



USAF Center for Unconventional Weapons Studies (CUWS) Outreach Journal

Issue No. 1120, 20 June 2014

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

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FEATURE ITEM: "*Moving Beyond Pretense: Nuclear Power and Nonproliferation*". Henry Sokolski, editor; published by the Strategic Studies Institute (SSI), U.S. Army War College; June 2014. Document is 505 pages.
<http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdf/PUB1204.pdf>

The further proliferation and possible use of nuclear weapons are among the very greatest threats to U.S. and international security, yet most governments and industry officials downplay the risks of civilian nuclear technology and materials being diverted to make bombs and use this optimistic assessment in formulating U.S. and international nuclear trade and nonproliferation policies. This volume taps the insights and analyses of 13 top nuclear and security experts to weigh the validity of their narrative. The result is a comprehensive counter-narrative that recommends a significant tightening of current nonproliferation controls.

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The Washington Times – Washington, D.C.

Nuclear Overhaul Cost Estimates likely too Low, Watchdog Says

By Phillip Swarts, *The Washington Times*

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

The Energy and Defense Departments' 10-year, \$263-billion estimate for overhauling the nation's nuclear weapons is likely too low and will cost taxpayers more money than originally estimated, a watchdog report says.

That's because the estimate didn't consider some steps that are needed to modernize the weapons, including improving intercontinental ballistic missiles or developing a new nuclear bomber, a report by the Government Accountability Office said.

The monetary estimates given by the agencies are likely "less than what will be needed to meet schedules reflected in the joint report," said the GAO, Congress' top watchdog.

Congress required the departments to prepare the estimate and 10-year plan on overhauling nuclear weapons programs. But investigators said that without more accurate monetary estimates and more choices on how to proceed, the documents aren't as helpful as they should be.

"Unless the Secretary of Defense directs the Secretary of the Air Force and Secretary of the Navy to include in future reports at least a range of potential budget estimates for key modernization programs based on preliminary cost information, its estimates in subsequent annual joint reports will be incomplete and understated," the GAO said.

The two agencies are planning on a number of overhauls to the weapons program, including refurbishing old missiles and launch systems, replacing outdated uranium and plutonium processing facilities and updating computer systems.

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Air Force officials told the GAO it was risky at the moment to try to put a cost estimate on a new nuclear bomber. Acquisition of the plane is still in the very early stages, and military officials aren't certain yet just how much it will likely cost.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2014/jun/18/nuclear-overhaul-cost-estimates-likely-too-low-wat/>

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U.S. Department of Defense – Washington, D.C.

June 18, 2014

Air Force Secretary Outlines Changes for Nuclear Force

By Army Sgt. 1st Class Tyrone C. Marshall Jr., American Forces Press Service (AFPS)

WASHINGTON, June 18, 2014 – Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James today outlined new incentives and measures designed to change the culture of the service's nuclear force.

Following a cheating scandal involving intercontinental ballistic missile launch officers at Malmstrom Air Force Base, Montana, and the subsequent relief of nine officers, a commander's retirement and 91 other airmen receiving discipline, James touched on ways the Air Force has begun to address "systemic issues."

"I do think this is more than a single issue," she said in remarks at a Defense Writers Group breakfast. "As I've said before, I do think we need some holistic fixes for the nuclear force. This is not something that happened in the last year or two, or even 10. It's probably been happening gradually over the last 25 years."

The secretary said while there are likely no quick fixes to resolve these issues, there are measures she and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III can implement now.

"Let's talk money," James said. "Money is not everything, but money's important. So right now, in [fiscal year 2014], just in the last few months, we have redirected \$50 million -- \$50 million, by the way, is the most that the Global Strike Command said they could reasonably spend in [the fiscal year]."

Money should be spent reasonably, she said, so in addition to \$50 million, \$350 million more will be redirected to the nuclear mission over the next five years. The money will go to sustainment infrastructure and to some of the "people issues," the secretary added.

There could be more to come, James said, but this is what officials have decided so far.

Another issue being addressed is undermanning in the nuclear force, the secretary told the defense writers.

"When you're undermanned, that means the existing people have to work harder," she said. "That impacts morale and it could impact other things as well. We have, right now, already directed 1,100 additional people are going to be inserted into the nuclear force to get those manning levels up."

They principally will be in the field, she said, and the Air Force is going to 100-percent manning in the eight critical nuclear specialties. Air Force officials have lifted some of the ongoing servicewide manpower reductions to add people back into the nuclear force, she added.

Along with those adjustments, the secretary noted, she has called for elevating the Global Strike Command commander's position to the four-star level and that the related major general position on the Air Force staff be made a lieutenant general position.

"We want to up the rank of the nuclear forces within the Air Force," she said. "Rank matters in the military, so that's another thing that we're doing."

Additionally, James said, the testing environment that produced the cheating scandal has been revamped, and the inspections environment will also see changes.



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"It had become this zero-defect mentality, where even the smallest of the small kinds of errors could cause an entire failure," she explained. "That wasn't a healthy environment."

In the fall, James said, the Air Force also will introduce a variety of new financial incentives for the nuclear force "to kick it up a notch," including offering accession bonuses for new officers' ROTC scholarships and incentive pay.

James also noted 20th Air Force commander, Maj. Gen. Jack Weinstein, has issued a series of directives to the field designed to start to shift the culture.

"Now, you know memos don't shift culture," she said. "Leadership and time eventually shifts culture, but this is a start. This is designed to stop the micromanaging, to push down to the lower levels [and encourage] decision-making."

All of that will help, James said.

"We didn't get here overnight, and we're not going to fix it overnight," she added.

It will take persistent focus, leadership and attention for years to come, she said.

"With all of what I've just said, I'm certain that additional resources are probably still in order," James said. "We're going to have to talk about those resources as we get into the next [program objective memorandum] cycle."

James said she believes the U.S. nuclear mission is a national mission for the entire Defense Department, not just the Air Force.

"So I'll be talking to the deputy [defense] secretary, the secretary of defense [and] the senior leaders of DOD to see what we can do about this," she said.

