s Army would have to use this weapon early in any battle, lest the conventionally superior Indian forces intrude deep into Pakistani territory and foreclose on the option of deploying TNWs. Moreover, Pakistan’s forces would have to ensure a concentration of Indian troops in the target area so that the damage inflicted can justify the use of a nuclear weapon. In general, command and control of tactical nuclear weapons can also be tricky in the heat of conventional battle.

Meanwhile, India’s doctrine allows it to retaliate with a massive nuclear strike to inflict unacceptable damage even in response to a “small” nuclear attack. Whether India would elect to exercise this option or not is another matter.

Overall, the deployment of TNWs should aim to save Pakistan from a conventional defeat and prevent further escalation to the level of strategic nuclear weapons. The ability of Pakistan’s TNWs to do either is dubious.

While the TNWs do not tilt, in this writer’s opinion, the scales one way or the other from what was set in 1998, there are other changes afoot in the region that call for greater examination. The re-emergence of the debate, courtesy of Kidwai, offers an occasion to look at these changes. With its growing leverage over Pakistan and Afghanistan, Beijing is likely to displace Washington from the
region. Before that, however, let us recapitulate the old debates on nuclear stability in South Asia and the role played by the United States.

Old Debates

The nuclear stability debate after the 1998 tests was divided into two camps: nuclear optimists and nuclear pessimists. The optimists argued that the acquisition of nuclear weapons by both states would stabilize the region simply because any war between the two nations would have catastrophic possibilities. The pessimists, on the other hand, pointed to the organizational problems that might lead to deterrence failure, and concluded that proliferation would have destabilizing effects.

Sumit Ganguly and S. Paul Kapur, though on opposite sides of the divide, extricated this debate from the vague theoretical premonitions and placed it in the more realistic contemporary regional framework of South Asia. Ganguly, an optimist, believes that post nuclearization conflicts between India and Pakistan erupted because of regional tiffs and not as a consequence of nuclearization. Further, he believes that these conflicts did not escalate, thanks to the potential deterrence effects of nuclear war.

Kapur meanwhile chastises the earlier nuclear pessimists for conceding the deterrence effects of nuclear weapons to the optimists and restricting their arguments to organizational problems. He reformulates his position as one of “strategic pessimism.” While accommodating the realities of South Asia, Kapur further nuances the debate by introducing a distinction between revisionist and status-quo powers. A territorially dissatisfied power, if conventionally weaker than its adversary, will employ destabilizing tactics under the nuclear umbrella. The threat of nuclear weapons deters the conventionally stronger adversary from using its full might and thus will protect the revisionist power from large-scale conventional defeat. Moreover, the introduction of nuclear weapons internationalizes any minor dispute between the two countries, thus guaranteeing a settlement better than that which the weaker power could have negotiated on its own.

The U.S. Role

The role played by the U.S. to contain the possibilities of nuclear exchange in South Asia has been glorified or belittled, depending on which account you read. The nuclear optimists, as believers in the deterrence capabilities of nuclear arsenal, do not credit the U.S. for dousing all flames in nuclearized South Asia. The pessimists credit everything but nuclear weapons for de-escalation.

Nawaz Sharif's meeting with Bill Clinton on July 4, 1999 is often cited as the reason for Pakistan’s withdrawal from the Kargil War. Ganguly disagrees. He points out that the Tiger Hill – one of the strategic points captured by the invaders – was evacuated by India “a good ten hours before” the meeting between Sharif and Clinton. The pessimists hit back with a narrative of the roles played by Robert Gates, then America’s deputy national security advisor, during the 1990 crisis; and later by Colin Powell, the U.S. secretary of State, and Richard Armitage, his deputy, during the 2002 standoff.

