



USAF Center for Unconventional Weapons Studies (CUWS) Outreach Journal

CUWS Outreach Journal

26 June 2015

Feature Item: *“Project Atom: A Competitive Strategies Approach to Defining U.S. Nuclear Strategy and Posture for 2025–2050”*. Principal Authors; Clark Murdock, Samuel J. Brennen, Thomas Karako and Angela Weaver; a Report of the CSIS International Security Program; Published May 2015; 158 pages.

http://csis.org/files/publication/150601_Murdock_ProjectAtom_Web.pdf

Project Atom is a forward-looking, “blue-sky” review of U.S. nuclear strategy and posture in a 2025-2050 world in which nuclear weapons are still necessary. The report highlights and addresses the current deficit in national security attention paid to the continued relevance and importance of U.S. nuclear strategy and force posture, provides a new open-source baseline for understanding the nuclear strategies of other countries, and offers a credible, intellectually tested, and nonpartisan range of options for the United States to consider in revising its own nuclear strategy.

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Defense One – Washington, D.C.

Report: US Needs New Small Nuclear Bombs

CSIS' Clark Murdock argues that only such weapons can deter rogue states from seeking nukes of their own.

By Marcus Weisgerber

June 21, 2015

The United States should develop new low-yield, tactical nuclear weapons to deter countries from seeking nuclear weapons of their own, a new think-tank report says. It also argues that the U.S. should base more nuclear weapons around the world to better deter attacks.

“Forward deploying a robust set of discriminate nuclear response options conveys the message that the United States will ‘respond in kind’ and proportionately to nuclear attacks on its allies,” wrote Clark Murdock, a former Pentagon policy official who is now a senior adviser with the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

CSIS’ “Project Atom” report, provided to *Defense One* in advance of its June 22 release, was produced by Murdock and eight co-authors as a “zero-based, blue-sky” look at American’s nuclear arsenal. It challenges the Obama administration’s policy of seeking to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in national strategy, and argues for new bombs, missiles, and delivery platforms to replace the ones that have been around since the Cold War.

Murdock’s report comes just days after Russian President Vladimir Putin said Moscow would deploy 40 new intercontinental ballistic missiles. It also comes as the Obama administration faces a handful of decisions on nuclear modernization, including proposals to develop new weapons.

The report recommends the U.S. keep its “rough parity” with Russia and “nuclear superiority” over China. It also suggests the U.S. “maintain sufficient capability to cope simultaneously with nuclear-armed ‘regional rogues’” and “maintain a smaller stockpile, which is enabled by a responsive infrastructure.”

In the report, Murdock argues that the superiority of the American military will lead certain countries to seek nuclear arms as an asymmetric counter.

“The value of nuclear weapons as a ‘trump card’ for negating U.S. conventional power was enhanced by the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003 to prevent Saddam Hussein from acquiring a nuclear weapon,” the report says. “If the United States apparently believes that it can be deterred by an adversary’s nuclear weapons, why wouldn’t a nonnuclear ‘regional rogue’ want one?”

Authors’ Dissent

But not all of Murdock’s co-authors agree.

Barry Blechman and Russell Rumbaugh of the Stimson Center argue that the American military is so far superior to its global counterparts that “nuclear weapons add few options” to the U.S. palette. “Indeed, given U.S. conventional military superiority, nuclear weapons serve no military role for the United States beyond deterring nuclear attacks on itself and its allies,” they write in one of the report’s appendices.

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Blechman and Rumbaugh formed one of three think-tank teams — the others came from the Center for a New American Security and the National Institute for Public Policy — that contributed to the report, along with experts from CSIS and elsewhere. Under a methodology dubbed the “competitive strategies approach,” each of the teams produced their own analyses, which were discussed by the report’s authors and ultimately included as appendices. But the final report represents Murdock’s conclusions alone.

“As the author of the final report, my views were shaped and influenced by the debate among the independent think tank teams, but did not attempt to bridge the differences on fundamentals between the competing approaches,” he wrote.

Time to Rebuild?

After the end of the Cold War, the military seemed to lose focus on its nuclear mission. In 2007, the Air Force mistakenly flew nuclear weapons across the country on a B-52 bomber; the next year, it accidentally shipped ICBM fuses to Taiwan. There have also been cheating controversies throughout the Air Force and Navy nuclear ranks.

“The various scandals of the past decade were a symptom of the post-Cold War failure to believe in the nuclear mission, think seriously about deterrence, and invest and act accordingly,” said Thomas Karako, a senior fellow at CSIS and one of the Project Atom authors.

After a cheating scandal erupted under his watch, former Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel placed the nuclear forces under close watch. He began regular visits to ICBM, bomber, and submarine bases. And along with other senior Pentagon officials, he began talking about the importance of nuclear forces down the road.

“The next decade includes a swell of investments to recapitalize the triad and the weapons themselves,” Karako said. “We’re paying the piper now, with interest, for having taken a peace dividend of the 1990s and our nuclear allergy in the 2000s. But the real deficit has been in thinking seriously about nuclear deterrence.”

In coming months, the Pentagon is expected to award a contract for a stealthy new Air Force bomber, a plane that officials say will eventually carry nuclear weapons. The Navy is also planning to buy new ballistic-missile submarines to replace its Ohio class. But these projects are expensive, and Pentagon officials have questioned their affordability.

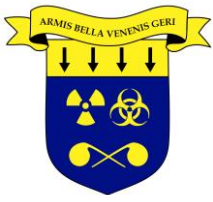
Murdock argues the Pentagon needs a more diverse suite of nuclear weapons. “In order to execute its Measured Response strategy, the nuclear forces for both deterrence and extended deterrence should have low-yield, accurate, special-effects options that can respond proportionately at the lower end of the nuclear continuum,” he writes.

This could also include a “smaller, shorter-range cruise missile that could be delivered by F-35s” including the ones that will someday operate from the Navy’s aircraft carriers, Murdock said.

Karako said, “Without completing the current slate of modernization programs, we can’t even sustain our current deterrent capabilities from the 20th century – let alone go further, adapting and expanding our force to the challenges of the 21st. Project Atom represents a thinking competition of sorts, for what that may require.”

<http://www.defenseone.com/management/2015/06/report-us-needs-new-small-nuclear-bombs/115765/?oref=d-topstory>

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Flightglobal.com – London, U.K.

US Report Calls for Dual-Capable F-35C and Tactical Nukes

By James Drew, Washington DC

22 June 2015

A US think tank has proposed installing nuclear weapons on the Lockheed Martin F-35C Joint Strike Fighter for deployment aboard aircraft carriers as a hedge against Russia and China.

Clark Murdock of the Center for Strategic and International Studies floated the idea of a return to carrier-based nuclear weapons in a new report published on 22 June.

The US government has committed to outfitting only the land-based F-35A with nuclear weapons as a “dual-capable aircraft,” namely the Boeing B61-12 thermonuclear guided bomb.

According to Murdock though, the F-35C should also receive nuclear weapons in the future as a “visible manifestation” of the United States’ commitment to protecting its allies.

“While I think bombers are an important hedge capability, what’s really important are nuclear-capable aircraft that can be forward-deployed on the territory of our allies,” he said at a report unveiling in Washington. The report, titled Project Atom, considers alternative nuclear strategies and force postures in the 2025 to 2050 time frame.

Murdock believes the “nuclear umbrella” the United States extends to its allies is more effective and reassuring when it is planted in allied territory instead of relying solely on long-range nuclear bombers, ballistic missiles and submarines.

According to the US Air Force, the first full-up B61-12 nuke will be assembled by 2020 and early aircraft integration activities with the F-35A are due to begin next year. The current time line would see the F-35A achieve dual-capable status by 2024 as part of the Block 4 configuration.

“We had 7,000 nuclear weapons forward-deployed in Europe at the pinnacle of the Cold War,” says Murdock. “In Asia, we had almost 1,000 deployed on the Korean Peninsula. About 3,000 total were in the Asia Pacific theatre.

“When the Soviets looked out at their borders, they didn’t just see a ring of American men and women in uniform, they saw a ring of nuclear weapons. They knew that any major, conventional aggression on their part would go nuclear because all the weapons were there.”

Murdock’s analysis also concludes that America needs to field range of nuclear weapons, at least one for every rung of the nuclear escalatory ladder, from low-yield, tactical nukes right up to those capable of mass destruction. The current US strategy favours a massive retaliatory response as the primary deterrent against a nuclear attack, leading some to question how the West will respond in the event of a lower-lever crisis.

Murdock as well as contributing author Elbridge Colby of the Center for a New American Security believe America needs a variety of air-delivered tactical nuclear weapons, including low collateral, enhanced radiation, earth penetration, electromagnetic pulse “and others as technology advances”.

“US nuclear weapons should and need to do more than threaten unhindered devastation,” says Colby. “It’s not very credible if the United States threatens to loose apocalyptic destruction that

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would call forth a matching response over something less than a very central or grave interest. It's a bad idea.

“I do think the US should reserve the right and the ability to use nuclear weapons first in extreme circumstances to respond to aggression.”

The conversation about the strategic nuclear force structure comes as the US Defense Department embarks on a major recapitalisation of its nuclear triad, which critics and supporters alike say is unaffordable.

It also comes as the West's former Cold War rivals Russia and China invest heavily in their nuclear infrastructure, while America's nuclear weaponry ages out.

The DOD is requesting billions of additional dollars from Congress to buy a new nuclear-capable bomber, submarine, ballistic missile, cruise missile and nuclear command-and-control apparatus.

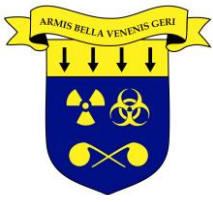
Table 1. Warhead yields

Designation	Warhead	Yield (Kilotons)
NUCLEAR		
B-29 Superfortress	Little Boy	15
B-29 Superfortress	Fat Man	21
Current Inventory		
ICBM-LGM-30G Minuteman III	Mk-12A	335
ICBM-LGM-30G Minuteman III	Mk-21/SERV	300
SLBM-UGM-1323A Trident II D5	Mk-4: 4 W76 MIRV	100
SLBM-UGM-1323A Trident II D5	Mk-4A: 4 W76-1 MIRV	100
SLBM-UGM-1323A Trident II D5	Mk-5: 4 W88 MIRV	455
B-52H Stratofortress	ALCM: W80-1	5-150
B-2A Spirit	B61-7/B61-11, B83-1	10-360/400, low-1,200
Nonstrategic-F-16 DCA, F-15E, Tornado	B61-3/B61-4	0.3-170/0.3-50
UNDER DEVELOPMENT (Nuclear)		
F-15E, F-16 DCA, Tornado, F-35A	B61-12	0.3-50
CONVENTIONAL		
Massive Ordnance Penetrator (MOP)—carried aboard B-2A and B-52H	GBU-57A/B	0.003

Center for Strategic and International Studies

<http://www.flightglobal.com/news/articles/us-report-calls-for-dual-capable-f-35c-and-tactical-413936/>

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Sputnik International – Russian Information Agency

US Not Planning to Redeploy Nuclear Weapons to Europe - US Envoy to NATO

US Permanent Representative to NATO Douglas Lute said that United States is not planning on redeploying nuclear weapons back to Europe.

23 June 2015

BRUSSELS (Sputnik) – The United States is not planning on redeploying nuclear weapons back to Europe, US Permanent Representative to NATO Douglas Lute said Tuesday.

“There is no decision-making underway in Washington to redeploy nuclear weapons that were once deployed, sort of 30 years ago, back in Europe 30 years ago,” Lute told journalists.

NATO’s 2014 Wales Summit Declaration outlines “deterrence, based on an appropriate mix of nuclear, conventional, and missile defense capabilities.”

Recent media reports cited US officials as saying the deployment of “counterforce” missiles in Europe as an option in light of increasing tensions with Russia.

Lute also pledged over 1,000 pieces of US military equipment, including hundreds of armored combat vehicles, to be deployed in Europe by the end of 2015. He said the deployment will not violate the NATO-Russia cooperation act.

Defense Secretary Ashton Carter, in turn, pledged 250 US tanks in seven Eastern European and Baltic nations, including Germany.

Carter’s and Lute’s comments follow NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg’s plan voiced in January to boost the alliance’s military presence in Eastern Europe.

Russia interprets the buildup of NATO forces in Eastern Europe as a threat to national security, arguing that it is an aggressive step that could increase tensions and destabilize the region.

<http://sputniknews.com/europe/20150623/1023742086.html>

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Business Insider – New York, NY

U.S. Nuclear Force Upgrade Affordable Despite High Cost: Study

By David Alexander, Reuters

June 24, 2015

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - An effort to modernize the U.S. nuclear force, from bombs to ballistic missile submarines, is affordable despite estimates the cost could be as high as \$1 trillion over 30 years, according to a new study by a Washington think-tank.