<http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=122502>

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RT (Russia Today) – Moscow, Russia

US Missile Defense System Proves to be Useless after \$40 Bln Spent

June 17, 2014

Despite a decade of testing and tens of billions of dollars' worth of research, a major missile defense program in the United States has proven to be anything but successful, a new investigation suggests.

Nevertheless, the Missile Defense Agency, or MDA, plans on conducting next week its ninth exercise of that costly system since 2004, and the outcome of the drill is expected to influence whether or not more than a dozen new interceptors are added to the United States' arsenal.

According to a recent investigation by the Los Angeles Times, however, that system has so far been marred by mistakes that raise questions about its ability to thwart any major attack and the cost incurred during the last decade.

The results of the Times probe, published by the paper on Sunday this week, show that Pentagon officials with inside knowledge of the Ground-based Midcourse Defense system, or GMD, say the program has suffered from mishaps more often than the US government would have expected.

"[A] decade after it was declared operational, and after \$40 billion in spending, the missile shield cannot be relied on, even in carefully scripted tests that are much less challenging than an actual attack would be," David Willman wrote for the Times over the weekend.

"Official pronouncements about the GMD system, The Times found, have overstated its reliability."

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Results have been mixed to say the least since as far as 1999 when GMD testing first began — half of the first 16 tests of the system's ability to intercept a mock enemy warhead failed, the Times acknowledged. The system was finally upgraded to "operational" in 2004, but five of the eight tests held in the last decade have failed as well.

The GMD system is expected to intercept incoming missiles, like hypothetical attacks waged by adversaries such as Iran or North Korea. Even when US officials have scripted test drills to try out this ability, however, the GMD program has hardly acted as expected. The last successful intercept occurred five-and-a-half years ago, and the last three attempts — two in 2010 and one last July — all were unsuccessful.

"The tests are scripted for success," Philip E. Coyle III, a former director of operational testing and evaluation for the Pentagon, told the Times. *"What's amazing to me is that they still fail."*

Because of this tainted track record, all eyes are expected to be on a drill later this month on June 22. MDA Director Navy Vice Adm. James Syring told Congress recently that the upcoming intercept flight test remains his "highest priority," and with good reason: 14 new intercepts could be added to a MDA system currently composed of 30 if the upcoming test is a success, but Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel hinted that failure would mean a halt in funding.

Speaking before Congress, Sen. Dick Durbin (D-Illinois) said *"not just friends of the United States but even our enemies"* will monitor the next round of testing in order to gauge the current abilities of the MDA program.

"I'm also optimistic we have identified the cause of the intercept failure involving our first-generation EKV last July when the CE-1 failed to separate from the booster's third stage," Syring said. *"We have accounted for this issue in the upcoming flight test and we are working toward a correction for the entire fleet before the end of the year."*

Regardless, Syring is appealing to Congress for \$99.5 million to begin what he described Wednesday to the Times as *"redesign improvement"* that would stop short of a complete overhaul, sources familiar with the matter told the paper.

<http://rt.com/usa/166612-missile-defense-times-mda/>

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The London Guardian – London, U.K.

Nuclear Powers Modernising Arsenals, Says Study

Sipri says upgrades suggest nuclear weapons will remain deeply embedded elements of nations' defence strategies

By Richard Norton-Taylor

Monday, 16 June 2014

All five legally recognised nuclear-weapons states – China, France, Russia, Britain and the US – are deploying new nuclear weapon delivery systems or have announced programmes to do so, according to an authoritative study.

India and Pakistan are also developing new systems capable of delivering nuclear weapons and are expanding their capacities to produce fissile material for military purposes. And there is an emerging consensus in the expert community that North Korea has produced a small number of nuclear weapons, as distinct from rudimentary nuclear explosive devices.

These are the conclusions of the latest annual survey by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (Sipri), which says nine states – the US, Russia, the UK, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea – possess a total of approximately 4,000 operational nuclear weapons. A decrease in the overall number of nuclear weapons is due mainly to Russia and the US – which together account for more than 93% of all nuclear weapons – further reducing their inventories under the terms of the New Start treaty, the report says.

"Once again this year, the nuclear weapon-possessing states took little action to indicate a genuine willingness to work toward complete dismantlement of their nuclear arsenals. The long-term modernisation programmes under way in these states suggest their views that nuclear weapons will remain deeply embedded elements of their

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strategic calculus," said the Sipri researchers, Shannon Kile and Phillip Patton Schell. The US plans to spend up to \$350bn (about £200bn) over the next decade on modernising and maintaining its nuclear forces, including designing a replacement for its existing Trident submarines beginning in 2031, the study says. This would have implications for Britain's future nuclear weapons programme.

Russia is building a new class of nuclear missile submarines and replacing all its Soviet-era intercontinental ballistic missiles with mobile, multiple-warhead versions of the existing SS-27 system.

China is expanding its conventional ballistic missile programme and has deployed dual-capable medium and short-range ballistic missiles. Mixing conventional and nuclear missiles poses a critical risk of mistaken escalation of a conflict, as an adversary would not be able to determine whether the missile fired was armed with a conventional or nuclear warhead, Sipri warns.

Total nuclear warheads in 2014

US 7,300

Russia 8,000

UK 225 (160 deployed)

France 300

China 250

India 90-110

Pakistan 100-120

Israel 80

North Korea 6-8

Total 16,300

Source: Sipri Yearbook 2014

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jun/16/modernising-nuclear-weapons-arsenals-sipri-study>

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Great Falls Tribune – Great Falls, MT

Last Malmstrom ICBM Reconfigured under Treaty

By Jenn Rowell

June 18, 2014

In an effort to comply with New START, a nuclear arms reduction treaty with Russia, the Air Force completed work to reconfigure all of the nation's Minuteman III missiles, which are located at Malmstrom, F.E. Warren and Minot Air Force bases. The Minuteman III is the only intercontinental ballistic missile remaining in service.

The Minuteman ICBMs were previously configured to carry up to three multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles, MIRVs that were each armed with a nuclear warhead and able to hit three separate targets from a single missile launch.