According to an interview Robert Gates gave to Seymour M. Hersh (one of the world’s best-known investigative journalists), Gates told Pakistan’s Army Chief General Mirza Aslam Beg that the U.S. had war-gamed every conceivable scenario between Pakistan and India, and there wasn’t a single way Pakistan could win. The American Ambassador Robert B. Oakley recalled Gates warning Beg to not expect any help from the U.S. in the event of war. Gates’ “mission” apparently cooled temperatures on both sides. The American also offered satellite reconnaissance data to reassure leaders about the withdrawal happening on both sides.
Following the launch of Operation Parakram by India in the aftermath of the terror attack on Indian parliament in December 2001, one million troops were facing each other across the the Line of Control and the international border. Collin Powell visited New Delhi after a stopover in Islamabad and assured India of Musharraf’s intention to crack down on terrorism. The fragility of the gains was exposed by a terrorist attack that killed 32 at the Indian army camp at Kaluchak in Jammu. Before the outraged Indians could initiate an assault, Richard Armitage extracted a promise from Musharraf to end infiltration “permanently.”

Christine C. Fair, an astute scholar who specializes in South Asia, has tabulated the Correlates of War (COW) Militarized Interstate Disputes (MID) data, concluding that the rate of conflict between India and Pakistan increased as the nuclear level of Pakistan proceeded from “Nonnuclear period” through “Incipient nuclear period” to “De facto nuclear period” and full-fledged post-test “Nuclear period.”

For two of those four periods – incipient nuclear period and nuclear period – the U.S. provided considerable military and economic aid to Pakistan, leading Fair to conclude that U.S. support may have emboldened Pakistan further to pursue its revisionist agenda.

**China’s Role: Past, Present and Future**

Pakistan’s route to nuclear weapons could have been much more onerous if not for Chinese support. China sought to tie India into perennial conflict with its western neighbor thus stymieing India’s ability and desire to pursue a greater role in Asia.

The recent visit of Xi Jinping to Pakistan opened the floodgates, with China pledging $46 billion dollars to Pakistan's infrastructure and energy development. The deal envisions a China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) that runs from Gwadar Port in Baluchistan to Kashgar in Xinjiang. Gwadar is crucial to China’s “One Belt, One Road” program, as it is the point where the belt and the road meet. The CPEC will greatly shorten the route for energy imports into China. Gwadar provides China with an alternative to the Strait of Malacca, which can be choked by India.

Pakistan has since its birth steadfastly defined winning in terms of Kashmir and Afghanistan, legacies of “Two-Nation theory” and British colonialism. Thanks to China’s accommodation of Pakistan in the former’s One Belt, One Road initiative, the latter is realizing the benefits of regional connectivity. CPEC is expected to link East Asia to South Asia, Central Asia and Middle East, facilitating trade and investment across the continent. Chinese investment will diversify Pakistan’s economic options and create constituencies that will a) not remain fixated on the eastern border and b) seek peace that will enable them to harness the dividends of new opportunities. This development is likely to reduce the probability of nuclear belligerence from Rawalpindi.

As China supplants U.S. as Pakistan’s primary ally and gradually increases its profile in Afghanistan, it understands its responsibility to monitor the potential for a nuclear exchange in South Asia. As a seeker of global leadership, China is prepared to demonstrate its regional leadership credentials. Beijing, as a result, is likely to adopt a more neutral stance between India and Pakistan. It has been increasingly wary of taking Pakistan’s side in the dispute over Kashmir and the India-Pakistan wars. In a sign of changing realities, Chinese officials have shown interest in civil nuclear cooperation with India.
While the incipient factors seem encouraging, the proof of the pudding will be in the eating. The next time, whenever it is, India and Pakistan come close to a conflict with nuclear clouds overhead, the role of China will be much more important than it has been in the past. And that role will be studied by scholars in great detail.

*Kunal Singh is an Editor at policywonks.in. He is also a Research Associate at the Centre for Policy Research (CPR), New Delhi.*

http://thediplomat.com/2015/06/the-south-asia-nuclear-equation/

The Moscow Times – Moscow, Russia

OPINION/Op-Ed

**Cold War Is Back in Town (Op-Ed)**

By Alexander Golts

June 15, 2015

While experts debate whether a new Cold War is possible in the 21st century, such a war has already started. This time, The Associated Press played the role of harbinger, just as the famous "long telegram" that George Kennan sent from the U.S. Embassy in Moscow in 1946 presaged the first Cold War.

The AP quoted a report of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff on possible U.S. responses should Russia violate the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, including once again placing intermediate-range missiles in Western Europe to provide a "countervailing influence" to those held in Russia.