But paying for the nuclear modernization could mean trade-offs elsewhere, “thus, the issue is not affordability - rather, it is a matter of prioritization,” the authors of the study said in preliminary findings released late on Tuesday.

Todd Harrison and Evan Braden Montgomery, analysts at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments think-tank, estimated the annual cost of maintaining and upgrading the U.S. nuclear

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force would rise 56 percent to a peak of about \$26 billion by 2027 before falling back to current levels of about \$17 billion per year by 2039.

They said rebuilding the country's nuclear force was affordable because the cost would never exceed 5 percent of the total annual defense budget, currently at more than \$500 billion.

Five percent is half of what the Pentagon spends on healthcare each year, they said.

The question, they said, is: "Should nuclear forces, and by extension their modernization programs, be given a higher priority in the budget than other forces? This question is ultimately a matter of national security strategy."

The United States is in the process of overhauling all three legs of its nuclear triad of delivery systems, submarines, ballistic missiles and bombers, because the aging current systems are reaching the end of their service life.

The modernization program is expected to take some 25 years to complete. It comes at a time of tight budgets as the U.S. military is buying other expensive new weapons, including the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter and new aircraft carriers.

Harrison and Montgomery did not initially offer a specific dollar estimate of the cost of modernizing nuclear missiles, bombers, warheads and submarines.

The Congressional Budget Office estimated this year the cost would be about \$348 billion over the next 10 years, similar to findings issued by the Stimson Center think-tank in 2012.

Because modernization is expected to take 25 years or so, much of the work would fall outside the 10-year timeline of the CBO and Stimson studies.

The Center for Nonproliferation Studies in California estimated last year that the cost of nuclear modernization would top \$1 trillion over 30 years.

A congressionally mandated National Defense Panel concluded last year the modernization program was "unaffordable" under current budget constraints.

Reporting by David Alexander; Editing by Paul Simao

<http://www.businessinsider.com/r-us-nuclear-force-upgrade-affordable-despite-high-cost-study-2015-6>

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The San Diego Union-Tribune – San Diego, CA

Pentagon Official: Russian Nuke Talk 'Playing with Fire'

By ROBERT BURNS, Associated Press (AP) National Security Writer

June 25, 2015

WASHINGTON (AP) — Russia is "playing with fire" by suggesting it would threaten the use of nuclear weapons in territorial disputes, and the Obama administration believes this is part of a Russian intimidation campaign against the NATO alliance, the Pentagon's No. 2 official said Thursday.



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Robert Work, the deputy secretary of defense, said he's troubled by what he calls Russian provocations. He described Moscow's defense strategy as seeking to control the escalation of security tensions by raising the nuclear ante.

"Anyone who thinks that they can control escalation through the use of nuclear weapons is literally playing with fire," he told a House Armed Services subcommittee hearing on U.S. nuclear strategy and plans for nuclear modernization.

Work did not cite specific Russian statements but appeared to refer to President Vladimir Putin's comment in March that he had been ready to ensure that Russian nuclear forces were on high alert during tensions over Russian annexation of Crimea. Putin has made other moves to emphasize the readiness and power of the Russian nuclear arsenal.

Adm. James A. Winnefeld Jr., vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who testified alongside Work, criticized Russian talk of a potential nuclear escalation in Crimea as part of its "bluster and threats" against the West.

"It's very important that the Russians understand that far from being de-escalatory, first use of nuclear weapons in a conflict like that risks uncontrolled escalation," Winnefeld said.

"Senior Russian officials continue to make irresponsible statements regarding its nuclear forces, and we assess that they are doing it to intimidate our allies and us," Work said. "These have failed. If anything, they have really strengthened the NATO alliance solidarity."

Work was testifying on the administration's approach to modernizing the U.S. nuclear arsenal, which is hampered in some cases by outdated equipment and facilities, at a cost some say is unaffordable given budget constraints and other priorities.

Work said the administration still aspires to a world without nuclear weapons but first must deal with the fact that Russia and China are modernizing their nuclear arsenals.

<http://www.utsandiego.com/news/2015/jun/25/pentagon-official-russian-nuke-talk-playing-with/>

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Military.com

Pentagon Says It Needs \$270 Billion to Upgrade Nuclear Arsenal

By Kris Osborn

June 25, 2015

The United States will need to spend as much as \$18 billion per year for 15 years starting in 2021 to keep the nation's nuclear stockpile and the weapons and vehicles designed to deliver these weapons viable, Pentagon leaders told lawmakers.

"We've developed a plan to transition our aging system. Carrying out this plan will be an expensive proposition. It is projected to cost DoD an average of \$18 billion a year from 2021 through 2035," Deputy Defense Secretary Bob Work told members of the House Armed Services Committee at Thursday's hearing on nuclear deterrence.

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"The only existential threat to our nation is a nuclear attack. Nuclear weapons remain the most important mission we have," he added.

Work explained that keeping the country's nuclear enterprise modernized is especially important in light of the advancements made by Russia and China.

The U.S. Navy and Air Force have already seen problems creep up with operations and morale within their nuclear forces. Both services faced cheating scandals in recent years. The Air Force's two top leaders were fired in 2008 after former Defense Secretary Robert Gates faulted the leaders for losing focus on the nuclear mission.

The Pentagon is already pursuing several acquisition efforts to boost the nuclear triad, but many have high price tags and the Air Force and Navy are trying to figure out how to pay for them under restricted budgets.

The Air Force plans to announce a contract this summer for its next-generation bomber program, called the Long Range Strike Bomber, or LRS-B. The Navy is working with Congress to secure funding for its Ohio Replacement Program, a new-generation of nuclear-armed ballistic missile submarines slated to arrive by the early 2030s.

The new LRS-B planes are expected to cost about \$550 million each and the Navy hopes it can keep the cost of its Ohio Replacement submarines for under \$5 billion per boat. Many defense analysts have called those estimates ambitious after the services have had a record for going over budget in recent years on other big budget acquisition programs like the Joint Strike Fighter and the Ford-class aircraft carrier.

Congress has identified a new National Sea Based Deterrence fund designed to identify money to pay for the Ohio Replacement submarines, however most of the needed money for the fund has yet to be identified.

Rep. Joe Courtney, D-Conn., said Congress was working vigorously to identify money for the fund.

"We've created a mechanism within the budget process. We're ready and we're moving forward and we hope that the administration is going to help us solve this problem," he said.

Work said funding the Ohio Replacement Program was a critical priority, explaining that if it is paid for out of the existing shipbuilding budget – the funds needed will adversely impact other priority programs.

"This is our number one mission. We are going to pay for it (Ohio Replacement) no matter what. We appreciate the theory of the case behind this fund. There will have to be something like this to help us through," Work said.

Russian Saber Rattling

Work stressed that Russian, Chinese and North Korean nuclear weapons development continues to engender a dangerous and high-threat global environment.

"While we seek a world without nuclear weapons, we face the harsh reality that Russia and China are rapidly modernizing their already capable nuclear arsenals - and North Korea intends to develop nuclear weapons and the means to deliver them against the United States. A strong nuclear deterrent force will remain critical to our national security," Work said.



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Citing the fact that senior Russian officials continue to make irresponsible statements about their nuclear forces, Work said the U.S. and NATO were not intimidated but rather strengthened in solidarity.

"As Secretary Carter has recently said, Moscow's nuclear saber-rattling raises questions about Russia's commitment to strategic stability -- and the profound respect that world leaders in the nuclear age have shown in the brandishing of these weapons," he added.

The Russian military is currently modernizing its arsenal of ICBMs and advancing its nuclear weapons' technologies, Work said.

Work stressed that Russia continues to violate the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, or INF agreement, reached between President Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev in the late 1980s. The treaty is designed to eliminate nuclear and conventional ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with intermediate ranges identified as 500 to 5,500 kilometers.

"Russia continues to violate the INF treaty and our goal is to return them to compliance to preserve the viability of that treaty. We will not allow them to gain significant military advantage through INF violations," Work added.

Chinese nuclear modernization is also on the Pentagon's radar, Work explained. The Chinese are placing multiple warheads on their ICBMs, expanding their mobile ICBM force and continuing to pursue sea-based nuclear weapons.

"However, we assess that this modernization program (China) is designed to ensure they have a second strike capability and not to seek a quantitative nuclear parity with the United States or Russia," Work said.

When addressing the funding challenges expected to make the modernization of nuclear weapons a reality for DoD, Work said the stepped up effort would require about 7 percent of the Pentagon's annual budget.

"The choice right now is modernizing or losing deterrence. Without additional funding, sustaining this level of spending will require very, very hard choices that will impact the other parts of our defense portfolio," he explained.

HASC Chairman Rep. Mac Thornberry, R-Texas, said spending 7 percent of the Pentagon budget on its top security priority seems reasonable and appropriate.

"It seems to me that it is not unreasonable to say that it's in the ballpark," he said.

<http://www.military.com/daily-news/2015/06/25/pentagon-says-it-needs-270-billion-to-upgrade-nuclear-arsenal.html>

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TASS Russian News Agency – Moscow, Russia

Security Official Warns about Dangers of Anti-Missile Shield for Baltic States

If Baltic States like to be targets because of American weapons systems, it is their choice, deputy secretary of the Russian Security Council said

June 24, 2015

TURKA SETTLEMENT (Buryatia), June 24. /TASS/. Instead of counting on NATO weapons, the Baltic States should think about the threats they have created for their countries by deploying elements of the anti-missile shield, the deputy secretary of the Russian Security Council, Yevgeny Lukyanov, said on Wednesday.

"They'd better think about other things - the deployment of missile defence system elements that are targeting our strategic nuclear forces, that is where their problem is, as they become our targets," Lukyanov told reporters.

"If they like to be targets because of American weapons systems, it is their choice," he added. "The logic of the conflict is that nobody wins from a conflict, but somebody finds itself in between (the opposing parties)," he said, adding that this is exactly the situation the Baltic States could face.

He declined to assess potentials of heavy armaments that the United States intended to supply to Baltic states. "Unhealthy agitation of certain states, new members of the Atlantic bloc, is not substantiation of the existence of some threats allegedly coming from us," he said.

<http://tass.ru/en/russia/803499>

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Sputnik International – Russian Information Agency

Global Missile Defense Systems Target Russia, China – Russian Security Head

Russian Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev said that Global missile defense systems are directed against Russia and China.

25 June 2015

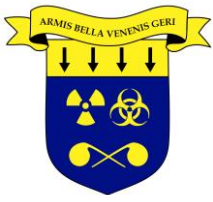
ULAN UDE (Sputnik) – Global missile defense systems are directed against Russia and China, Russian Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev said Thursday.

"We know for sure that the global system of missile defense complexes are directed against Russia and China, though they tell us that they are being created against Iran and North Korea," Patrushev told journalists.

Patrushev said that the West tells Russia there is no threat from NATO expansion to the east or from global missile defense systems.

"We're told that there isn't a threat, but how is it there is no threat when there is," Patrushev added.

Russia has repeatedly expressed concern over the creation of an US-designed ballistic missile defense system in Europe, approved in 2010, during a NATO summit in Lisbon. A range of European countries, including Poland, Romania, Spain and Turkey, agreed to deploy elements of this system on their territories.



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On April 6, the US Defense Department announced it would locate 60 percent of its military fleet to the Pacific-Indian Ocean area, including warships fitted with the Aegis ballistic missile defense system.

China specifically objected, saying the deployment of Aegis systems in the Pacific could jeopardize its strategic deterrent.

NATO claims the systems are aimed primarily at countering threats from North Korea and Iran.

<http://sputniknews.com/military/20150625/1023832558.html>

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Sputnik International – Russian Information Agency

US-Russia Terms at Stake as Missile Defence Sites Deployed in E Europe

US readiness to deploy missile defense systems in Poland and Romania violates the US-Russia Intermediate-Range Nuclear treaty.

25 June 25, 2015

WASHINGTON (Sputnik) — The United States remains on schedule to finish construction of the missile defense facilities in Romania and Poland, US Assistant Secretary of State for Arms Control, Verification, and Compliance Frank Rose said on Thursday.

“We are on track to complete deployment of an AEGIS ashore site in Romania as part of the phase two of EPAA [the European Phased Adaptive Approach] later this year,” Rose stated at the United States and Global Missile Defense Conference in Washington, DC.

#missiledefense is "not an attempt to alter the strategic balance" with #Russia, according to Frank Rose #ACDefense pic.twitter.com/TTLP8I4Ily

— Robbie Gramer (@RobbieGramer) June 25, 2015

He explained this Romanian site, combined with ballistic missile defense (BMD) capable ships in the Mediterranean, will enhance coverage of NATO from short- and medium-range ballistic missiles launched from the Middle East.

Rose added that the construction of an AEGIS ashore site in Poland is also planned to be completed on time.

“[US] President [Barack] Obama’s Fiscal Year 2016 budget request designates approximately \$200 million for the establishment of the site including construction which will begin early next year allowing us to remain on schedule to have the site completed by 2018,” he said.