On June 16, maintainers at Malmstrom removed the last of the extra MIRVs on a Minuteman Missile in the 341st Missile Wing's inventory.

The New START treaty, which entered into force Feb. 5, 2011, limits the number of deployed strategic warheads to 1,550, and limits the number of nuclear capable deployed and non-deployed delivery vehicles to 800. Of that, 700 can be deployed. These numbers must be met by Feb. 5, 2018.

The treaty doesn't regulate how the U.S. or Russia choose to configure their strategic nuclear weapons within those limits.

The 2010 Nuclear Posture Review, a U.S. national security strategy document, dictated that all Minuteman III missiles be reconfigured to carry only one MIRV with one warhead.

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“The United States will deMIRV all deployed ICBMs, so that each Minuteman III ICBM has only one nuclear warhead. ‘DeMIRVing’ will reduce each missile to a single warhead. This step will enhance the stability of the nuclear balance by reducing the incentives for either side to strike first,” the document stated.

In April, the Pentagon announced its implementation plan to meet the New START limits by reducing the ICBM force to 400 deployed missiles with 54 in warm status, meaning those silos will be maintained and communications systems remain in place so that the silo can be armed with a missile at any time.

Silos in warm status count toward the treaty limitation of 800 deployed and nondeployed launchers.

The Pentagon plan also includes 60 deployed nuclear-capable bombers and 240 deployed submarine-launched ballistic missiles. The Pentagon also plans to maintain 40 submarine launched ballistic missile tubes, 20 tubes on two submarines in overhaul, and six heavy bombers that are nondeployed.

“This was the last Minuteman III in the Air Force to be ‘deMIRVed,’ and this is a major milestone in meeting the force structure numbers to comply with the New START requirements,” said Steve Ray, Air Force Global Strike Command missile maintenance division. “This is historic because we’ve had MIRVs in the field for more than 40 years, since 1970 when the first Minuteman III came on alert.”

The Air Force was the lead agency in the Minuteman reconfiguration, but multiple federal agencies were involved in the process.

Ray said that the Air Force coordinated with the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, which maintains a database of where all missiles are located, with the Department of Energy for shipment of the weapons, and with U.S. Strategic Command, who must be notified of how many weapons they have supporting them at all times.

“At the base, it took a five-man missile mechanical team to go out and pull the top off the missile, and they were supported by a large security forces team and helicopters, which ensured safe transport to and from the base,” Ray said of the work completed at all three ICBM bases. “The missile operators also played a role, as they maintain command and control at the missile sites. Everyone at the heart of the missile operations team was involved. It was a real team effort.”

A team of 12 people at the weapons storage area at each base was involved in the process of disassembling and reconfiguring the system to a single reentry vehicle, making sure the maintenance was done in a safe and secure manner, according to AFGSC.

“We’re reducing the number of weapons from a Cold War high in conjunction with the Russians,” Ray said. “To take these multiple independent reentry vehicles to a single reentry vehicle is a significant milestone in stability and arms control.”

Malmstrom is also in the process of eliminating the 50 ICBM silos from the former 564th Missile Squadron, which was deactivated in 2008. All of the squadron’s launch facilities will be demolished.

Russian inspectors verified April 9 that 18 ICBM launch facilities had been eliminated at Malmstrom.

The initial phase of elimination began in January.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Air Force Civil Engineering Center selected Bryan Construction Inc. of Colorado Springs, Colo., as the demolition contractor. Current estimates call for eliminating the 50 launch facilities, located in Toole, Pondera, Teton and Chouteau counties, by late 2014.

The contractor will eliminate the launch facilities by filling them with earth and gravel. Gravel fill is a more effective and environmentally friendly method of elimination that’s also faster and more economical than those used in the past under the original START treaty. The work doesn’t pose any threat to public safety or the environment, according to Malmstrom officials.

The verification immediately reduces the number of ICBM launchers the U.S. is accountable for under New START requirements.

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After the April inspection, at least 16 more launch facilities had been completely demolished, according to Malmstrom officials. Those sites must remain undisturbed for 60 days and then they are removed from the U.S. launcher count under New START.

<http://www.greatfalls Tribune.com/story/news/local/2014/06/18/last-malmstrom-icbm-reconfigured-treaty/10773351/>

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The Washington Free Beacon – Washington, D.C.

U.S. Opposes New Draft Treaty from China and Russia Banning Space Weapons

Arms control pact sought as Beijing, Moscow secretly build anti-satellite, space arms

By Bill Gertz

June 19, 2014

The United States is opposing a new draft treaty submitted to the United Nations last week by China and Russia that seeks legally binding curbs on weapons in space amid concerns that both states are secretly building space arms.

The draft treaty—updated from a 2008 version—cannot be verified, according to Frank A. Rose, deputy assistant secretary of state for arms control, verification, and compliance.

“The United States believes that arms control proposals and concepts should only be considered by the international community if they are equitable, effectively verifiable, and enhance the security of all,” Rose told a June 10 session in Geneva of the U.N. Conference on Disarmament.

The Chinese-Russian draft treaty “does not meet the necessary criteria,” Rose said, adding that the U.S. opposition is based on a preliminary assessment that the new draft fails to address “significant flaws” in the 2008 draft.

“Namely, there is no effective verification regime to monitor compliance, and terrestrially based anti-satellite systems posing the greatest and most imminent threat to space systems are not captured,” Rose said.

Rose instead said the United States favors a less formal “code of conduct” for space being promoted by the European Union. The code has come under fire from the Pentagon’s Joint Staff that stated in a 2012 assessment that the code would harm U.S. military space activities.

A U.S. official said the Chinese-Russian treaty proposal would effectively kill international efforts on a code of conduct for space.

China is engaged in a major space weapons development program that includes ground-based anti-satellite missiles, lasers and electronic jammers, and small maneuvering satellites that can attack orbiting satellites.

Beijing’s January 2007 test of an anti-satellite (ASAT) missile to blast an orbiting weather satellite left tens of thousands of pieces of debris orbiting the earth. The debris threatens both manned and unmanned spacecraft with destructive high-speed collisions.