Some time later, British Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond defended the option of placing U.S. nuclear missiles on British territory. "We must send a clear signal to Russia that we will not allow them to cross our red lines," he said.

That is the logical result of the Russian authorities' attempt to blackmail Washington by threatening to withdraw from the INF Treaty. Back in the mid-2000s, former Russian Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov repeatedly claimed that Russia had compromised its security by giving up medium-range missiles in 1987. His argument: In the quarter-century since, many countries had obtained such missiles and had begun to threaten Russia.

In fact, such arguments are pure sophistry. Russia's arsenal gives it absolute nuclear superiority over every other country but the United States. For some reason, Russian leaders felt that their threat to withdraw from the INF could seriously frighten Washington.

The Russian press also ran occasional reports stating that modifications to Iskander short-range missiles could enable them to easily fly beyond the 500 kilometer limit imposed by the INF Treaty. From time to time, Moscow also threatened to deploy Iskander missiles to the Kaliningrad region.

And only a few days ago, Deputy Defense Minister Yury Borisov announced that Russia would soon introduce a new missile complex to replace the Oka system that was destroyed in compliance with the INF Treaty.
Approximately one year ago the United States directly accused Russia of violating the INF Treaty. However, Washington never publicly specified the exact violation. That definitely makes it more difficult for the U.S. to score propaganda points, but I suspect the Pentagon did not want to reveal its intelligence capabilities.

Nonetheless, U.S. military experts are certain that Moscow really did conduct tests in violation of the INF, and have now openly begun discussing options for retaliation if Russia begins deploying medium-range missiles.

The Kremlin can take pride in the fact that, after directing every imaginable threatening statement at the West for the past 10 years, Europe and the U.S. are finally taking it seriously.

That is what I call the beginning of a new Cold War. I will even hazard my own definition of the phenomenon. Cold War is when two countries have a disagreement that they cannot solve either diplomatically or militarily. In this case, Moscow has essentially made the diplomatically untenable demand for the special right to decide the destiny of former Soviet republics, while the enormous nuclear arsenals of Russia and the U.S. make a military solution impossible.

As a result, they have resorted to military deterrence based on the concept of mutually assured destruction. The recent statement of the Joint Chiefs of Staff offers what seems to be the first evidence that the West has adopted such a strategy.

According to one Pentagon official quoted in the Wall Street Journal, "We are dedicated first to deterrence. It is clear the Russians see us as an adversary. And so we have to ask: How do we inject stability into an environment that looks volatile?"

Once the two sides are locked in such a confrontation, they stop responding to official pronouncements and focus exclusively on their opponent’s military and technical capabilities. For example, the West is very interested in whether Russia can actually mass produce the new missile system it has announced. The answer might be "no," considering official data that Moscow has managed to produced only 60 Iskander missile launchers since 2006.

It seems that Russia is incapable of engaging in a Soviet-scale arms race with the United States. However, with the possible end of the INF Treaty restraints, Moscow and Washington return to the dead end of the early 1980s when Soviet missiles could reach, say, London and Bonn, but not the North American continent, while U.S. Pershing missiles and land-based cruise missiles were capable of reaching Moscow and Leningrad within minutes.

Welcome to the "new old world." I suspect that this is the world President Vladimir Putin inhabits, the one German Chancellor Angela Merkel referred to when she said that he "lives in another world."

Alexander Golts is deputy editor of the online newspaper Yezhednevny Zhurnal.


Return to Top
Getting Airpower Right: In Defense of the Long Range Strike Bomber

Robert Spalding and Adam Lowther

June 16, 2015

Is independent long-range strike a failure? That’s what T.X. Hammes would have us think. He uses time-worn arguments to claim that the U.S. Air Force’s plan to build the Long Range Strike Bomber (LRS-B) is a bad idea and that the money would be better spent elsewhere. Hammes’ argument suffers from many of the same flaws of others who offer impassioned critiques of airpower: namely, poor understanding of airpower theory and practice, a reliance on straw men, and selection bias. In short, we suggest that the LRS-B and the long-range strike mission remain critical to the nation’s national security.