Rose noted that Poland’s facility when combined with other EPAA assets will provide ballistic missile defense coverage of all NATO European territory.

"Given recent events the alliance needs to take a hard look with regard to its security posture vis-a-vis Russia."-- Asst Sec'y Frank Rose

— Barry Pavel (@BarryPavel) June 25, 2015

Issue No.1171, 26 June 2015

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The EPAA is meant to provide protection from short- and medium-range ballistic missile threats originating in the Middle East, primarily Iran.

Russia, however, sees the EPAA as a part of an ongoing policy of extending US and NATO influence eastward through Europe and Eurasia.

US authorities are reportedly considering deploying missiles to Europe to counter Russia's alleged violations of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty. Russian officials have pointed out that US missile defense launchers stationed in Poland and Romania are in violation of the INF treaty.

<http://sputniknews.com/us/20150625/1023849723.html>

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TASS Russian News Agency – Moscow, Russia

Prototype of Russia's New Heavy Ballistic Missile Delayed for Several Months — Source

The warhead will have a mass of ten tons. Its likely flight paths towards potential targets will lie over the North or South Pole

June 26, 2015

MOSCOW, June 26. /TASS/. A prototype of the Sarmat heavy intercontinental ballistic missile will be built no earlier than in October, and not June as was planned earlier, a source in the military-industrial complex told TASS on Friday.

"According to the adjusted schedule, a prototype of Sarmat will be ready at the end of September or beginning of October. The red line that cannot be crossed is the end of October," the source said.

Another source in the military-industrial complex told TASS earlier that a prototype of the new missile will be ready in May or June.

More than 60% of the missile's element have already been manufactured at the Krasnoyarsk Machine-Building Plant, the source said. "The plant is doing its work, it all now depends on whether contractors will deliver components on time," the source added. Individual components and assemblies, including engines, are now undergoing production tests, he noted.

In 2016 the phase of flight tests will begin, a source in the defense industry told TASS earlier. The purpose is to check the operation of the powder pressure accumulator and the missile's operation during liftoff and immediately after it leaves the silo.

"The prototype will have precisely the same size and mass as the future combat version. Instead of a MIRV warhead the prototype will carry a dummy. The booster will not be turned on. Sarmat will rise several dozen meters above the silo to fall nearby," the source said.

On February 21, Deputy Defense Minister Yury Borisov said Sarmat will have several configurations. The warhead will have a mass of ten tons. Its likely flight paths towards potential targets will lie over the North or South Pole.

The new-generation liquid propellant ICBM Sarmat is to replace the world's largest strategic missile R-36M2 Voyevoda, which is close to the life cycle expiration date. Earlier, strategic missile force



USAF Center for Unconventional Weapons Studies (CUWS) Outreach Journal

commander Sergey Karakayev said the strategic missile Sarmat was being developed by a group of defense industry enterprises under the Makeyev State Missile Center.

<http://tass.ru/en/russia/804103>

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Sputnik International – Russian Information Agency

US Military Strength 'Tempt's' Use of Nuclear Weapons by Adversaries

As the US conventional military superiority forces other nations to develop and consider deploying limited nuclear weapons, country aims to develop smaller, tactical nuclear weapons, former Pentagon official and US strategic analyst Clark Murdock said on Monday.

22 June 2015

WASHINGTON (Sputnik) — The strength of the US conventional military forces has lowered the threshold for its potential adversaries to use nuclear weapons, former Pentagon official and US strategic analyst Clark Murdock said on Monday.

“The implication of the conventional superiority of the United States, to me, this lowers the nuclear threshold, because it convinces our would-be adversaries to increase their reliance on nuclear weapons,” Murdock said in a Center for Strategic and International Studies panel discussion on the US nuclear posture.

Murdock argued that if US conventional military superiority encouraged other nations to develop and consider deploying limited nuclear weapons, “we have to counter that by denying them the attractiveness of a nuclear response to our conventional superiority.”

To counter other nations’ nuclear posture, Murdock advocated the US development of smaller, tactical nuclear weapons. He explained a more flexible US nuclear arsenal enables the US to leverage a limited nuclear response, below a large-scale nuclear exchange.

CSIS

Murdock- A robust forward deployment of nuclear forces is key to the future success of nuclear posture. <http://cs.is/1QLXdHq> #CSISLive

8:40 AM - 22 Jun 2015

Murdock currently leads several track-two dialogues on nuclear policy issues with US allies, and led a group of strategic analysts in producing a set of recommendations for the US nuclear posture from 2025 to 2050.

The US nuclear posture report, released on Monday, argues that the faster rate of nuclear proliferation was tied directly to US conventional military superiority.

Non-nuclear states including Iran, Iraq, Syria and Libya pursue nuclear weapons “as a counter or offset to US military prowess,” according to the report. Similarly, nuclear weapons nations, such as Russia and China, are pressed “to increase their reliance on nuclear weapons.”

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According to the most recent US Nuclear Posture Review, the United States reserves the right to initiate the use of nuclear weapons to defend US or allies' vital interests.

Russia similarly reserves the right to use nuclear weapons when facing an existential nuclear, conventional or biological threat, according to the December 2014 Russian military doctrine.

Moscow has specifically warned the United States that it could levy a nuclear response if fundamentally threatened by US conventional forces, such as the proposed US Prompt Global Strike program.

<http://sputniknews.com/military/20150622/1023711341.html>

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SFGate.com – San Francisco, CA

National Security Laboratory Selects First Woman as Director

Monday, June 22, 2015

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) — The largest U.S. national security research and development laboratory announced Monday that for the first time a woman has been selected to run its operations.

Jill Hruby will take over next month as president and director of Sandia National Laboratories, one of the most high-profile positions in U.S. science with responsibilities that cover nuclear weapons, energy and environmental technology.

"I embrace the opportunity to maintain the U.S. nuclear deterrent and lead Sandia in solving the difficult security challenges we face as a nation," Hruby said.

Her appointment also makes her the first woman to lead any of the nation's three national security labs, Sandia, Los Alamos and Lawrence Livermore.

She said she's proud to hold the distinction, "but mostly I'm proud to represent the people and work of this great lab."

Hruby, of Ann Arbor, Michigan, most recently served as a vice president overseeing Sandia's efforts in nuclear, biological and chemical security.

She replaces Paul Hommert, who announced his retirement recently after serving since 2010.

Sandia Corp. board of directors Chairman Rick Ambrose announced the move, saying Hruby has "the right combination of technical expertise and strategic vision to lead Sandia into the future."

Ambrose also serves as executive vice president of Lockheed Martin Space Systems.

The laboratory is a wholly owned subsidiary of Lockheed Martin Corp. and a contractor for the U.S. Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration.

Hruby is a graduate of Purdue University in Indiana.

<http://www.sfgate.com/business/technology/article/Sandia-National-Laboratories-to-name-1st-woman-as-6341673.php>

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The Miami Herald – Miami, FL

China May Be Trying to Hide its Submarines in the South China Sea

By Stuart Leavenworth, McClatchy Foreign Staff

June 22, 2015

BEIJING -- For months, China's visible construction of artificial islands and military facilities in the South China Sea has alarmed U.S. officials and many of China's neighbors.

What is happening under the water is also worrisome, say several defense and security analysts.

China has a growing fleet of nuclear submarines armed with ballistic missiles. The expansion of its claim on the South China Sea may be intended to create a deep-water sanctuary – known in military parlance as a “bastion” – where its submarine fleet could avoid detection.

“The South China Sea would be a good place to hide Chinese submarines,” said Carl Thayer, a U.S.-born security specialist who has taught at the University of New South Wales and other Australian institutions. The sea floor is thousands of meters deep in places, with underwater canyons where a submarine could easily avoid detection.

Conflicts in the South China Sea are expected to be a major focus of annual U.S.-Sino talks that start Tuesday in Washington, including meetings between U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and Chinese Vice Premier Wang Yang.

China last week announced that it was winding down its expansion of artificial islands in the South China Sea, but the statement wasn't warmly received by U.S. officials.

Daniel Russel, assistant U.S. secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific affairs, noted that China continues to build facilities on the islands, including military installations, a move that he said was “troubling.”

“The prospect of militarizing those outposts runs counter to the goal of reducing tensions.” Russel said Thursday during a briefing in Washington. “That's why we consistently urge China to cease reclamation, to not construct further facilities, and certainly not to further militarize outposts in the South China Sea.”

The South China Sea – bounded by Vietnam, China, Taiwan, Japan, the Philippines and Malaysia – is one of the world's most important shipping lanes. China asserts it holds maritime rights to 80 percent of the sea, a claim that other countries have vigorously contested.

According to Thayer, Beijing sees the South China Sea as a strategic asset because it guards China's southern flank, including a submarine base in Sanya, on China's Hainan island. The People's Liberation Army Navy has built underwater tunnels there to quietly dock some of its submarines, including those that carry ballistic missiles.

As of 2014, China had 56 attack submarines, including five that were nuclear powered. It also has at least three nuclear-powered submarines capable of launching ballistic missiles, and is planning to add five more, according to a Pentagon report released last year.

In an April media briefing in Washington, a top U.S. Navy official said the Pentagon is watching China's ballistic submarines “very carefully.”

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“Any time a nation has developed nuclear weapons and delivery platforms that can range the homeland, it’s a concern of mine,” said Adm. William Gortney, the commander of the U.S. Northern Command. Gortney quickly added that China has a policy of “no first use” of nuclear weapons, “which gives me a little bit of a good news picture there.”

In recent decades, China has worked to build up a nuclear deterrence capability in the shadow of that developed by the United States and Russia. Its submarine program is a major part of that push. Since submarines can often avoid detection, they are less vulnerable to a first-strike attack than land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles or nuclear bombers.

Currently, China’s JL2 submarine ballistic missiles lack the capacity of reaching the continental United States from the South China Sea. But China hopes to improve the range of those missiles in coming years, which is why analysts think China sees the sea as a future “bastion” for its nuclear submarines.

Bernard D. Cole, a professor at the National War College and a retired U.S. Navy captain, says the Soviets developed the submarine bastion strategy during the Cold War. A spy ring alerted the Soviets to the fact that the United States was easily tracking their submarines in the open ocean. So the Soviets created heavily mined and fortified zones for their subs to operate as close to the United States as possible. One was in the White Sea of northwest Russia and the other was in the Sea of Okhotsk, north of Japan, said Cole.

Chinese submarines are known for being relatively noisy – and thus easy to detect – making it difficult for them to slip into the western Pacific without being detected. But once China improves the range of its missiles, it won’t need to move its submarines out of the South China Sea to pose a retaliatory threat to the United States.

“My own conclusion, right now, is that China will adopt a bastion strategy in the South China Sea,” Cole said in an email, noting he was expressing his personal views, not those of the National War College. China’s bastion strategy, he said, will bank on fairly rapid development of ballistic missiles with the range to reach the United States.

U.S. officials are concerned that China might unilaterally declare an “air defense identification zone” in the South China Sea that would restrict military overflights, including U.S. planes attempting to track China’s submarines. Last month, when a U.S. surveillance plane carrying a CNN crew flew over some of the islands, the Chinese navy issued urgent warnings to back off, a possible sign of things to come.

The two-day U.S.-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue, an annual exchange between the two countries, starts Tuesday in Washington. China and U.S. officials will discuss trade and economic issues, and the U.S. side will likely raise concerns over recent cyber theft of federal employee data, thought to originate from China.

In the run-up to the meeting, Chinese state media has been playing down tensions between the two countries.

“Following months of diplomatic clashes over the South China Sea, Sino-U.S. relations seem to be headed for calmer waters . . .” China Daily reported Friday.

Thayer and other analysts say China has multiple reasons for building its artificial islands in the South China Sea. One purpose is to intimidate neighbors, particularly Vietnam and the Philippines.



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“China hopes to put pressure on the Philippines so it will not provide the U.S. with a rotational (military) presence,” said Thayer. In May of 2016, Filipinos will vote in a presidential election that could determine the future of U.S. military access to the Philippines.

<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/nation-world/world/article25161682.html>

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The Korea Times – Seoul, South Korea

Expert Calls for US Nuke Weapons Deployment Here

By Yi Whan-woo

June 23, 2015

The United States should deploy nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula to counter North Korea's military threats, according to an expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), a Washington D.C.-based think tank.

Speaking on Radio Free Asia (RFA), Tuesday, Clark Murdoch, a senior advisor at CSIS, said South Korea may want U.S. nuclear arms, such as bombers carrying nuclear missiles, deployed on its soil. He also said that Seoul may develop such weapons on its own.

RFA said Murdoch's comment came during a roundtable discussion in Washington D.C., Monday, while referring to a CSIS report released in May.

Murdoch is a co-author of the 158-page report titled, "Project Atom: A Competitive Strategies Approach to Defining U.S. Nuclear Strategy and Posture for 2025-2050."