Russia also is developing space warfare weapons.

Mark Schneider, a former Pentagon strategic analyst, said the administration’s opposition to the new space weapons treaty is one of the few times he has agreed with the administration on an arms control issue.

“All U.S. administrations have rejected space control because there are serious definitional problems, such as what is a space weapon,” Schneider said. “And there are serious verification problems associated with it.

Additionally, the space arms ban treaty is part of Russian and Chinese efforts to attack U.S. and allied missile defenses, which are heavily reliant on space sensors and weapons.

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"At some point I believe we should put missile defense into space," said Schneider who worked in the Pentagon on strategic defense, space, and verification policies.

Additionally, "Russia is certain to cheat on any space treaty," Schneider said. "They have announced that they are developing ASAT weapons. Moreover, they may be developing space offensive weapons."

The Soviet Union in the 1960s deployed a nuclear space weapon system called the fractional orbital bombardment system. It used an orbiting strategic missile in low earth orbit that was designed to de-orbit and attack the United States by transiting southward from the South Pole to avoid radar detection.

Russian military writings have indicated recently that Moscow may revive the orbiting southern polar missile attack system. Analysts have said that in addition to providing Moscow with a first-strike space nuclear weapon, the system could also be used in a devastating electro-magnetic pulse attack over U.S. territory that would destroy all electronics over a large area.

A State Department spokesman referred questions about the U.S. position on the space arms treaty to Rose's statement.

Former State Department China specialist John Tkacik said the draft treaty appears to be a ploy by Beijing and Moscow.

"The Chinese and Russians have no interest in actually abiding by any international treaty that limits the militarization of space, but they are keen to get the United States to tie itself in knots over one," Tkacik said.

The Obama administration's criteria for a space treaty—that it be verifiable and contain precise definitions—is also faulty, Tkacik said.

"It is a truth universally acknowledged that countries with a tradition of respect for the rule of law abide by such treaties, while countries with no respect for law—like Russia and China, to name but a few—see treaties as subterfuges with which to confound the gullible," he said.

The draft treaty is formally called the Treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space and of the Threat or Use of Force against Outer Space Objects. It was presented to the United Nations Conference on Disarmament on June 10.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying told reporters in Beijing that the new draft incorporates unspecified "new developments" in recent years on space security.

"It reflects the two countries' efforts to promote negotiation on and formulation of the treaty on arms control in outer space and prevent outer space arms race," she said.

Hua said China is opposed to weaponizing space.

"We call on the international community to work out a legally binding international treaty through negotiation based on the draft treaty submitted by China and Russia as soon as possible, so as to fundamentally safeguard peace and security of outer space," Hua said. "We hope that some of the countries can listen attentively to the appeal of the international community and deal with the proposal for negotiation with a constructive attitude."

The official Chinese military newspaper, PLA Daily, stated June 12 that China wants the treaty to prevent upsetting the strategic balance and stability.

"Existing laws on outer space can neither prevent space weaponization nor effectively prevent using or threatening to use force against objects in outer space," the military newspaper said.

Observers say the Russian and Chinese push for a legally binding space arms treaty are part of unconventional legal warfare, or lawfare, efforts designed to achieve the objective of limiting their adversaries military capabilities covertly.

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A Pentagon-sponsored report on China's use of lawfare predicted China's use of the UN conference to limit U.S. military space capabilities.

"In the future, Chinese legal warfare could provide advantages in areas such as treaties regulating or abolishing the emplacement of weapons in space, or the fielding of anti-satellite systems," according to the May 2013 report "China: The Three Warfares."

"For instance, at the United Nations Conference on Disarmament, China has favored a position that the U.S. must negotiate a new treaty banning the 'weaponization' of space."

The report said the current 1967 Outer Space Treaty prohibits only the placing of weapons of mass destruction in space, with limits against harmful contamination of space.

"In a new UN space weapons treaty, "the Chinese would not be required to forego their arsenal of ground-based kinetic and non-kinetic antisatellite weapons," the report said.

The Obama administration's 2010 National Space Policy does not rule out the use of space weapons in support of U.S. defense and national security objectives.

"The United States will employ a variety of measures to help assure the use of space for all responsible parties, and, consistent with the inherent right of self-defense, deter others from interference and attack, defend our space systems and contribute to the defense of allied space systems, and, if deterrence fails, defeat efforts to attack them," the policy, dated June 28, 2010, states.

A year later the Pentagon and Office of the Director of National Intelligence published the National Security Space Strategy that calls for promoting the peaceful use of space, but retaining the right to defeat space threats—an indication that space weapons could be developed and fielded in the future.

<http://freebeacon.com/national-security/u-s-opposes-new-draft-treaty-from-china-and-russia-banning-space-weapons/>

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Want China Times – Taipei, Taiwan

PLA Completes Next-Gen Nuclear Submarine Tests in S China Sea

By Staff Reporter

June 15, 2014

The People's Liberation Army Navy has successfully completed its first organized tests of China's new generation of nuclear submarines, reports the Communist Party mouthpiece People's Daily.

The high-pressure tests were reportedly completed by a special research unit inside the PLA Navy which has been responsible for testing almost all of the China's modern underwater and submarine systems.

"Our country's new generation of underwater weapons and equipment carries the dream of a powerful national military," said Fei Zhigang, director of the research unit. "No matter how much risk it puts us under, it's worth it!"

The research unit was said to have conducted several hundred tests in an unspecified section of the South China Sea, including maiden tests for more than a dozen domestic submarine combat systems.

Numerous domestic underwater records were broken, the People's Daily said, with the unit's chief engineer, Cui Zigang, singled out for solving three technical bottlenecks during the tests.

The paper added that submarine torpedoes successfully destroyed multiple underwater targets at record depths.

China claims the vast majority of the contested South China Sea and is currently embroiled in a territorial dispute with a number of countries over the region, including the Philippines over the Spratly Islands and with Vietnam over the Paracel Islands.