Airpower Theory

The argument that long-range strike (also called strategic bombing) is little more than a disproven theory stems from a fixation by critics on the early work of Giulio Douhet, an airpower theorist who was writing during the early days of manned flight (1921) about the possibility of airpower playing a pivotal role in warfare. While it is true that some of Douhet’s contemporaries, including American Army Brigadier General Billy Mitchell, believed in the ability of airpower to end wars, airpower has since evolved in both theory and practice. Modern airmen have continued to incorporate experience into their thinking on the role of airpower in war. Using the writings of Douhet and Mitchell to criticize the role of modern airpower is akin to an airman using the writings of Maurice de Saxe (1757) to criticize modern land warfare.

While Hammes correctly mentions some of airpower’s successes, he sets up a straw man to then dismiss the impact of airpower when he suggests that airpower fails if it does not win wars independent of land and sea capabilities. In offering his own cases of airpower’s failure to be decisive (Lebanon-1982, Syria-1986, Sudan-1998, etc.), Hammes falls into the selection bias trap by selecting cases based on the dependent variable: conflicts in which airpower played a visible role. Not only does he dismiss all cases where airpower may have deterred a conflict, but he also dismisses cases that disprove his assertions.

These include World War II (particularly how it ended in the Pacific), Operation Opera (Israeli), and Operation Odyssey Dawn (NATO). He also describes Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan) as an airpower failure, yet the most successful period of the operation was during its early days when a small ground contingent relied on airpower to destroy large parts of opposition forces. His most grievous mistake involves his misuse of terms. Long-range strike is a mission, not a theory. In other words, the U.S. Air Force conducts long-range strike missions against targets in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and elsewhere regularly. To suggest it is a theory, rather than something we do with great frequency, is incorrect. It is a mission the United States must continue to be prepared to carry out for the foreseeable future. It is also one that is uniquely suited to the bomber the Air Force will build.

Bombers have some unique characteristics that aren’t usually talked about. While they do have long range and flexibility, there are some not so traditional elements that make bombers uniquely well suited for the long-range strike mission.
Point of Origin

The point of origin for a strike mission matters. American bombers launching from American soil are not bound by the restrictions placed on aircraft launching from foreign airfields. If the United States wants to strike a target in country X when launching from country Y, it is necessary to get country Y’s approval of the mission. This is a constraint frequently placed on American aircraft, but seldom relayed to the American public. Bombers launched from the United States are not subject to this constraint, and thus remain one of the most flexible capabilities in America’s arsenal.

Magazine Depth

The Navy provides another sovereign launch point — from international waters — for an American strike. Unfortunately, carrier based aircraft are short-legged (less than 1,000 nautical mile range) and cruise missiles are expensive and rapidly depleted. Contrary to Hammes’ argument that the United States will have plenty of cruise missiles if we just avoid buying a new bomber, the simple fact is, cruise missiles must be launched from expensive platforms too. Whether it be ships, submarines, or bombers, the cost of a cruise missile is not the only expense involved. As Air Force and Navy planners have discovered, one-way cruise missiles are an expensive way to strike a target. Cruise missiles also have limited capacity to strike hardened or mobile targets. Bombers provide effective deep strike capability, day after day. Operation Odyssey Dawn is a good example of the magazine-depth challenge: Given its persistent presence, naval vessels launched TLAMs to begin the campaign but were essentially out of Schlitz after the first night. Bombers flying from the United States or European bases were able to fly strike missions continuously, delivering weapons that are about one-tenth the cost of a cruise missile.

Manned vs. Unmanned

The Air Force is regularly castigated for not being forward thinking in its adoption of the ever-increasing capabilities of remotely piloted aircraft (RPA). The idea is that the Air Force, which is led by pilots, is loath to make the move to drones due to machismo and perceived loss of prestige. Nothing could be further from the truth, as evidenced by the large number of RPAs being acquired (more RPAs than manned aircraft) and RPA pilots being trained today. The Air Force has made the switch to RPAs where appropriate, but it does not always make sense, especially when America’s adversaries are intent on taking away the ability to control them from a distance through a range of cyber-attacks and jamming capabilities. Each mission has to be looked at closely to ensure the risks to mission success are acceptable — for the foreseeable future, a mix of manned and remotely-piloted systems provides flexibility, resilience, and effectiveness.