The report predicted the Kim Jong-un regime is likely to maintain power at least until 2030.

It claimed a collapsing state such as North Korea could use nuclear weapons as "a last-gasp, in-your-face act of anger and revenge."

It also said Pyongyang will maintain a small arsenal of nuclear weapons, including miniaturized nuclear warheads that can be mounted on inter-continental ballistic missiles.

The report raised concerns over Washington's limited access to gain intelligence on North Korea's nuclear employment and capabilities.

http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2015/06/485_181480.html

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Kyodo News – Minato, Japan

N. Korea Suspected of Providing Iran with Missile Components

By Tomotaro Inoue, Kyodo

June 26, 2015

WASHINGTON -- North Korea is suspected of having provided Iran with engine components for ballistic missiles, violating a U.N. ban on activities related to such weapons, a diplomatic source familiar with North Korean matters said Friday.

The source said it is likely North Korea has already begun disassembling more than 10 engines and has shipped some of the parts to Iran, prompting the United States and other Middle Eastern countries to step up relevant surveillance.

The U.N. Security Council has adopted resolutions prohibiting North Korea and Iran from being involved in projects related to the development of ballistic missiles that can potentially deliver a nuclear weapon.

<http://english.kyodonews.jp/news/2015/06/360502.html>

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The Moscow Times – Moscow, Russia

Russia Pushing Through Sale of Advanced Missile Systems to Iran

The Moscow Times

June 22, 2015

Russia could sell Iran advanced Almaz-2500 anti-aircraft missile systems after Tehran withdraws a lawsuit against Moscow for canceling a previous weapons delivery, newspaper Kommersant reported Monday citing an unidentified Kremlin source.

Such a sale would increase Iran's ability to repel air attacks and — critics say — protect any nuclear facilities that they are deployed to protect.

Iran purchased five S-300 air defense systems in 2007, but then-President Dmitry Medvedev froze the delivery three years later as a sign of good will toward the West amid negotiations on Iran's nuclear program.

But with Russia's relationship with the West on the rocks over Ukraine, Moscow and Tehran are revisiting the sale.

After negotiations yielded a preliminary deal on Iran's nuclear program in April, Russian President Vladimir Putin lifted Medvedev's ban on selling the weapons to Tehran, signaling that a delivery may be imminent. However, an obstacle remains: a \$4 billion lawsuit filed by Iran against Russian state arms export agency Rosobornexport for violating the 2007 contract.

Progress is being made to resolve the issue, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Morteza Sarmadi told Russian news agency Sputnik on Sunday. In recent negotiations the two sides discussed amendments to the 2007 contract and mechanisms for lifting the lawsuit, he said.

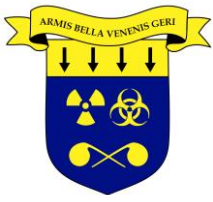
“The termination of these proceedings will be the first step toward implementing the transaction, this is fundamental”, Kommersant quoted an unidentified Kremlin official as saying.

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The two sides are also discussing new prices for the anti-air missiles, Sarmadi told Sputnik.

According to the Kommersant report, the S-300 units that Tehran purchased in 2007 have since gone out of production, and in February the head of state defense technology holding Rostec, Sergei Chemezov, offered up the more advanced Almaz-2500 systems instead.

<http://www.themoscowtimes.com/business/article/russia-pushing-through-sale-of-advanced-missile-systems-to-iran/524140.html>

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RT (Russia Today) – Moscow, Russia

'Strategic Nuclear Weapons Have No Military Use' – British General

June 24, 2015

Nuclear weapons are outdated and the British government only wants to replace Trident to keep up with other nuclear powers, according to a former Gulf War commander.

Quoted in a new report, Major General Patrick Cordingley, who commanded UK forces in the First Gulf War, argued "*strategic nuclear weapons have no military use.*"

"It would seem the government wishes to replace Trident simply to remain a nuclear power alongside the other four permanent members of the UN Security Council.

"This is misguided and flies in the face of public opinion; we have more to offer than nuclear bombs."

The report by the Nuclear Information Service and the Nuclear Education Trust, '*British military attitudes to nuclear weapons and disarmament,*' offers a major insight into military thinking on Trident.

The report found that while a majority of former military personnel interviewed support the replacement of Trident, that view is by no means unanimous. Many are expressing concerns about the cost of nuclear weapons and their use as political rather than defensive tools.

A number of interviewees downplayed concerns over the safety of nuclear weapons, a position which is again not unanimous across the armed forces.

Nuclear whistleblower William McNeilly was recently discharged from the Royal Navy after raising safety and security concerns in an extensive dossier he published online in May.

After his discharge, McNeilly published a fresh nine-page document rebuking what he called naval "*spin doctors*" over their response to his findings.

"It is shocking that some people in a military force can be more concerned about public image than public safety," he said.

In his original dossier, McNeilly raised up to 30 issues regarding nuclear weapons safety and base security.

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The Navy immediately claimed McNeilly's allegations were "*subjective and unsubstantiated*" and "*factually incorrect or the result of misunderstanding or partial understanding.*"

<http://rt.com/uk/269356-trident-outdated-military-nuclear/>

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

Nato to Review Nuclear Weapon Policy as Attitude to Russia Hardens

Alliance to discuss military exercises and missile guidelines in development harking back to Washington v Moscow rhetoric during cold war

By Ewen MacAskill in Brussels

Wednesday, 24 June 2015

Nato, in an echo of the cold war, is preparing to re-evaluate its nuclear weapons strategy in response to growing tension with Russia over Ukraine, sources at the organisation have said.

Updating Nato's nuclear policy would amount to an escalation in tit-for-tat exchanges with Russia since the Ukraine crisis erupted last year. Expressing concern over President Vladimir Putin's announcement last week that Russia was to buy 40 new intercontinental ballistic missiles, Nato officials also said there was alarm over Russian rhetoric on nuclear weapons and the extent to which such weapons are involved in military exercises.

A Nato diplomat said: "There is very real concern about the way in which Russia publicly bandies around nuclear stuff. So there are quite a lot of deliberations in the alliance about nuclear [weapons], but it is being done very slowly and deliberately. We need to do due diligence on where we are."

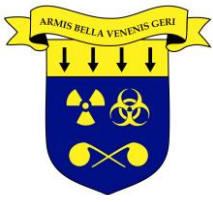
The issue is being discussed on the margins of a two-day Nato ministerial meeting that began in Brussels on Wednesday. But the US is keen to get the issue on the table and a meeting of Nato's ministerial nuclear planning group is likely to be held later this year – earlier than planned – to discuss refreshing the nuclear doctrine.

Among potential topics is an enhanced role for nuclear weapons in Nato military exercises. Also up for discussion would be how to better interpret Russian warnings about nuclear weapons: whether they should be taken seriously or whether these amount to no more than rhetoric.

Speaking on the sidelines of the summit, British defence secretary Michael Fallon said Russia's "nuclear messaging is not helpful". He added: "It is important we understand its implications for the alliance".

Since the peak of the cold war, the US and Russia have slashed their nuclear arsenals but Russia still has an estimated 1,582 strategic warheads deployed on 515 missiles and bombers, while the US has 1,597 deployed on 785. There is no suggestion at Nato headquarters of a return to the days of nuclear arms races and the doctrine of mutually assured destruction, and the US has specifically ruled out returning cruise missiles to Europe.

But Nato officials, military and diplomats are raising worries that the US-led alliance's existing nuclear posture reflects the thinking of a decade ago when Russia was viewed as a potential partner. That strategy badly needed to be refreshed, they suggested. Although Nato nuclear



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exercises are classified, the organisation does, like Russia, conduct them. The concern at Nato is that the role of nuclear weapons in such exercises needs to be upgraded to take account of the changed relationship with Moscow.

Nato's secretary general, Jens Stoltenberg, speaking at a press conference on Wednesday, said the nuclear issue was serious and had to be treated with caution. "The nuclear activities, the investments of Russia in new nuclear capabilities, and the exercise activities by Russia in the nuclear domain is part of the global picture where we see a more assertive Russia."

The American ambassador to Nato, Douglas Lute, briefing journalists in Brussels on Tuesday, said: "There is a general assessment under way in Washington and a parallel assessment here in Nato to look at all the possible implications of what Russia says about nuclear weapons, its doctrine and so forth, its pronouncements, its rhetoric, and what we actually see on the ground in terms of development and deployment." Nato, he added, had not yet reached any conclusions or decided on "what are the actions that are implied in our response".

Putin last week announced plans to purchase 40 intercontinental ballistic missiles and complained of US acts in eastern Europe as amounting to the most aggressive since the cold war. Russia argues that the expansion of Nato into eastern Europe and its courting of Ukraine has been a repeated provocation.

A Nato official said: "Deterrence, based on an appropriate mix of nuclear, conventional and missile defence capabilities is a core element of our overall strategy. We cannot go into detail on our nuclear discussions. These are internal, sensitive and classified matters. What I can say is that Nato continuously assess all aspects of Russia's military activities, including Russia's nuclear rhetoric."

A second Nato official said: "The Russian leadership is rhetorically lowering the threshold when it comes to nuclear weapons and this is something which should not be done. It largely wasn't done even during the cold war.

"This kind of nuclear threat was something which we found quite surprising, quite negative and is something we believe should be avoided but we are closely examining it carefully as part of the overall examination of Russia's activities in Europe and how we at least in Nato must unfortunately react."

Fallon announced on Wednesday evening that the UK is to double its spending on training Ukrainian troops from £3m to £6m.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/24/nato-to-review-nuclear-weapon-policy-as-attitude-to-russia-hardens>

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Arutz Sheva (Israel National News) - Beit El, Israel

Russia, Like China, Tests Nuclear Vehicle to Beat US Defenses

Russia holds new test on hypersonic vehicle able to beat US systems and deliver nuclear strike, following China's footsteps.

By Ari Yashar

June 25, 2015

America apparently has reason to worry; after China earlier this month conducted successful tests on a new hypersonic vehicle able to dodge missile defenses and deliver a nuclear strike, Russia just recently conducted a test of its own on a similar hypersonic attack vehicle.

Russia has been developing the new Yu-71 vehicle for several years and has been keeping the project under tight wraps. Just this month *Jane's Intelligence Review* revealed the scope of the covert program, as reported by the *Washington Free Beacon* on Thursday.

The most recent flight test of the strike vehicle was held in February, when a prototype of it was released from a SS-19 missile launched from the Dombarovsky missile base in eastern Russia. While the test reportedly concluded unsuccessfully it shows the supreme importance the project - entitled Project 4202 - holds for the Russians, according to the report.

Project 4202 has been ramped up in the last five years to beat US missile defenses; hypersonic vehicles like China's new Wu-14 that is also in development can reach an estimated speed of ten times the speed of sound, or about 7,680 miles per hour, and are highly maneuverable, thereby thwarting American missile defenses which are based on a fixed trajectory.

The *Jane's* report indicates Russia will be able to produce up to 24 nuclear-capable Yu-71s by 2020 to 2025, emphasizing that "Russia appears to be considering the option of deploying its hypersonic system in a nuclear, as well as conventional, configuration."

Pavel Podvig, a co-author of the *Jane's* report, warned that the new vehicle could "seriously damage arms control efforts."

That statement comes on the heels of a new study from the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), which warned that unless the US changes its policy and modernizes its nuclear arsenal it will lose its deterrence ability and lead to global nuclear proliferation - and that Russia and China will grow into key threats with their rapidly advancing nuclear programs.

Regarding the new Russian hypersonic vehicle test, a Pentagon spokeswoman declined to provide the *Washington Free Beacon* with a comment.

Former Pentagon official Mark Schneider, who closely tracks Russian strategic weapons programs, told the paper that the Chinese hypersonic program has the edge on Russia, noting, "both are reportedly nuclear-oriented and the Chinese program seems more successful."

"The Russian program was clearly described as strategic in nature," said Schneider. "The Obama administration talks about the Chinese threat, but very little about the Russian threat, so our only sources of information are the Russian press."

The US also has a hypersonic missile under development as part of its Prompt Global Strike



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program, although that program will feature conventional instead of nuclear weapons and aims to be able to precisely hit targets anywhere on earth within minutes.

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/197270#.VYwvDzYw9Y8>

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TASS Russian News Agency – Moscow, Russia

Russia Developing System Capable of ‘Switching Off’ Foreign Military Satellites

"The system will be used against cruise missiles and will suppress satellite-based radio location systems. It will actually switch off enemy weapons", Russia's KRET Deputy CEO said

June 25, 2015

MOSCOW, June 25. /TASS/. Russia's Radio-Electronic Technologies Group (KRET) is developing a fundamentally new electronic warfare system capable of suppressing cruise missile and other high-precision weaponry guidance systems and satellite radio-electronic equipment, KRET Deputy CEO Yuri Mayevsky told TASS on Thursday.