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An engineer in the PLA Navy research unit said the test location is important as new weapons and systems need to be tested in conditions in which they will be deployed in war.

Netizens recently posted photos of a PLA submarine base which showed three Chinese Type 094 Jin Class nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines. An additional submarine pictured alongside them is believed to be a Type 093 submarine which is armed with various torpedoes and anti-ship missiles.

<http://www.wantchinatimes.com/news-subclass-cnt.aspx?cid=1101&MainCatID=11&id=20140615000114>

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Yonhap News Agency – Seoul, South Korea

Nuclear Program Not Subject to Negotiation: N. Korean Newspaper

June 16, 2014

SEOUL, June 16 (Yonhap) -- North Korea's nuclear arms program is not a matter of political negotiations, the country's mouthpiece newspaper said Monday, expressing Pyongyang's intention to stick to atomic weapons development.

The report by the Rodong Sinmun daily, an organ of the Workers' Party of Korea, came as the top South Korean envoy on talks aimed at ending North Korea's nuclear programs held a chain of negotiations with his counterparts in neighboring countries.

Chief six-party negotiator Hwang Joon-kook met with his counterparts from the U.S. and China earlier this month before flying to hold a meeting with his Russian counterpart this week as part of efforts to resume a long-stalled multilateral forum to end North Korea's nuclear program.

"The fuss made by the U.S. and its followers in the international stage as if they are interested in denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula is a ridiculous trick in expectations of concession or compromise from us (North Korea) who (will) further strengthen our war deterrence," reported an article, carried by the daily.

The article also reasserted the country's widely-declared dual policy of seeking both economic development and nuclear arms development, saying that "now for us, it is unthinkable to build economic might and a strong socialist country without strengthening nuclear capacities."

North Korea will not respond to U.S. calls to give up nuclear arms in exchange for development assistance, the newspaper said, adding that "our nuclear deterrence is not an object of political negotiations or economic trading."

The reaction from the North came amid growing efforts by member countries of the six-party denuclearization talks to resume the negotiations. Since the talks were suspended in late 2008, the North has conducted two more nuclear tests, considerably upgrading its nuclear arms program.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2014/06/16/86/0301000000AEN20140616002200315F.html>

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The Chosun Ilbo – Seoul, South Korea

N.Korea Has New 'Potentially Destabilizing' Cruise Missile

Voice of America (VOA) News

June 18, 2014

A U.S. research group said a cruise missile appears to be the latest addition to North Korea's increasingly advanced arsenal.

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The U.S.-Korea Institute at Johns Hopkins University spotted the new missile in a brief shot buried within a North Korean military propaganda video. It said the cruise missile is a sea-based copy of the Russian-made, anti-ship Kh-35, which can be launched from ships, helicopters, or land.

The institute, which published the findings on its 38 North blog, said Pyongyang most likely acquired the missile through direct sale from Russia. It said North Korea could have also obtained the cruise missile through a third party such as Burma, which is also known as Myanmar.

Any such deal would be in violation of United Nations sanctions on North Korea's nuclear and missile programs.

In recent years, North Korea has carried out three nuclear tests, as well as a series of short-, medium- and long-range ballistic missile tests.

The report's author, Jeffrey Lewis, said modern cruise missiles would be a "new and potentially destabilizing addition to North Korea's missile arsenal."

He said there are also concerns North Korea could sell the Kh-35 cruise missile technology to others, as it has with the Soviet-made Scud missile.

Guided cruise missiles travel at a lower trajectory and generally are more accurate than ballistic missiles, which are guided only during their initial powered phase of flight.

http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2014/06/18/2014061801156.html

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China.org.cn – Beijing, China

S. Korean Defense Chief Vows Not to Buy THAAD, but Hints No Objection to Deployment

Xinhua

June 18, 2014

South Korean Defense Minister Kim Kwan-jin said Wednesday that the country has no plan to purchase the U.S.-developed interceptor missiles, but he indicated no objection to the U.S. deployment of its missile defense system on the Korean Peninsula.

Kim said during the parliamentary interpellation session that "we made it clear for us to have no plan to buy and deploy" the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) developed by the U.S. - based enterprise Lockheed Martin.

A week earlier, the country's arms procurement agency announced a plan to develop its own interceptor instead of adopting the THAAD, designed to intercept ballistic missiles at an altitude of 40-150 km.

The minister, however, hinted at no objection to the THAAD deployment on the Korean Peninsula by the United States, saying that if the U.S. Forces Korea (USFK) deploys the THAAD, it will make possible a multi-layered missile defense together with Patriot missiles.

Kim, who was named as top presidential security advisor, is now doubling as the defense minister as new minister nominee has yet to pass through the parliamentary confirmation hearing.

Given the limited range of the THAAD interceptors, the THAAD's operational reach will be restricted to the Korean peninsula, Kim said, noting that the system can shoot down Scud missiles as well as Rodong missiles possibly fired by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

Asked whether he will not object to the THAAD deployment by the U.S., Kim said there has been no request from the U.S. for reviewing the deployment, adding that the issue has been purportedly under discussions within the U.S.

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Vice-chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff James Winnefeld said on May 28 that the U.S. military was mulling an additional deployment of interceptor missiles in the Asia-Pacific region to prepare for what he called the DPRK threats.

Kim noted that South Korea had asked for materials about the THAAD to consult those when establishing the country's missile defense system.

South Korea has pushed for the Korea Air and Missile Defense (KAMD), or its own missile defense system which focuses on a terminal-phase, low-altitude missile defense. It means intercepting missiles at an altitude of less than 100 km.

Seoul will upgrade its PAC-2 missiles to Lockheed Martin's Pac-3 to intercept missiles at an altitude of less than 40 km. The medium-range surface-to-air (M-SAM) missiles will help PAC-3 shoot down missiles at such altitudes.

The long-range SAM, which South Korea planned to develop with its own technology, will intercept missiles at an altitude of 40 km or above.