Stealth

Another important component of American airpower is stealth, which is frequently misunderstood. Tactical stealth is the combination of technology and tactics that allow the striker to survive in a contested environment and successfully conduct a strike. This means aircraft like the F-22, which is stealthy and fast, have the “first look, first shot, first kill.” This provides the attacker a distinct advantage over an adversary unaware of the striker’s presence. Strategic stealth is also a combination of stealth technology and tactics, but it doesn’t stop there. Strategic stealth uses the technology to develop a stealth methodology for achieving a strategic effect. The stealth methodology seeks to take away the enemy’s ability to detect offensive actions.
Domestic basing, which makes it harder for an adversary to predict a strike, is one important feature of this methodology. Attack from a stealth aircraft can also defeat an adversary’s air defenses, enabling non-stealthy aircraft to penetrate an adversary’s airspace. Aircraft design and operational art are important components of the methodology. The bottom line is that the United States has developed a methodology of aerial warfare that provides a unique capability — one that our adversaries fear, and is proven to shape their behavior.

**Deterrence**

Together these characteristics combine to make airpower and the long-range strike mission (performed by bombers) a uniquely significant capability in the American arsenal. The all-too-often neglected role of airpower in shaping adversary behavior is probably its most significant capability — deterrence. The ability to create fear in the minds of America’s adversaries is the key aspect of deterrence. While this was evident during the Cold War, recognition of airpower’s role has been lost in recent years. Nevertheless, this concept was on full display March 28, 2013 when the Air Force sent two B-2 bombers in a show of force over South Korea to remind North Korea of U.S. long-range strike capability.

While the term “deterrence” is frequently used in conjunction with nuclear weapons, conventional capability — employed from a stealth bomber — is also an important weapon in America’s deterrence arsenal.

**Conclusion**

What is evident in the airpower critiques of land or sea power zealots is that their own preferred form of warfare (land or sea) could not pass the same test that airpower is expected to pass with a perfect score. Airmen can easily call into question the need for an Army given the long and arguably less-than-successful conduct of ground-centric campaigns in Asia (Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq). They might also call into question the need for the Navy to have an army (Marines), which has its own air force. Given the limited global threat to shipping, it would be easy to question the need to spend $140-150 billion each year on naval assets whose primary mission is patrolling the sea lines of commerce and communication.

In truth, however, this sort of non-productive inter-service bickering substitutes mediocre fiscal arguments for more strategic questions that deserve the attention of our best and brightest thinkers. How do we most effectively provide joint capabilities to the nation? How do we most effectively deter adversaries? Where is military power most and least appropriate for achieving national security objectives? If we can address these questions, we will better understand which specific capabilities and platforms are most needed in an uncertain and dangerous future.

*Colonel Robert Spalding, PhD (USAF) was an Air Force Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations and flew the B-2 bomber. Dr. Adam Lowther was a petty officer in the U.S. Navy and serves as a research professor at the Air Force Research Institute.*


Return to Top
The Diplomat – Tokyo, Japan
OPINION/Asia Defense

Russia to Add 40 New ICBMs: Should the West Be Worried?

What's the Status of Russia’s Nuclear Forces in 2015?

By Franz-Stefan Gady for The Diplomat

June 17, 2015

Yesterday, Russian President Vladimir Putin announced that Russia will increase its nuclear weapons arsenal in a response to NATO's alleged conventional military buildup in Europe amidst growing tensions over Ukraine.

The Washington Post quotes from speech that Vladimir Putin delivered to inaugurate "Russia’s military Disneyland" - a high-tech military exposition outside Moscow - in which he stated that his country will add 40 new intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) to its nuclear arsenal “capable of overcoming any, even the most technologically sophisticated, missile defense systems.”

While Putin's statement yesterday is indeed worrying, it nevertheless appears to reduce the number of new missiles when comparing his remarks to a previous announcement he made six months ago, where he stated that Russia’s Strategic Rocket Forces will receive 50 new ICBMs in 2015.

The new weapons will in all likelihood be RS-24 Yars (SS-27) rockets, Russia’s newest operational fifth-generation intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), which can carry multiple independently targetable nuclear warheads and was first introduced into service in July 2010. The RS-24 ICBM together with the single-warhead RS-12M2 ICBM (Topol-M missile system) will be the mainstay of Moscow's future Strategic Missile Forces (RSMF) main attack force.