"The system will target the enemy's deck-based, tactical, long-range and strategic aircraft, electronic means and suppress foreign military satellites' radio-electronic equipment," Mayevsky said.

The system will be mounted on ground-based, air-and seaborne carriers, he added.

"It will not be based on satellites as this is prohibited by international rules and we comply with this rule," he said.

Adviser to the KRET first deputy CEO Vladimir Mikheyev told TASS the integrated multifunctional electronic warfare system designed to target enemy aerospace vehicles would operate within the air defense and missile shield control contour.

"It will fully suppress communications, navigation and target location and the use of high-precision weapons," Mikheyev said.

"The system will be used against cruise missiles and will suppress satellite-based radio location systems. It will actually switch off enemy weapons."

The system's ground component will be tested soon, he said. "Ground tests are now going on in workshops. At the end of the year, the system's component will leave the factory gates for trials at testing ranges," he said.

<http://tass.ru/en/russia/803788>

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Tasnim News Agency – Tehran, Iran

Nuclear Talks' Progress below Expectations: Iranian Negotiator

June 22, 2015

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Progress in drafting the text of a comprehensive nuclear deal between Iran and the group of six world powers falls below expectations, top Iranian negotiator Abbas Araqchi said.

"Differences on the text of the agreement have narrowed to some extent, but the progress (in the talks) falls short of our expectations," Araqchi, also a deputy foreign minister, told IRIB in Vienna on Monday.

He made the comments before leaving for Luxembourg to join Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif for higher-level negotiations.

Araqchi and his colleague Majid Takht Ravanchi, have been holding regular daily meetings with the European Union deputy foreign policy chief, Helga Schmid, in Vienna since June 17 in a push to finalize the text of a comprehensive nuclear deal between Tehran and the Group 5+1 (Russia, China, the US, Britain, France and Germany).

Elsewhere in the interview, Araqchi described the text of the deal as "complicated", adding that it covers diverse "technical, legal and political" aspects.

On a self-imposed end-June deadline for striking an accord, the Iranian negotiator said June 30 is not a cut-off date and the parties will keep negotiating for some more days if necessary.

On Monday, Foreign Minister Zarif, who is also Iran's chief nuclear negotiator, arrived in Luxemburg to meet Britain's Philip Hammond, Germany's Frank-Walter Steinmeier, France's Laurent Fabius and the European Union's foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini to discuss the text of the deal.

Diplomatic negotiations on finalizing the text of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) will continue steadily until at least the self-imposed deadline of June 30.

On April 2, Iran and the Group 5+1 (alternatively known as the P5+1 or E3+3) reached a framework nuclear agreement in Lausanne, Switzerland, with both sides committed to push for a final deal until the end of June.

<http://www.tasnimnews.com/english/Home/Single/778243>

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Mehr News Agency – Tehran, Iran

Parl. Passes Nuclear Bill

Tuesday, 23 June 2015

TEHRAN, Jun. 23 (MNA) – Iran's Parliament has approved a plan that would oblige the government to preserve nuclear rights and achievements .

Of the 244 Iranian lawmakers who attended an open session of Parliament on Tuesday, 213 voted in favor, 10 against and 6 abstained on the details of a bill that would oblige the government to safeguard the nation's nuclear rights and achievements .



USAF Center for Unconventional Weapons Studies (CUWS) Outreach Journal

In line with safeguarding national interests of Iran and in compliance with the Safeguards Agreement of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, any outcome of nuclear negotiations with the 5+1 group of countries shall be valid as long as the following requirements are met:

- (1) The immediate and complete lifting of all sanctions imposed on Iran by the UN Security Council and the European Union as well as the US administration and Congress on the same day that Tehran begins to implement its commitments.
- (2) The International Atomic Energy Agency would be able only to have regular inspections of Iran's nuclear facilities and it would not be given access to military or security sites or nuclear scientists.
- (3) Iran will allow no limitations to its scope of activities to develop peaceful nuclear technology and to conduct procurement and production work in the field of research and development (R&D).

The results of nuclear negotiations must be presented to Majlis. Furthermore, Foreign Minister is obliged to report to Majlis the process of the implementation of the agreement every six months. Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Committee must present the report on the execution of the agreement to members of Parliament every six months.

Iranian MPs on Sunday had approved the general outlines of the bill with 199 votes in favor, 3 against and 5 abstained out of 213 lawmakers that had attended the open session.

The bill, which has now been approved by Parliament, will oblige the government to cancel the Geneva agreement and return Iran's nuclear measures to the point before the agreement in case the United States Congress imposes further sanctions against Iran.

The bill needs to be approved by the Guardian Council to be signed into law and put into effect.

<http://en.mehrnews.com/news/108119/Parl-passes-nuclear-bill>

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Press TV – Tehran, Iran

Fair Nuclear Deal Must Serve Iran Interests: Leader

Tuesday, June 23, 2015

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei says Iran seeks to reach a fair deal with the P5+1 group of countries over Tehran's nuclear program that will serve the country's national interests.

"All Iranian authorities, while insisting on [the country's] red lines, are pursuing a good deal [with the P5+1], which is a fair and honorable agreement in line with Iran's interests," the Leader said in a meeting with the heads of the three branches of the Iranian government and the country's senior officials in Tehran on Tuesday.

A study of the Americans' demands shows that they intend to turn Iran's nuclear industry into a "caricature" after dismantling it and abolishing the country's nuclear identity, the Leader added.

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Ayatollah Khamenei stated that the Americans are also making efforts to deprive the Iranian nation of the great advantages of the nuclear industry while maintaining pressure and sanctions against the Islamic Republic.

The Leader said Iran has always made rational demands since the beginning of the talks with the P5+1 countries and emphasized that all “cruel sanctions” on Tehran over its nuclear program must be lifted.

Ayatollah Khamenei commended the Iranian nuclear negotiating team for its faithfulness and bravery in the talks with the six world powers, and said the negotiators are meticulously making efforts in order to settle issues.

The Iranian negotiators have managed to bravely announce Iran’s stance on the nuclear issue, the Leader said, adding that they may possibly make some mistakes but they are “brave and faithful”.

He pointed to all nuclear powers’ refusal to sell 20 percent enriched fuel to Iran for the production of nuclear medicine at the Tehran Research Reactor and said young Iranian scientists have succeeded in producing the fuel and confounding the opposite side.

Iran’s red lines in nuclear talks

Ayatollah Khamenei further went on to once again reaffirm the Islamic Republic’s red lines in its nuclear negotiations with the P5+1 countries.

“Despite the Americans’ insistence, we do not accept long-term restrictions [on nuclear activities] for 10 or 12 years. We have told them what number of years we accept for restrictions,” the Leader said.

He stressed that proceeding with research and development in the field of nuclear technology even during the time of restrictions is another red line for the Islamic Republic.

The Leader further emphasized that all economic, monetary and banking sanctions imposed by the United Nations Security Council and the United States against Iran must be immediately lifted on the day of signing a possible final nuclear deal while other bans must be terminated on a rational time schedule.

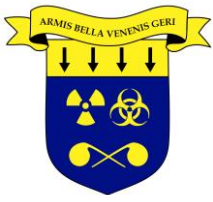
“The lifting of sanctions must not be contingent on the implementation of Iran’s undertakings. They should not say that you (Iran) should fulfill your commitments and the [International Atomic Energy] Agency (IAEA) should then verify it in order for the sanctions to be lifted. We do not accept this issue at all,” Ayatollah Khamenei stated.

He said Iran opposes the P5+1 group’s fulfillment of its commitments after the IAEA’s report “because the agency has repeatedly proved that it is not an independent and fair body and so we are pessimistic about it.”

The Leader further expressed Iran’s firm opposition to “unconventional inspections, questioning Iranian figures, and the inspection of military sites” as other red lines for the country.

<http://www.presstv.com/Detail/2015/06/23/417217/Iran-Leader-Ayatollah-Seyyed-Ali-Khamenei-Americans-nuclear-deal>

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USAF Center for Unconventional Weapons Studies (CUWS) Outreach Journal

The Times of Israel – Jerusalem, Israel

Leaked Saudi Memo Claims Iran Sent Nuke Equipment to Sudan

Diplomatic cable released by WikiLeaks reports shipment of centrifuges to Khartoum in 2012

By Stuart Winer

June 23, 2015

Iran shipped advanced nuclear equipment to Sudan in 2012, according to a leaked document purportedly written by diplomats at the Saudi Arabian embassy in Khartoum at the time.

The memo, dated February 2012 and marked as “very secret,” was leaked last week by the WikiLeaks groups along with what it claimed were 60,000 other official Saudi communications over the weekend.

“The embassy’s sources advised that Iranian containers arrived this week at Khartoum airport containing sensitive technical equipment in the form of fast centrifuges for enriching uranium, and a second shipment is expected to arrive this week,” the document read, according to a Reuters report.

Even if authentic, the message does not include details on where the Saudi diplomats sourced their information or any particular details of the shipment that could be verified.

Sudan does not have its own nuclear program and there have not been previous claims that Iran sent nuclear-related equipment to the country.

Wikileaks intends to publish a total of 500,000 Saudi documents.

Saudi Arabia has not commented on any of the documents in particular but noted that they might be fake.

Sudanese and Iranian officials also would not comment on the leaked memo about the shipment, the report said.

In October 2012 Sudan claimed an Israeli airstrike was responsible for causing a massive explosion that devastated an arms factory south of the Khartoum.

Israel neither confirmed nor denied involvement in the explosion at the factory, which destroyed much of the complex and killed four people in the Sudanese capital.

But Israeli officials claimed that Sudan plays a key role in an Iranian-backed network of arms shipments to Hezbollah and Hamas, leading to speculation at the time that destroying those weapons was the objective.

Iran is in intensive negotiations with Britain, the US, France, China, Russia, and Germany to hammer out an agreement aimed at rolling back its nuclear program that the so-called P5+1 nations fear is directed towards producing atomic weapons. Iran, which claims its research is for peaceful purposes, has balked at demands for extensive inspections of its nuclear sites by international monitors.

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Negotiators hope to ink a deal by a June 30 deadline, based on a framework agreement reached in April. Among the conditions of the earlier agreement was a demand that Iran deactivate most of its thousands of centrifuges that are used to enrich uranium, a key component of a nuclear bomb.

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/leaked-saudi-memo-claims-iran-sent-nuke-equipment-to-sudan/>

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Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) – Tehran, Iran

24 June 2015

Guardian Council Approves of Parliament's Nuclear Bill

Tehran, June 24, IRNA – The Guardian Council on Wednesday approved of the Parliament's nuclear bill obliging the Government to preserve nuclear achievements.

The parliament passed a bill on Tuesday formal session as approved by the majority of the Guardians Council members in its extraordinary Wednesday session and evaluated in conformity with both the Constitution and with the holy Islamic jurisprudence.

The full text of the parliamentary nuclear law is as follows:

Single Article:

In line with preserving the national interests and observing the regulations of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), any nuclear negotiations with the countries of the 5+1 Group (the UN Security Council Big 5 plus Germany) will be validated if the following necessities will be clearly observed in it:

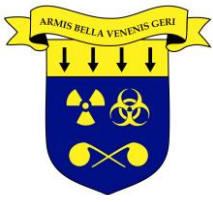
1. All the sanctions will be, as a part of the agreement, fully and solidly terminated on the day of signing the agreement.
2. The International Atomic Energy Agency will be allowed to conduct conventional supervisions on the nuclear sites under supervision of the Supreme National Security Council. Access to military, security, and non-nuclear sensitive premises, documents and scientists are forbidden.
3. No limitation in acquiring peaceful nuclear science and technology and research and development in those fields is acceptable and the Supreme National Security Council guidelines must be observed respectively.

Appendix 1: Based on articles 77 and 125 of the Constitution the outcome of the negotiations must be in conformity both with the Constitution and with the ratifications of the Iranian Parliament.

Appendix 2: The minister of foreign affairs is commissioned to report the process of proper implementation of the agreement to the Parliament once every six-month. The Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Commission will once every six-month present a report to the MPs about proper implementation of the agreement.

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/81658927/>

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Sputnik International – Russian Information Agency

US Ready to Provide Iran with Nuclear Equipment

The United States and its partners expressed readiness to supply Iran with nuclear equipment in return for reducing its nuclear weapons program as part of ongoing negotiations to reach a nuclear agreement with Tehran, US media reported.

25 June 2015

WASHINGTON (Sputnik) — The United States vows to give Iran light-water nuclear reactors to use in place of its nearly completed heavy-water facility at Arak, as reported by Fox News on Wednesday.

The media outlet also said that the United States and its allies would help Iran with nuclear fuel supply and removal arrangements, as well as aid in building and operating nuclear reactors.

On June 11, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said the reconfiguration of the controversial nuclear reactor in Arak, Iran, is bringing the progress in Iran nuclear talks to a virtual standstill.