It will improve the multi-layered missile defense, which South Korea has been targeting. The multi-layered system means the failure of the first-stage interceptors leads to the second-stage interception at different altitudes.

http://www.china.org.cn/world/Off_the_Wire/2014-06/18/content_32704939.htm

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Yonhap News Agency – Seoul, South Korea

NK's March Missile Test Aimed at Evading Interceptor Systems:

Sources

June 19, 2014

SEOUL, June 19 (Yonhap) -- North Korea's firing of ballistic missiles in March seems to have been aimed at testing if its midrange ones could target South Korea by skirting South Korean and U.S. interception systems, military sources here said Thursday.

On March 26, the communist North test-fired two midrange Rodong missiles from north of Pyongyang. Though the missiles have an estimated range of 1,000 kilometers to 1,500 km, those in March flew about 650 km before dropping into the East Sea.

"North Korea fired the Rodong missiles at a higher than usual launch angle in order to shorten their maximum range," a senior military officer here said, requesting anonymity.

Though Rodong-class missiles mostly target American bases in Japan, while parts of China and Russia are within their range, shooting them in the way that was adopted in March could cause them to hit South Korea.

"By carrying out such a test, North Korea appears to have come up with a way not to be caught by either the South Korean or American missile interception system when launching an attack against South Korea with its midrange missiles," he added.

While declining to mention Pyongyang's intention behind the test, Seoul's defense ministry said the current missile defense system on Korean soil is not able to kill the North's Rodong-class weapons.

"At that time, the Rodong missiles flew at altitudes of more than 160 kilometers and with a top speed of over Mach 7.0. In that case, it is not easy for Patriot PAC-3 missiles to shoot them down," Seoul's defense ministry spokesman said at a regular briefing.

South Korea now has a missile interception system with Patriot PAC-2 missiles, and the U.S. Forces Korea employs PAC-3 missiles.

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Both PAC-2 and PAC-3 missiles target Scud short-range missiles with a range of up to 500 kilometers. They also can intercept missiles at an altitude of under 40 kilometers.

Rodong missiles are considered to be more destructive as they can carry a nuclear warhead, but it is unknown whether Pyongyang has the capability to develop a small enough warhead to fit on them.

"That's why we have been developing our own long-range surface-to-air missiles (L-SAM) with our indigenous technology," the spokesman said, reaffirming the government's earlier stance that it will not buy the U.S. Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) battery.

THAAD, which can shoot down missiles at an altitude of up to 150 kilometers, is an integral part of the U.S.-led missile defense (MD), and South Korea has said it will not join the air defense system that Japan takes part in and aims to counter a rising China in the region.

Increasing pressure on South Korea to join its air defense system, however, the U.S. is considering deploying the THAAD battery in South Korea, citing evolving threats posed by North Korea.

"We will neither introduce nor plan to adopt the THAAD system in accordance with our own plan to develop the L-SAM system," he said.

As for the remarks by Defense Minister Kim Kwan-jin on Wednesday that South Korea does not oppose the deployment of the interceptor on Korean soil in accordance with the U.S. Forces Korea's own decision, the spokesman said even the THAAD deployment here does not mean that South Korea is joining the U.S. MD system.

"The primary goal (of the U.S.) in bringing the THAAD battery here is to protect its forces stationed here," Kim said. "Furthermore, it does not fit our military's Korea Air and Missile Defense system."

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2014/06/19/98/0301000000AEN20140619004600315F.html>

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BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) News – London, U.K.
14 June 2014

Scottish Independence: Nuclear Free Promise for Constitution

The removal of nuclear weapons from Scottish soil should be part of a post-independence constitution, according to Scotland's deputy first minister.

Nicola Sturgeon said a legal obligation to work for nuclear disarmament should be enshrined in the document.

It would place a duty on the Scottish government to work to remove submarine-based Trident nuclear weapons.

The MoD said the naval fleet at Faslane on the Clyde supported 8,000 jobs and there were no plans to move it.

The draft interim constitution, to be published for consultation shortly, will set out how an independent Scotland could prepare a written constitution.

It will also detail interim arrangements such as the role of government and the protection of human rights.

In a speech at Edinburgh University on Monday, Ms Sturgeon will argue that it should contain a constitutional commitment to remove all nuclear weapons from Scottish territory.

She said: "We believe nuclear weapons have no place in Scotland, and have made clear our intention to negotiate for the removal of Trident within the first parliamentary term of an independent Scotland.

'Permanent ban'

"Now, following consultation with the people of Scotland, these plans could be bound by constitutional law.

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"Scottish taxpayers have been paying to have one of the largest concentrations of nuclear weapons in Europe on our doorsteps. It's high time that comes to an end.

"The people of Scotland now have the opportunity to remove Trident before we are hit with a share of the further £100bn in costs for a new generation of weapons of mass destruction on the Clyde.

"The Scottish government will also propose, for the permanent constitution, a constitutional prohibition on nuclear weapons being based in Scotland. This way they would never return."

A MoD spokesperson said there were no plans to move the Trident fleet from its Faslane base.

The spokesperson added: "From 2017 all of the Royal Navy's submarines will be based at Faslane, supporting 8,000 jobs.

"The defence secretary has previously said that any alternative solution would come at huge cost and take decades to replace.

"We are confident that the Scottish people will vote to remain part of the UK family which is the only way Scotland can be certain of its security, and benefit from the manpower, bases and military equipment that the union provides."

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-27847874>

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ITAR-TASS News Agency – Moscow, Russia

Russia Extends Service Life of Voevoda Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles to 27 Years

Strategic Missile Troops are armed with six types of missile systems

June 17, 2014

MOSCOW, June 17. /ITAR-TASS/. Service life of heavy intercontinental ballistic missiles Voevoda (SS-18 Satan according to NATO classification) was extended from 20 to 27 years, the press service of Russian Strategic Missile Forces told ITAR-TASS on Tuesday.

"Service lives of missile systems on combat duty were extended. Service life of missiles RS-20V Voevoda was extended to 27 years, RS-12M Topol to 26 years, RS-12M2 Topol-M (SS-27) is being extended to more than 15 years, and RS-18 (Stiletto SS-19) — to 36 years," the press service said.