As I noted in a piece for the June issue of The Diplomat Magazine, Russia is in the middle of modernizing its strategic and nonstrategic nuclear warheads. According to the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, Moscow has currently 4,500 nuclear warheads, of which roughly 1,780 strategic warheads are deployed on missiles and at bomber bases. An additional 700 strategic warheads are kept in storage along with approximately 2,000 nonstrategic warheads. "Russia deploys an estimated 311 ICBMs that can carry approximately 1,050 warheads,” the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists further notes.

The publication also points out:

There are many uncertainties about the status and future of Russia’s nuclear arsenal. One is poor transparency, due to New START having discontinued public release of detailed aggregate numbers and the fact that Moscow does not publish comprehensive information about its nuclear forces. The increasing diversity of the Russian intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) force creates additional uncertainty.

In 2010, President Vladimir Putin announced a massive 20 trillion rubles military modernization project aimed to replace 70 percent of Soviet-era military hardware by 2020, including 50 new warships for the navy, hundreds of new fighter jets, thousands of new vehicles for the ground forces, and the complete modernization of Russia’s strategic nuclear forces.
According to the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*:

*In February 2012, then-Prime Minister (now President) Vladimir Putin stated that the military would receive more than 400 advanced ground and sea-based intercontinental ballistic missiles over the coming decade, or an average of 40 missiles per year.*

These numbers, however, could be difficult to sustain, least of all because of the financial costs involved as the *New York Times* points out:

*Russia, given its economic problems, probably cannot afford even the weapons that Mr. Putin has pledged to deliver by 2020. Six months ago, he said the country would add 50 ballistic missiles to its nuclear arsenal this year, and at least one senior Russian military official has indicated publicly that the Kremlin’s appetite exceeds its wallet.*

I also wrote about Russia’s difficulties in maintaining the current pace of military modernization, given the country’s current economic reality (see: “Is the World’s Deadliest Tank Bankrupting Russia”):

*Russia cannot afford military expenditures at such scale in the long-run […] The only way for Russia to currently finance its growing military expenditure is to tap into the country’s reserve fund – money the Kremlin put aside over the last few years when oil prices were high and meant to cushion the economy against shocks […] Yet, this calculation may perhaps be too optimistic […]*

According to a Russian-born scholar: “Russia has already spent more than half of its total military budget for 2015. At this rate, its reserve fund will be emptied before the end of the year.”

However, Russia is indeed in the process of retiring all Soviet-era ICBMs and replacing them with new weapon systems, a project that is about halfway complete, according to Western estimates. The estimated completion date for the replacement of all Soviet legacy systems remains 2022.

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


---

The Moscow Times – Moscow, Russia

OPINION/Op-Ed

**Inconvenient Truth Lies Behind Putin’s War Talk (Op-Ed)**

By Ivan Sukhov

June 17, 2015

At the recent Army 2015 forum President Vladimir Putin announced that Russia is prepared to deploy more than 40 new intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs).

A year or more ago, such a statement would have had immediate repercussions on the market. The ruble would have lost value, investors would have abandoned Russia and stock market commentators would have politely made it known that the head of state should be more guarded in his remarks to avoid jeopardizing the national economy.

But now, against the backdrop of the ongoing war in Ukraine and the possibility of even harsher sanctions against Russia, the market hardly reacted to the president’s rhetoric. What with
the annexation of Crimea and all that has happened since then, the world is probably tired of reacting to every new surprise from the Kremlin.

Frankly, Russians are also growing tired of surprises. Two or three years ago, Russians debated the government's charges against Pussy Riot and against marchers imprisoned for their role in the mass protest on Bolotnaya Ploshchad on May 6, 2012.

People wondered who or what had compelled then-President Dmitry Medvedev to announce that Putin would run in his place in the next presidential elections. The State Duma was only just getting started on its wave of prohibitive legislation and nobody could have then imagined a political rupture between Russia and the West caused by the forced revision of post-Soviet borders.