The West has long accused Iran of trying to develop nuclear weapons under a guise of a civilian nuclear program, and imposed several rounds of sanctions against Tehran.

After several rounds of talks, Iran and the P5+1 group of international mediators, comprising the United States, China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and Germany agreed on a framework for a deal ensuring the peaceful nature of Tehran's nuclear program as well as a gradual lifting of sanctions.

Iran agreed to redesign and rebuild the Arak reactor with a design making it unable to produce weapons-grade plutonium.

<http://sputniknews.com/politics/20150625/1023812855.html>

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Reuters.com – U.S. Edition

Exclusive: Kerry Tells Iran Foreign Minister 'the Past Does Matter' - Sources

By Louis Charbonneau and Parisa Hafezi

Thursday, June 25, 2015

VIENNA -- U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry telephoned Iran's foreign minister in recent days to tell him that Tehran must answer questions about whether its past atomic research was arms-related if it wants a nuclear deal, officials said.

The telephone calls came after Kerry raised eyebrows among some Western officials by saying the U.S. was "not fixated" on any past Iranian work, about which it already had "absolute knowledge," and was looking to the future instead.

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The officials have also voiced concern that Kerry was backing down on a crucial demand in the talks, one Tehran has consistently ignored, and said he was overstating U.S. knowledge about Tehran's past nuclear work in the interest of getting a deal at all costs.

A day after Kerry made those June 16 remarks, a State Department spokesman said the words of the top U.S. diplomat had been misinterpreted and dismissed the idea that Washington had climbed down from previous demands that Tehran come clean about its nuclear past.

But two Western officials, who spoke to Reuters on condition of anonymity, were not persuaded by the State Department denial.

"I suspect he accidentally gave a window into his negotiating stance with the Iranians," one official said. Critics say that Kerry's intense involvement in the talks suggest that he is chasing an agreement, signaling an eagerness for a deal that the Iranians can exploit for concessions.

The damage control went beyond the daily State Department briefings, during which reporters grilled new spokesman John Kirby on this issue for days. Kerry, officials told Reuters, called Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif to make sure he did not think Washington was letting Iran off the hook.

"Kerry called Zarif and told him the past does matter and the U.S. was insisting that the PMD (possible military dimensions) issue be resolved in the negotiations," a Western source close to the talks told Reuters.

An Iranian official said Kerry spoke to Zarif twice in recent days.

"There were two calls from Kerry to Zarif, during which he corrected his stance ... He told Mr. Zarif that he had been misunderstood and the past activities are important and should be clarified," a senior Iranian official told Reuters.

"Also he said that Iran should come clean on the past activities. This is an issue being discussed."

A senior U.S. official confirmed that Kerry had spoke to Zarif but denied there had been any shift in the U.S. position on the need for Iran to come clean about its nuclear past. "The U.S. has consistently made clear our position on PMD, and it has not changed," the official said.

The United States, Britain, France, Germany, Russia and China have a self-imposed June 30 deadline to finish a long term nuclear deal with Iran under which it would curb sensitive nuclear activities for at least a decade in exchange for sanctions relief.

The U.S. official said Kerry also spoke or met with the foreign ministers of France, Germany, Britain, Russia and China ahead of his Friday departure for the Vienna talks with Iran, and has kept in touch with the Israelis and Saudis as well.

"PMD came up in some of these conversations, but it was not the focus," the official added.

Officials close to the talks say they will likely run into July and that the chances of succeeding are greater than the likelihood of failure.

Tehran denies harboring any ambitions to develop atomic weapons but has rejected U.N. demands that it halt uranium enrichment and other nuclear activities, resulting in crippling international sanctions.

U.S. officials had previously said Iran must answer all queries the U.N. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has about past Iranian activities that may have been related to atomic weapons



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research and that some sanctions relief under a possible nuclear deal would depend on resolving those queries.

Tehran says the agency's evidence about past weapons-related activities is fabricated and insists its nuclear program is peaceful.

REACHING OUT

France is the closest of the six powers to Israel and Saudi Arabia, regional foes of Iran who oppose a deal. They fear that a deal with Iran will effectively give it the right to continue developing a nuclear arms capability, even if its sensitive nuclear activities remain limited for over a decade.

According to a senior French diplomat, Kerry reassured French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius earlier this week that the United States had not softened its stance on PMD and that his remarks had been over interpreted.

"If we are to know what Iran may get up to, then we need to know up to a point what Iran did do," the diplomat said, adding Paris and Washington shared the same view.

A group of prominent American security advisers, including five with ties to President Barack Obama's first term, said on Wednesday that the deal under discussion might be too weak to provide adequate safeguards.

That will be reassuring to those diplomats and experts concerned that failure to resolve this issue could undercut the ability of the IAEA to monitor compliance with any agreement reached with Iran, as well as undermine the agency's credibility.

Olli Heinonen, a nuclear expert at Harvard University and former deputy head of the IAEA, predicted that the PMD issue would be the last question resolved in the course of the talks. He also said it could not be swept under the carpet.

"It's a de facto nuclear threshold state. So you can't just forget about weaponization," he said. "You don't need to know every nut and bolt of the past program. But you need to know how far they got."

As early as November, officials close to the talks said the six powers were pressing Iran to stop stonewalling the IAEA, but were likely to stop short of demanding full disclosure of any secret weapon work by Tehran to avoid killing an historic deal.

Additional reporting by John Irish and Shadia Nasralla; editing by Anna Willard

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/06/25/us-iran-nuclear-kerry-exclusive-idUSKBN0P51PT20150625>

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Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) – Tehran, Iran

26 June 2015

Araqchi: Major Differences in Nuclear Talks Still Standing

Vienna, June 26, IRNA – Senior negotiator, Abbas Araqchi said on Friday that major differences in wording of the nuclear deal are still standing.

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However, he noted, good progress has been made in certain general subjects.

He acknowledged presence of all negotiating parties led by deputy foreign ministers of 5+1 Group and said that bilateral and multilateral meetings are underway in Vienna.

'In certain topics, they also have different stances which may not be harmonized easily,' Araqchi said.

On aggregate, we are making headway the job is progressing slowly and hard, he said.

Asked about statement of one of 5+1 Group negotiators on 90 percent progress of drafting the deal, he said, 'At present, we cannot speak about figures.'

As you know there is a main text with several annexes, Araqchi said.

'Some progress has been made in main contexts compared to annexes.'

Several issues which are of higher significance in terms of quality are still remaining, he said.

Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif will arrive in Vienna on Saturday, he said, noting, 'I think bilateral talks of foreign ministers and multilateral talks will kick off on Saturday and Sunday.'

On the extension of the deadline for the deal, he said that currently, no extension is on the agenda.

'We have decided to reach an agreement within the deadline. We will keep up the job for several days to clinch a deal at last,' he said.

<http://www.irna.ir/en/News/81660432/>

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The Economic Times – New Delhi, India

Saudi Arabia Seeks Nuclear Deals, Alliances to Counter Iran

By Agence France-Presse (AFP)

26 June 2015

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia is pursuing its own nuclear projects and building alliances to counter Iran, which is days away from a potential atomic deal Riyadh fears could further destabilise the region.

The United States and other major powers will hold weekend talks with Iran in Vienna, aiming to finalise by Tuesday an agreement to prevent Tehran from getting a nuclear weapon.

Sunni-dominated Gulf states led by Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil exporter, have concerns that Shiite Iran, Riyadh's regional rival, could still be able to develop a weapon under the emerging deal to end 12 years of nuclear tensions.

They also worry Washington is not taking their concerns about Iran's "destabilising acts" in the Middle East seriously enough.

On Wednesday, France and Saudi Arabia announced a feasibility study for building two nuclear reactors in the kingdom.

Like its neighbour the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia wants to diversify its energy sources and has plans for 16 reactors.

The Paris pact is the third nuclear accord Riyadh has signed this year.

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Last week, it reached a deal with Russia on economic, technical and scientific ties for the peaceful use of atomic energy. In March, the kingdom signed a preliminary deal for nuclear cooperation with South Korea.

"Saudi Arabia is going big with its nuclear project," said Jamal Khashoggi, a veteran journalist and an analyst who is linked to the royal family.

"Of course officially it is a peaceful project", but the nuclear know-how could also be used to develop weapons, he said.

In March, Prince Turki al-Faisal, the kingdom's former intelligence chief, told the BBC that whatever Iran is given under a deal with world powers, Saudi Arabia and others will want as well, potentially sparking a regional nuclear race.

Under a framework pact agreed in April, Iran will reduce the number of its nuclear centrifuges for enriching uranium, in return for a lifting of international economic sanctions.

Iran says its nuclear programme is peaceful but if Saudi Arabia feels the Iranians are continuing their quest for a nuclear weapon, Riyadh will have "no option" but to pursue its own deterrent policy, Khashoggi said.

POSTURING

Riyadh has both "the will and the ability" to produce nuclear weapons, Saudi analyst Nawaf Obaid, a visiting fellow at Harvard University's Belfer Center, wrote on CNN.com last week.

But a Saudi official told AFP the kingdom "won't take the risk" of seeking an atomic bomb. He said Iran's policy of "interfering" in Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Lebanon poses danger, regardless of the weapons it possesses.

"I believe much of the talk about Saudi interest in nuclear weapons is posturing," said Mark Fitzpatrick, director of the non-proliferation and disarmament programme at the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies.

He said their capability is still "rather low" and a better way to enhance Saudi security options is to partner with various Western nations.

"The French reactor deal provides another means of reassurance from Western partners of attention to Saudi interests," Fitzpatrick said.

The nuclear agreement was among investments totalling about \$12 billion finalised during the Paris visit by Deputy Crown Prince and Defence Minister Mohammed bin Salman.

Improved links with France highlight a deepening of ties between the Gulf and major powers beyond the region's traditional ally the US.

Fitzpatrick said there is still huge distrust between Washington and Tehran but they will now have channels of communication, "which is of legitimate concern to Saudi Arabia."

Salman's Paris mission came a week after his trip to Russia where a military pact and several other agreements were reached alongside the nuclear deal.

Russia and Iran support Syria's President Bashar al-Assad while Riyadh backs Sunni-led rebels in that country's civil war.

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But an editorial in the Saudi Gazette said cooperation between Russia and Riyadh will ensure "national unity and security" for both of them.

The kingdom "has to pursue its own security independently," and cannot take American guarantees for granted, Khashoggi said.

"We are very worried about the Iranian expansionism.... The Middle East is falling apart and no one is helping to put it back in order. Saudi Arabia somehow is dancing alone there."

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/world-news/saudi-arabia-seeks-nuclear-deals-alliances-to-counter-iran/articleshow/47829029.cms>

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Asia Times (AT) – Hong Kong, China

Indian Fighter Jets to Fire World's Fastest Cruise Missile

By AT Editor

June 24, 2015

Indian fighter jets will soon be equipped with the world's fastest cruise missile. According to Indian news outlets, New Delhi India recently developed a modification for its Sukhoi Su-30 MKI fighter airplane that will allow it to carry the Indo-Russian BrahMos supersonic cruise missile.

Earlier this year, it was reported that India's Strategic Forces Command (SFC) had begun receiving 42 Su-30MKI air dominance fighters modified to carry air-launched BrahMos supersonic cruise missile, The National Interest reports.

The BrahMos missile will be tested from the modified Sukhoi Su-30 MKI plane this year. According to Sudhir K. Mishra, CEO and managing director of the Indo-Russian joint venture BrahMos Aerospace Private Limited (BAPL), "It will take about four to five months to complete the instrument flight test, the dummy test and the actual flight."

The Sukhoi Su-30 MKI is a twin-seater, highly maneuverable, fourth-generation multirole combat fighter aircraft built by Russia's Sukhoi Design Bureau and licensed to India's Hindustan Aeronautics Limited. The plane will serve as the backbone of India's Air Force through 2020 and beyond. Delhi has already acquired around 200 jets, and eventually plans to acquire 282 of them.

The BrahMos is one of India's most important missiles. It is a short range—it has a maximum range of around 290 kilometers—ramjet supersonic cruise missile that can be launched from submarines, ships, aircraft or land. It is one of the world's fastest missiles, and can reach speeds of up to Mach 2.5 to 2.8, which is three and a half times faster than the United States' Harpoon cruise missile.

The BrahMos missile also has the capacity of attacking surface targets as low as 10 meters in altitude.

The BrahMos has a two-stage propulsion system, and—according to Russian media outlets—has a "solid-propellant rocket for initial acceleration and a liquid-fueled ramjet responsible for sustained supersonic cruise. Air-breathing ramjet propulsion is much more fuel-efficient than rocket propulsion, giving the BrahMos a longer range than a pure rocket-powered missile would achieve."

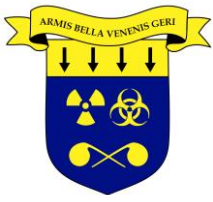
The high speed of the missile is thought to give it "better target-penetration characteristics than lighter subsonic cruise-missiles."