The warranty service life of mobile ground-based missile systems Topol-M and Yars makes 15 years, the press service recalled. As long as service life of these missiles expires it will be decided to extend it or convert these missile systems to advanced models.

"Missile systems with missiles RS-18 Stiletto, RS-20V Voevoda, RS-12M Topol will be on combat duty of Strategic Missile Forces until the expiration of their service lives, alongside missile systems will be lifted from combat service and decommissioned gradually as long as new types of weapons are brought into service," the press service said.

Russian missile making is in industrial co-operation to create new missile systems "with features permitting to respond adequately to emerging and forecasted threats to Russian security," the press service said.

Strategic Missile Troops are armed with six types of missile systems: three silo-based missile systems Voevoda, Stiletto and Topol-M and three mobile ground-based missile systems Topol, Topol-M and Yars.

<http://en.itar-tass.com/russia/736382>

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Barents Observer – Oslo, Norway

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Heavily Armed Nuclear Sub Ready for Deep Sea Tests outside Norway

After 23 years of construction, the multi-purpose submarine "Severodvinsk" hoisted the navy's flag today. Next mission is likely deep sea tests west of the Bear Island.

By Thomas Nilsen

June 17, 2014

Never before in the Russian navy's history has a submarine been under construction for such long period. Starting back in 1993, based on drawings and blueprints that still had the USSR-stamps, the K-560 "Severodvinsk" became the navy's first 4th generation nuclear powered submarine armed with cruise-missiles that can carry nuclear warheads.

The submarine is the first of eight in the Yasen-class, the most heavily armed since the Oscar-II class. While the Oscar-II class, like the ill-fated "Kursk" submarine, can carry cruise-missiles with a limited range, "Severodvinsk" and her coming sister vessels carries an assortment of long-range cruise missiles, able to hit targets from 5,000 to 1,500 kilometers away. Such distance nearly erases the traditional classifications of what is a strategic submarine and an attack submarine.

Systems significantly deteriorated

"Severodvinsk" was first supposed to be launched in 1995 and commissioned for the Northern fleet in 1998. Economical and huge technical upgrade challenges for both the reactor, electronic warfare systems and weaponry, however, delayed those plans. Four years ago, in June 2010, "Severodvinsk" was finally put on water from the Sevmash yard in the city of which the submarine got her name. The maiden voyage took place in the White Sea in September the year after. The submarine spent some 100 days at sea during the period until autumn 2012, testing weapons, propulsion and other gear.

Before the submarine set sail for another series of tests in November 2012, BarentsObserver quoted a statement from Russia's former Deputy Commander Admiral Igor Kasatonov claiming some systems in the sub have significantly deteriorated due to the long construction period. Izvestia reported the same autumn that around 2,000 technical flaws were discovered during the tests.

White- and Barents Seas not deep enough

In a longer interview with Rossiskaya Gazeta on Tuesday, CEO of Malakhit Design Bureau, Vladimir Dorofeev, explains why the submarine today is officially transferred from the construction yard to the navy.

"The purpose [of transferring to the navy] is to organize and conduct tests that could not be carried out for objective reasons," says Vladimir Dorofeev. He explains that the White Sea is not deep enough for needed deep-dive tests. New submarines from Sevmash are normally tested in the waters from outside the Kandalaksha bay towards the outlet of the Varzuga River on the southern shores of the Kola Peninsula. At the deepest, these waters are 330 meters.

"Severodvinsk" can dive to 600 meters depth.

"I can most definitely say that electronic weapon systems can truly only be experienced on the high seas at great depths ... including deep dive," says Dorofeev," to Rossiskaya Gazeta.

"Komsomolets" accident

With depth from 150 to 400 meters, the Barents Sea, where the Russian Northern fleet's nuclear powered submarines normally operate, is no deep enough for testing "Severodvinsk."

The shelf first goes deep where the Barents Sea meets the Norwegian Sea, northwest of Troms and Finnmark and west of the Bear Island. Here the depth down to more than 2,000 meters. Also, the sailing distance from the naval bases on the Kola Peninsula is short. It was in these waters the Soviet navy's most deep diving submarine ever; the "Komsomolets" was exercising her diving capabilities when the disastrous fire started on April 7, 1989.

"Komsomolets" sank, killing 42 of the crew members.



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According to Wikipedia, “*Komsomolets*” was a one-of-a-kind submarine developed to test technologies for Soviet 4th generation submarines.

It is not clear for how long the “*Severodvinsk*” will conduct deep diving tests, or from which naval base, Zapadanaya Litsa, Vidyaevo or Gadzhievo, she will operate out from.

Worried about possible accident

Steinar Høibråten is expert on nuclear safety with the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment. He says to BarentsObserver that a nuclear submarine, like the “*Severodvinsk*” will most likely not be carrying weapons while undergoing tests.

“In case of an accident, I am much more worried about releases from the nuclear reactor than contamination from the weapons. Metallic uranium or plutonium will not contribute much to the radioactivity in the oceans,” Steinar Høibråten says.

Nuclear physicist and expert on Russian reactor safety, Nils Bøhmer with the Bellona Foundation in Oslo, says to BarentsObserver that accidents do happens, also on new submarines.

“Even though the Navy now gets more modern equipment, we know from experiences, like with the “*Komsomolets*” submarine that new submarines are no guarantee against accidents,” explains a worried Nils Bøhmer. He would better see the money spent on clean-up security after the Cold War that left huge amounts of nuclear waste at run-down storages along Russia’s northern coast.

“We think that when the Russian Navy can afford spending huge amounts on new equipment, they should also raise the spending on the cleanup of nuclear waste from the Cold War period, when up to 150 nuclear submarines were operating out from the Kola Peninsula,” argues Nils Bøhmer.

“*Severodvinsk*” is powered by one nuclear reactor. When fully armed, the 119 meters long submarine can carry 24 cruise missiles and eight torpedo launchers. She has a crew of 90. The two next submarines in the Yasen-class, named “*Kazan*” and “*Novosibirsk*” are already under construction, while the forth “*Krasnoyarsk*” will be laid down on Thursday this week.