Who would have thought that Russia would spiral downward with such speed that the negative changes would fairly whistle in the ears as they sped past? If we had known what waited just around the corner — Crimea, Novorossia, the downing of Flight MH17, the threat of a major war — that time would have seemed like a walk in the park. It would not have been possible then to imagine what is happening right now.

Generally speaking, Russia seems to have a problem when it comes to imagination. On the one hand, it had enough imagination to firmly believe that this country was the military and political equal of the Soviet colossus that collapsed in 1991, that it was a full-fledged rival of the United States and that its domestic problems and difficulties with neighboring states all stemmed from that confrontation.

On the other hand, it lacked the imagination to "change its tune" in such a way as to attract, rather than repel neighbors such as Ukraine and Georgia that sought integration with the West.

Apparently, the Kremlin thinks that deploying 40 new ICBMs will somehow improve its image, just as the Soviet Union once used the same missiles in a misguided attempt to make itself more attractive.

However, the politicians of an earlier age — and even former Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev and former U.S. President John F. Kennedy, who brought the world to the brink of nuclear war during the Cuban Missile Crisis — had one distinct advantage over today's leaders: their proximity to the experience of World War II.

That experience made them understand that they could talk about nuclear weapons, and even shuffle them about at their opponent's doorstep, but under no circumstances could they use them.

The current generation of Russian politicians has no personal experience of war. Their notions of war boil down to an almost cartoonish image of the Soviet victory over Nazi Germany accompanied by the slogan "We can do it again!" That results from a lack of both knowledge and imagination.

Only a lack of knowledge could account for the suggestion that Russia repeat the loss of 28 million lives. And only a lack of imagination can explain why Putin would fail to consider the far greater loss of life that would result if, God forbid, those 40 new ICBMs were ever actually launched.

Russia's leaders have chosen a political path that involves surprising the home audience and scaring opponents, thereby forcing them to come up with ever more moves to keep the show rolling. Eventually, though, the protagonist will reach the critical climax of the drama when he will...
have to make a choice — either use his main “special effect,” as he has been threatening to do, or else quietly leave the stage.

Of course, if Putin decided not to run for re-election in 2018 and to allow the constitutional transfer of power through free elections — a key characteristic of stable and sound political systems — it would go a long way toward restoring what Russia has lost during its precipitous decline of the last 18 months.

Transferring power in that way would rank as a major accomplishment for Russia and put it back on the path of rapprochement with the West. Unfortunately, that is an unimaginable scenario for the ruling regime. As a result, the Russian people should prepare themselves for the Kremlin’s continued attempts to surprise them and frighten the rest of the world.

Lying was common among Soviet-era high school students. Many, including myself, would regularly hide bad grades from their parents and incomplete homework from their teachers. Sometimes the number of lies grew so great that the person telling them carried about a constant psychological burden. Countless times each of us feared that we were just minutes from getting caught in our lies: our knees literally went soft at the prospect, even while we desperately hoped some miracle would deliver us from exposure and provide at least a temporary reprieve.

What we as children could not then understand was that our adult listeners sometimes pretended to believe our naive lies just to protect us from the inevitable shame and discomfort a confrontation would cause.

The entire country of Russia is now in the same position as that schoolboy liar who has not mastered his lessons and has spun a web of lies to big and so broad that even he struggles to keep track of them all. The more Russia lies now about its power and might, the greater will be its fall when its real weakness is exposed.

That final reckoning is inevitable. There are no compassionate adults on hand who will go along with the charade, and deploying 40 new ballistic missiles will hardly make the world more disposed toward helping Russia save face.

Ivan Sukhov is a journalist who has covered conflicts in Russia and the CIS for the past 15 years.


Return to Top

Brookings – Washington, D.C.

OPINION/Order from Chaos

Putin’s Nuclear Saber-Rattling: What Is He Compensating For?