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The new Indian modifications to its fighter airplanes increases the BrahMos' utility against land-based targets. In May 2015, the Indian army successfully tested a version of the BrahMos with steep-diving capability. This would allow it to take out targets hidden behind mountain ranges. The Indian government has placed many BrahMos missiles in the mountainous state of Arunachal Pradesh on its northeast border with China, in addition to its border with Pakistan.

In another development, France has agreed "in principle" to equip the BrahMos with cutting-edge guidance technology.

The Indian Army currently operates four BrahMos missile regiments. However, with the potential enhancements and developments of the missile, the Indian Army is considering raising two further BrahMos missile regiments. India is also looking to export the missile to other countries.

<http://atimes.com/2015/06/indian-fighter-jets-to-fire-worlds-fastest-cruise-missile/>

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The Moscow Times – Moscow, Russia

OPINION/Op-Ed

Russia Should Lay Off the Saber Rattling (Op-Ed)

By Alexander Golts

June 22, 2015

A new Defense Ministry exhibition center near Moscow opened to great fanfare last week. Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu announced that the center will offer a permanent venue displaying the Russian defense industry's latest weapons. Shoigu even went so far as to call it a "military supermarket" where foreign buyers could shop for whatever suits their fancy.

Of course, the opening offered the perfect opportunity for President Vladimir Putin to give his long-awaited response to the aggressive West. To believe the reports on Russia's state-controlled television, the West is constantly threatening peace-loving Russia — from promising to deploy medium-range missiles in Europe and building fifth-generation fighter aircraft to placing heavy U.S. military equipment and troops next to Russia's western border.

Putin lived up to those expectations, remarking ominously: "More than 40 new intercontinental ballistic missiles able to overcome even the most technically advanced anti-missile defense systems will be added to the makeup of the nuclear arsenal this year." Washington must be trembling.

All the more considering that in a meeting the same day with Finnish President Sauli Niinisto, Putin made an even more direct threat: "If somebody threatens any of our territories, that means we will need to aim our armed forces, our modern weaponry toward the territories from which that threat originates."

It is worth noting that NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg took those threats seriously. He called Putin's statements groundless "nuclear saber rattling," and also "unjustified" and "dangerous" behavior.

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However, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland said that Putin's recent declaration that Russia would add 40 new intercontinental ballistic missiles to its arsenal was mere posturing aimed at the Russian people. According to Reuters reports, Nuland pointed out that "Those kinds of announcements when made publicly like that obviously have a rattling effect. When we look at what is actually happening inside Russia, it is far less dramatic," she said.

Nuland emphasized that Washington expects Moscow to comply with its obligations under arms control agreements and will permit verification of all its actions.

She was right on the mark. In fact, Putin also said in the same statement that orders for the strategic missile forces had fallen by as much as 20 percent, although six months ago at the opening ceremony of another gargantuan project, the National Defense Management Center, Putin said that Russia would build as many as 50 ICBMs. However, as we see now, that did not happen.

In fact, it is quite possible that Russia will not build 50, or even 40 missiles. Recall that in December 2014, three different senior officials speaking during a single three-hour period quoted three completely different figures for the number of missiles Russia had built.

Putin claimed that the military had created three new missile regiments — meaning not fewer than 20 missiles — Shoigu referred to 16 new missiles, while Deputy Defense Minister Yuriy Borisov reported the deployment of five new missiles. It turns out that government press officers did not even take the trouble to coordinate the lie that the officials told the public. And this time, Putin's speechwriters did not even bother to check to see which number of missiles Putin had mentioned the last time he spoke.

With such a track record, the effect is less than impressive when the commander in chief claims that "Obviously, an efficient defense industry is an important resource for the growth of the entire economy. Moreover, it is the defense industry that should set the bar in many technological and production aspects and remain the driving force for the development of innovations, including dual-purpose and civilian ones."

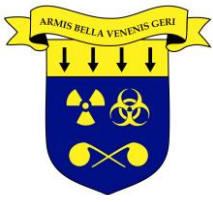
Instead, such statements indicate that Russian leaders' views on innovation and technological progress are a throwback to the 1970s. By contrast, the West now understands that it is the civil, not the military sector that drives economic growth.

Unfortunately, the only thing that Russia's civilian industry can learn from its military-industrial complex is how to accompany its bold lies with even louder fireworks and pomp. Thus, military chiefs would do well to conduct a thorough inventory of their "military supermarket" as soon as it opens for business.

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

<http://www.themoscowtimes.com/opinion/article/russia-should-lay-off-the-saber-rattling-op-ed/524156.html>

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USAF Center for Unconventional Weapons Studies

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Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists – Chicago, IL

OPINION/Analysis

June 22, 2015

Sorting Fact from Fiction on Russian Missile Claims

By Pavel Podvig

In early June, the United States released its annual Compliance Report for the year 2015, which assesses whether countries are adhering to their arms control agreements. The report accuses Russia of violating the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. Signed in 1987, during the waning days of the Cold War, the treaty eliminated all ballistic and ground-launched cruise missiles—nuclear and conventional—with a range of between 500 and 5,000 kilometers, and prohibited possessing, producing, and testing them.

And yet this is what the United States says Russia is doing. According to the report, Moscow has been working on a ground-launched cruise missile in violation of its treaty obligations. In fact, the United States first publicly made the charge a year ago, in its 2014 Compliance Report, so the contents of the new report shouldn't come as a surprise. Today, though, the allegation is eliciting unprecedented calls to action.

A few days before the release of this year's Compliance Report, an Associated Press story cited a report by the office of Gen. Martin Dempsey, chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, that is said to examine "weapons the U.S. could develop and deploy if freed from INF treaty constraints," and apparently goes so far as to identify specific weapons systems that the United States might use. Fear over INF Treaty violations seems to be catching on in Europe as well—pressed by journalists, British Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond speculated that the United Kingdom might consider hosting US intermediate-range weapons on its territory.

Comments like these are starting to create an atmosphere of inevitable confrontation, deepening the already existing crisis created by Russia's actions in Ukraine. Most unfortunately, many news stories and commentaries seem to assume that the accusations of non-compliance mean that Russia is already building its cruise missiles and is poised to target them at Europe and maybe even has already. They give the impression that some yearn for a repeat of the standoff of the 1980s, when the decision to deploy US missiles in Europe in response to the Soviet deployment of its SS-20 missiles eventually forced the Soviet Union to back down and sign the INF Treaty in the first place.

But what may have worked in the 1980s is very unlikely to work today. Before we bring back the Cold War confrontation over intermediate-range missiles in Europe, it would be useful to look at what Russia's new missiles actually are and, more importantly, what they are not. In the Compliance Reports, the United States deliberately published very little information about the alleged violation of the INF Treaty, giving rise to speculation and numerous theories. Some have suggested that the offending weapons are cruise missiles belonging to the Iskander system, which Russia has been deploying for several years and which it periodically threatens to move close to NATO borders. Others suggest that the problem is the new RS-26 Rubezh ballistic missile, which is probably an intermediate-range missile developed in the guise of an ICBM. However, neither of these is the culprit.

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Even though the information on the violation is extremely thin, we can say with high certainty that the system in question is a long-range cruise missile that is being developed for deployment on submarines. The INF Treaty does not prohibit development and deployment of sea-launched cruise missiles, even though for all practical purposes the same missiles could easily be deployed on land. The treaty also allows the parties to test their sea-launched cruise missiles from land, as long as the trials are conducted from a fixed launcher at a site that is used solely for testing. And here is where Russia came into conflict with the treaty: It either tested its cruise missile from a launcher that is not “fixed,” or from one that was used for another purpose at some point. Neither of these concepts is clearly defined in the treaty and although they seem self-explanatory, there is some room for interpretation and disagreement.

Why Russia would conduct tests that are not fully treaty-compliant is not entirely clear. It may be that the tests did not go through a thorough compliance review and nobody saw a potential conflict. Maybe Russia has its own understanding of what a fixed launcher is or what you can use a launcher for. It is also possible that Russia did test the cruise missile from a mobile launcher, knowing full well that this kind of test would violate the INF Treaty. However, while such a deliberate breach cannot be completely ruled out, given all the evidence we have, an inadvertent technical violation of the treaty seems much more likely.

One might think that the US government, having gone public with the allegation of non-compliance, adds some weight to the theory of a grave deliberate violation. Not necessarily. The Obama administration quite possibly would have preferred to resolve the issue quietly through diplomatic channels, but once it became known that the State Department was conducting its own internal compliance review—prior to the public release of the 2014 Compliance Report—members of Congress and others put serious pressure on the administration to confront Russia about the alleged violation. There was a clear advantage in doing so: Russia had contemplated leaving the INF Treaty in the past, but after a public accusation of non-compliance, the political cost of doing so would be much higher.

To a certain extent, Washington’s tactic worked—Russia responded to the US Compliance Report by officially stating that it remains firmly committed to the treaty and has no intention of leaving. However, for things to stay that way, the United States and Russia will have to find a way to address the current non-compliance dispute. That could be extremely difficult.

To begin with, Russia has yet to own up to the actions that created the current situation. It insists that the United States has not provided it with enough information to rebut the accusations and that as far as it is concerned, no violation has ever taken place. It is true that the United States did not go into much detail about the charges, mostly to protect its methods and sources, but probably also to force Russia into disclosing more information about its tests. At the same time, even though the United States did not name the specific weapon system or the test dates, we know that it did provide Russia with enough information to identify the tests and the systems of concern. At this point, Russia is clearly playing for time while it contemplates its next step.

The problem is that regardless of whether the tests in question were deliberate or inadvertent violations, they cannot be undone. The treaty is rather strict on this point—one test is all it takes for its provisions to kick in. Then, all missiles and launchers of the type that were tested fall under the scope of the treaty. This means that if Russia is to “return to verified compliance,” on which the United States insists, it would have to eliminate all of them, including, for example, missiles that may have been built for deployment on submarines. That is a very tall order, so it is not surprising that Russia wants to think twice before admitting anything.



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To be clear, none of the Russian missiles in question have been deployed yet. This is what the United States told its allies last year and it is apparently still the case. The US administration seems committed to a diplomatic resolution to the dispute, and indeed there are ways to reach an agreement that would be acceptable to both sides. However, a diplomatic solution would require quite a bit of good will and trust, which are almost completely absent from today's United States-Russia relationship.

Meanwhile, the rhetoric surrounding the issue—from experts, the media, and occasionally officials in Russia and the West—seems to be getting out of control, as people start assuming the worst and speaking as if we were about to see a major military standoff in Europe with hundreds if not thousands of potentially nuclear intermediate-range missiles pointed in both directions. This kind of posturing would be extremely unhelpful in the best of times, and we could certainly live without it in this very difficult period, when there are plenty of other issues to deal with. It would make sense for both sides to calm down and at least stop escalating this particular dispute.

Most of the solution is in Russia's hands. Despite Moscow's claims to the contrary, it has enough information to open a meaningful technical discussion with the United States about what actually happened at the test site. Accepting that there is an issue to discuss does not mean admitting any wrongdoing. Stonewalling, on the other hand, will only make the situation worse and will definitely not help Russia win any friends.

The United States could also help calm the situation down. This does not mean, of course, that it should let the issue go. It is understandable that the US administration believes it has to be tough with Russia—if there has ever been a time to show resolve it is probably now. Besides, a violation is a violation and there is nothing wrong with continuing to press Russia about compliance. But at this point it would be wise for Washington to reveal more details about the accusations and say clearly that Russia is not pointing its missiles at Europe. This alone would bring much-needed sanity to the discussion. And it would certainly help to reassure the public that the military options the United States has discussed are purely hypothetical at this point. Doing so may help make sure they stay that way.

A physicist trained at the Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology, Podvig works on the Russian nuclear arsenal, US-Russian relations, and nonproliferation.

<http://thebulletin.org/sorting-fact-fiction-russian-missile-claims8414>

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The National Interest – Washington, D.C.

OPINION/The Buzz

Revealed: Why America Needs New, Super Usable Nuclear Weapons

By Zachary Keck

June 23, 2015

The United States needs to develop more “usable” nuclear weapons to deter future conflict, according to a new think tank report.

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This week, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a prominent international relations think tank in Washington, DC, released a new report entitled: “Project Atom: A Competitive Strategies Approach to Defining U.S. Nuclear Strategy and Posture for 2025–2050.”

In the report, Clark Murdock argues that the United States should develop and deploy more low-yield tactical nuclear weapons to deter adversaries from engaging in low-level nuclear aggression.

“The United States needs to develop and deploy more employable nuclear weapons, ones that enable the United States to respond directly and proportionately to an adversary’s employment of a nuclear weapon,” Murdock writes.

Elsewhere he elaborates: “Discriminate employment options would be provided by a suite of low-yield, special-effects warheads (low collateral, enhanced radiation, earth penetration, electromagnetic pulse, and others as technology advances), including possibly a smaller, shorter-range cruise missile that could be delivered by F-35s.”

The thinking of the proposal is that America’s unmatched military power encourages potential adversaries to use nuclear weapons to offset their conventional inferiority. The danger, Murdock argues, is that adversaries would use low-yield nuclear weapons early in a conflict in order to get the United States to “back off.” Should such a scenario come to pass, America might be self-deterred from responding at the nuclear level.

“Since most U.S. nuclear response options are large, ‘dirty,’ and inflict significant collateral damage,” Murdock writes, “the United States might be ‘self-deterred’ and not respond ‘in kind’ to discriminate nuclear attacks.” Even just the possibility of potential adversaries believing this to be true could significantly increase the probability that they will use nuclear weapons in the event of a conflict with the United States.

Murdock is hardly the first analyst to foresee such a danger. For example, writing in *Foreign Affairs* in 2009, Keir Lieber and Daryl Press warned, “During a war, if a desperate adversary were to use its nuclear force to try to coerce the United States... an arsenal comprised solely of high-yield weapons would leave U.S. leaders with terrible retaliatory options. Destroying Pyongyang or Tehran in response to a limited strike would be vastly disproportionate, and doing so might trigger further nuclear attacks in return. A deterrent posture based on such a dubious threat would lack credibility.”

Nor is such a scenario far-fetched. Indeed, since at least 2000, Russia’s official defense posture has included a policy of “de-escalation” nuclear strikes. That is, Moscow’s official declaratory policy is that if it is faced with an overwhelmingly conventionally superior foe, it will use low-level nuclear strikes to “de-escalate” the conflict. Such a policy could easily be adopted by other states like North Korea in time of war, once it acquires deliverable nuclear warheads.

As *The National Interest* has warned before, the remarkable accuracy of precision-guided missiles is also making it more possible to use low-yield nuclear weapons without causing excessive collateral damage against civilian populations.

Indeed, using a Pentagon computer model, Lieber and Press estimated that a U.S. counterforce strike against China’s ICBM silos using high-yield weapons detonated at ground blast would kill anywhere between 3-4 million people. Using low-yield weapons and airbursts, this figure drops to as little as 700 fatalities.

Murdock, Lieber and Press are not the only ones calling for the United States to develop more usable nuclear weapons. In the new Project Atom report, Elbridge Colby (writing with Shawn



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Brimley and Ely Ratner) of the Center for a New American Security also calls for a similar U.S. nuclear force.

Predictably, however, Murdock's recommendation has some very vocal detractors. Kingston Reif, the Director of Disarmament and Threat Reduction Policy at the Arms Control Association, told Think Progress of Murdock's recommendation: "There's a number of reasons why this idea doesn't make sense.... "[I don't think that] Russia and China would understand its use to control escalation and not part of a campaign to change regimes in those countries."

Barry Blechman, the co-founder of the Stimson Center and a co-author of the new report, is also critical of Murdock's proposal. In his own chapter in the Project Atom report, Blechman and his co-author, Russell Rumbaugh, argue that America's conventional superiority allows the United States to reduce the prevalence of nuclear weapons in America's national security strategy. Later, Blechman told Think Progress that Murdock's proposal is "terrible on so many grounds," including that it would be "a huge waste of money" and could make it easier for terrorists to steal the nuclear devices.

Ultimately, it is unlikely that such a radical change in America's nuclear forces will come under the Obama administration. However, these issues are something that the next American president will likely have to grapple with.

Zachary Keck is managing editor of The National Interest.

<http://www.nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/revealed-why-america-needs-new-super-usable-nuclear-weapons-13168?page=show>

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Defense One – Washington, D.C.

OPINION/Commentary

Why Putin's ICBM Announcement Does Not Signal a New Nuclear Arms Race

The Russian President's announcement was entirely in line with previous expectations, and won't add new capabilities to Moscow's arsenal.

By Adam Mount, Council on Foreign Relations

June 25, 2015

Last week, Russian President Vladimir Putin gave brief remarks at the opening ceremony of ARMY-2015, an exposition where Russia's defense contractors demonstrated new military technology for foreign weapons buyers. The speech was relatively sedate. It omitted much of the aggressive rhetoric that has become commonplace for the Kremlin, amounting to little more than a sales pitch for Russia's military systems. Highlighting several pieces of Russia's plan to modernize its military, Putin mentioned that, "This year we will supply more than forty new intercontinental ballistic missiles [ICBMs] to our nuclear force."

This simple statement ignited a minor fervor in NATO countries. Secretary of State John Kerry told reporters that, "Nobody should hear that kind of announcement... and not be concerned." NATO

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Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said, “This nuclear sabre-rattling of Russia is unjustified.... It’s also one of the reasons we are now increasing the readiness and preparedness of our forces.” Reuters says Russia is “beefing up” its arsenal, CNBC asked whether it meant a new cold war, and many others worried about the prospect of a new arms race.

Reading through these statements, you would think that Russia had announced a new arms buildup that posed a significant threat to the West. In fact, Putin’s announcement was entirely in line with previous expectations and did not add major new capabilities to his nuclear arsenal. Russia continues to comply fully with the New START treaty, which limits strategic launchers like ICBMs. Because their Soviet-era ICBMs are aging out of service, Russian nuclear forces must take delivery of forty new ICBMs each year just to replicate their existing capability. Far from a threat, Russia’s ICBM modernization may actually make their arsenal more vulnerable. In short, the speech was barely an announcement and, because it held a moderate line on nuclear modernization, probably more good news than bad.

Let’s take a closer look. Under New START, Russia must decline to reach an aggregate limit of 700 deployed launchers (meaning ICBMs, SLBMs, and heavy bombers) by 2018. Both Russia and the United States are on track to meet these commitments. In fact, according to the latest data, Russia is far below this limit, holding its aggregate number of launchers steady at 515. The forty “new” ICBMs do not increase the number of ICBMs deployed, but simply replace old missiles that have been in service since the 1970s.

It is entirely reasonable for Russia to replace its Soviet-era SS-18, SS-19, and SS-25 missiles with variants of the new SS-27 and the Sarmat heavy ICBM. The replacement process, which Russia hopes to complete by 2022, decreases the number of missiles in total, but packs more warheads onto each missile, a vulnerability that the United States would never accept in its own arsenal because it means that more Russian warheads can be attacked by fewer U.S. warheads.

Russian ICBM modernization is reasonably well understood and proceeding as expected. As veteran nuclear watcher Hans Kristensen noted last month, Putin in 2012 stated an intention to deploy forty ballistic missiles a year. Since then, Russian ICBM deployment has fallen short of this goal, retiring more older systems than they are deploying new ones.

If anything, last week’s announcement represented a step back from Putin’s pledge last year to deploy fifty new ICBMs this year, a clear concession to the acute fiscal pressures that are hemming in Russia’s military modernization. Furthermore, the United States should welcome any Russian effort to be transparent about its nuclear arsenal. The information transmitted through New START inspections and in public announcements like these is reassuring to both parties. It should be applauded rather than criticized, especially if they do not announce new capabilities.

Even if Russia were somehow to accelerate its nuclear modernization efforts, the U.S. Department of Defense recognizes that Russia “would not be able to achieve a militarily significant advantage by any plausible expansion of its strategic nuclear forces, even in a cheating or breakout scenario under the New START Treaty.”

To summarize: Russia could deploy many more missiles and still remain behind the United States in numbers of launchers and under the New START caps. Even if it cheated on the New START treaty and deployed still more, the Pentagon does not believe that this would significantly affect the strategic balance.

Last week’s announcement should fall somewhere between mundane and reassuring. Instead, much of the West took the bait. Putin clearly hopes that his irresponsible talk about nuclear



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weapons will strike NATO like a drum, sending fear and awe resonating through the alliance. He hopes to provoke a reaction that will distract attention from his conventional and hybrid aggression, raise Russia's stature in Eastern Europe, solidify his rule at home, and allow him to impose even greater military expenditures on his citizenry.

With the United States prepositioning heavy weaponry to its NATO allies in the Baltics and NATO itself planning to more than double the size of its NATO Response Force (NRF), Russian rhetoric will only grow more shrill, reckless, and urgent in the coming year. And with the U.S. presidential election kicking off, Putin is likely to find an audience that is ready and willing to amplify his alarmist rhetoric.

To be sure, Russia has made deeply dangerous moves with its nuclear arsenal. It's abrogation of the INF treaty and apparent lack of interest in returning to compliance undercuts U.S. confidence that it is possible to reach negotiated solutions with Russia. Furthermore, Kremlin officials have also proven anxious to inject nuclear threats into non-nuclear crises, as when Putin rather strangely claimed to have prepared to raise the alert level for his nuclear forces to cover his aggression in Ukraine.

As former Secretary of Defense William Perry told a meeting in Vienna this week, "We are about to begin a new round in the nuclear arms race unless some brake is put on it right now." With rhetoric reaching a fever pitch, it is important to remember that the goal is not to plunge eagerly into a new arms race, but to prevent one.

The episode of the forty ICBMs firmly underscores the need to be clear about Russia's actions, to demarcate the trivia from the substantive, the rhetoric from the threat. The United States has no interest at all in indulging Putin's effort to create tension at the nuclear level and every interest in confronting to Russia's aggression at the conventional level. To date, the White House has been exemplary in drawing this line, responding patiently but firmly to INF noncompliance while refusing to rise to Putin's nuclear threats. In response to a question about the forty ICBMs, White House press secretary Josh Earnest told reporters, "We've seen these reports. I don't have a specific reaction to them."

At the same time, the White House has moved assertively to strengthen NATO's ability to respond to aggression on its own terms, pledging to contribute high-end assets to the NRF's spearhead force. This Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF) will benefit from U.S. special operations forces, logistical, artillery, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities.

There are already calls in the United States to fight fire with fire and add to our own nuclear forces. However, there is little reason to believe that building new nuclear capabilities or forward-deploying the ones we already have would restrain Russia. There is *every* reason to believe that Putin would take these steps as license to divert attention to the nuclear balance, to abrogate existing arms control treaties, to launch a new arms race, and to use his nuclear arsenal to cover aggression at lower levels—in short, to start a new Cold War.

It is better to fight fire with cold water. The United States should firmly resist Russian aggression by deploying conventional forces in Europe and just as firmly resist the urge to respond to nuclear

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provocations. It will certainly not help to worry about “new” nuclear threats where there are none. The best way to prevent a new arms race is to refuse to engage in one.

This post appears courtesy of CFR.org.

<http://www.defenseone.com/technology/2015/06/why-putins-icbm-announcement-does-not-signal-new-nuclear-arms-race/116317/?oref=d-river>

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Albuquerque Journal – Albuquerque, NM

OPINION/Editorial

Editorial: Now’s Not Time to Back Off from Nuclear Deterrence

By Albuquerque Journal Editorial Board
Friday, June 26, 2015

Perhaps Russian President Vladimir Putin’s plan to add 40 new intercontinental ballistic missiles is only saber rattling, but along with other actions like Crimea and Ukraine it’s a worrisome harbinger that old-style Russian aggression is on the rise.

And that bodes ill for U.S.-Russian relations, which under the Obama and Putin administrations have sunk to near Cold War status. Russia’s annexation of Crimea, its push into eastern Ukraine and its threats to use nuclear missiles to defend its aggression have ramped up fears among European nations. Last year, the U.S., the European Union and other allies slapped Russia with sanctions that include banning the sale of military technology to the country.

Putin has made modernizing his country’s arsenal a top priority, and last year 38 ICBMs were added to the cache. The 40 new missiles will not put Russia in violation of the 2010 New START agreement between the U.S. and Russia limiting nuclear weapons, according to the White House. But it is a turn of events that shows President Obama’s 2009 call for a nuclear free world – something we all hope for – and for resetting of U.S.-Russian relations was a bit premature. And very likely unachievable.

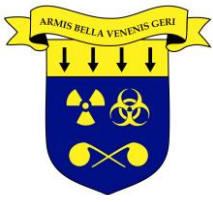
Certainly any talk of putting U.S. nuclear weapons labs in mothballs should be abandoned and seen for what it would be – a national security disaster. The same goes for steep reductions in U.S. military forces. America needs a strong and nimble military and its labs and their work of maintaining our nuclear arsenal now more than ever.

With Putin’s nuclear agenda, India and Pakistan locked in a nuclear arms race and the ongoing nuclear negotiations with Iran, any thought of reducing the U.S. stockpile would be folly.

This editorial first appeared in the Albuquerque Journal. It was written by members of the editorial board and is unsigned as it represents the opinion of the newspaper rather than the writers.

<http://www.abqjournal.com/604437/opinion/nows-not-time-to-back-off-from-nuclear-deterrence.html>

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ABOUT THE USAF CUWS

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

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

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

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

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