Steven Pifer

June 17, 2015

On Tuesday, Russian President Vladimir Putin visited a new “military-patriotic recreation park” near Moscow. His speech there made headlines, and not because the park is what one Western reporter called a “military version of Disneyland,” where kids can fire rocket-propelled grenades. (Sounds like the kind of park that I would have wanted to visit as a kid.)
Rather, President Putin used the odd venue to declare that the Russian military would add 40 new intercontinental ballistic missiles to its inventory. Putin’s announcement is nothing new. When he returned to the presidency in 2012, he approved a military modernization program calling for building 400 intercontinental ballistic missiles by the mid-2020s. His Tuesday statement simply reflects this year’s installment of that program. In fact, he may even have downsized the goal for this year—last December he said Russia would get more than 50 missiles in 2015. Many question whether the Russian economy, stressed by low oil prices and Western sanctions, can fulfill the Kremlin’s ambitious plans for modernizing its nuclear and conventional forces.

The United States has no particular reason for alarm about the missiles, provided that Russia remains within the limits of the 2010 New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START). That treaty limits the United States and Russia each to no more than 700 deployed strategic missiles and 1,550 deployed strategic warheads. Both sides are on track to meet the limits, which fully take effect in February 2018.

As the Russian military receives new missiles, it will retire a lot of old missiles. For example, nearly half of Russia’s deployed strategic warheads currently are on SS-18, SS-19 and SS-25 missiles, all of which are approaching or, in some cases, well past the end of their planned service life.

In fact, Russia now is well below the limit of 700 deployed strategic missiles. As of March 1, it had 515 deployed missiles—compared to 785 for the United States.

More worrisome than the new missiles is the fact that Putin, once again, seemed to feel a need to rattle his nuclear saber.

Late last summer, the Russian president said that people should remember that Russia has a large nuclear arsenal. What? Did he think that Washington somehow had missed that fact?

This March, in a television documentary, Putin said that, during the Russian military’s seizure of Crimea, he was ready to put nuclear forces on alert. Huh? Ukrainian military units in Crimea stayed in garrison and did not oppose the Russian forces. Moreover, Ukraine had no nuclear weapons. It gave up the world’s third largest nuclear arsenal in the 1990s—based on an assurance from Moscow that it would respect Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. And there was no external threat. NATO modestly increased its military presence in Poland and the Baltic states only well after Russia had annexed Crimea.

Putin’s loose talk encouraged others in the Russian government. Just days after the documentary aired, the Russian ambassador in Copenhagen threatened to target nuclear missiles at the Danish navy.

Why the nuclear chest-thumping?

The Russian president’s apparent infatuation with nuclear weapons could stem from several factors, some more troubling than others.

First, Putin seeks to project the image of Russia as a superpower. But Russia is not the Soviet Union, has a vulnerable, resource-dependent economy, and offers little ideological appeal. Lots of nuclear weapons provide the only thing that makes Russian power “super.”
Second, although Russia is modernizing its conventional forces, NATO maintains qualitative and quantitative edges, while China has greatly increased its conventional capabilities. Nuclear weapons offer an offset for conventional force disadvantages.

Third, Putin may see benefits in making the world think he is a little crazy when it comes to nuclear arms. That intimidates others, which seems to be one of his preferred tactics.

Fourth, and more alarmingly, the Russian president may see nuclear weapons not just as tools of deterrence, but as tools of coercion. That would be new and potentially dangerous.

Whatever Putin is trying to compensate for, one certainly hopes that the Russian president understands the awesome and dreadful power of nuclear arms and the consequences of their use.

His nuclear chest-thumping, on top of Russia’s seizure of Crimea and support for the conflict in eastern Ukraine, has consequences. Five years ago, many in NATO questioned the need to keep U.S. nuclear bombs in Europe. Today, that debate has largely gone silent, and plans are moving forward to modernize the bombs and their delivery aircraft.

Washington and NATO West should not be intimidated. That would only invite more saber-rattling. Western leaders should not let Putin's comments go unanswered. He wishes to be treated and respected as a responsible world leader. Russia’s aggression in Crimea and eastern Ukraine make that hard enough; he ought to be called out when he speaks irresponsibly about the most dangerous weapons in the world.

Steven Pifer is director of the Brookings Arms Control and Non-Proliferation Initiative and a senior fellow with the Center for 21st Century Security and Intelligence and the Center on the United States and Europe in the Foreign Policy program at Brookings. A former ambassador to Ukraine, Pifer’s career as a foreign service officer centered on Europe, the former Soviet Union and arms control.


Return to Top

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.