<http://barentsobserver.com/en/security/2014/06/heavily-armed-nuclear-sub-ready-deep-sea-tests-outside-norway-17-06>

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Scottish Express.co.uk. – London, U.K.

Scots Reject Nationalists’ Plans to Kick out Trident Nuclear Deterrent

ALEX Salmond’s bid to rid Scotland of nuclear weapons has been rejected by voters, with more people wanting to keep Trident in the event of independence.

By Paul Gilbride

Tuesday, June 17, 2014

A survey shows 41 per cent believe the missile system should stay at Faslane on the Clyde if there is a Yes vote in September. This compares to 37 per cent who want it to go.

The survey found concern on both sides of the Border about the idea that tax rates and benefit levels would be different in Scotland and England. Just 34 per of people in Scotland and 28 per cent in England think it would be acceptable for the old age pension to be different.

The British social attitude survey findings came as the Scottish Government stepped up its anti-nuclear agenda.

Deputy First Minister Nicola Sturgeon published proposals for an interim constitution which would lead to “the safe and expeditious removal” of the weapons.

The SNP thinks this will strike a chord with the electorate, especially Labour voters it needs to sway.

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But Scottish Tory MSP Murdo Fraser said: “The SNP would have us believe every Scot is signed up to the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. But this study shows quite clearly the majority are perfectly happy with the nuclear deterrent on the Clyde.”

The SNP’s interim constitution has a commitment to keep the Queen as head of state, enshrine the European convention on human rights in law and tackle climate change.

In the event of a Yes vote, there would be a “temporary” constitution, to be replaced by a permanent one if Scotland became independent in March 2016 as the SNP hope.

The public will be able to comment on the proposals over the next four months.

Scottish Labour MP and former Secretary of State for Scotland Jim Murphy said: “Pooling and sharing our resources across the UK works for Scotland and it works for the UK as a whole.

“It’s clear that people in Scotland support this principle. The only way to secure that we continue to work together to pay for pensions and benefits is to vote for Scotland to stay in the UK.

“Like me, the majority of Scots feel proudly Scottish first and foremost but that doesn’t mean we can’t be British too.

“We don’t need to choose between the two.”

[http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/482901/Scots-reject-Nationalists-plans-to-kick-out-Trident-nuclear-deterrent?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+daily-express-uk-news+\(Daily+Express+%3A%3A+UK+Feed\)](http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/482901/Scots-reject-Nationalists-plans-to-kick-out-Trident-nuclear-deterrent?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+daily-express-uk-news+(Daily+Express+%3A%3A+UK+Feed))

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ITAR-TASS News Agency – Moscow, Russia

Ukraine Keeps Maintaining Russian ICBMs Satan Despite Ban on Military Ties

Earlier, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko ordered to halt military cooperation with Russia
June 19, 2014

MOSCOW, June 19. /ITAR-TASS/. Ukraine’s Dnipropetrovsk-based missile-developing design bureau Yuzhnoye does not stop maintenance of Russian intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM) RS-20 Satan which are in service of the Russian Strategic Missile Troops, Izvestia daily reported on Thursday with the reference to a representative of the design bureau specialists.

Earlier, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko ordered to halt military cooperation with Russia. Meanwhile, the design bureau noted that the ban on military cooperation with Russia is possible only in case of a presidential decree to this effect that has not been issued yet.

“Our specialists went to Russia and keep visiting the country on different issues, primarily space rocket projects. If the president takes a decision and we are officially informed about it, then c-operation will be halted,” the source in Yuzhnoye design bureau said. Russian Defense Ministry does not have any information about the specific treaty being severed.

If this becomes reality after all, then, according to experts, “Russian enterprises have all opportunities for independent operations, and military forces have required documentation on missiles,” the daily reported.

Missile RS-20 Satan is considered the best strategic weapon in the world. The missile was developed at Dnipropetrovsk-based Yangel design bureau Yuzhnoye in 1973 and was brought into service of Soviet army in 1975. RS-20 can deliver up to ten warheads at a distance of more than 10,000 kilometers. Such reinforced facilities as silos and command posts are its targets.

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Satan will be in military service until 2022, Chief Commander of Strategic Missile Troops Sergei Karakeyev said. This missile should be replaced with ground-based strategic missile systems Topol-M and Yars, as well as ICBM Bulava.

Maintenance of Russian missiles RS-20 should continue until 2017 under the contract between the Defense Ministry and the Yuzhmash factory, the daily recalled. According to experts' estimates, Russia pays around \$10 million annually to the Ukrainian enterprise for missile maintenance.

<http://en.itar-tass.com/world/736727>

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ITAR-TASS News Agency – Moscow, Russia

Yars Missile Complex Facilities to Be Commissioned in Kaluga Region in December

June 20, 2014

MOSCOW, June 20. /ITAR-TASS/. Infrastructure facilities at the Yars missile system complex near the city of Kaluga in central European Russia are to be commissioned in December 2014, in line with the schedule, the press service of Russia's Federal Agency for Special Construction Projects (Spetsstroj) told ITAR-TASS on Friday.

The Kozelsk missile troops unit has been shifting to RS-24 Yars intercontinental ballistic missiles since 2012 to be the first one in the Russian army to be completely equipped with such weapons.

"The complex is planned to be commissioned in December 2014 in full compliance with the schedule set by the Russian defense ministry," the press service said.

Apart from that, Spetsstroj said that commander of Russia's strategic missile forces Colonel General Sergei Karakayev had arrived in the Kaluga region to inspect the Kozels missile troops unit.

<http://en.itar-tass.com/russia/737065>

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The Jerusalem Post – Jerusalem, Israel

Rouhani: Nuclear Deal by July 20 Deadline still Possible

In speech, Iranian president says differences with world powers can be settled in order to reach deal; offers assistance to Iraq in help fighting insurgents.

By Reuters

14 June 2014

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said in a speech Saturday that he believes it is possible to conclude a comprehensive nuclear agreement with major world powers by a July 20 deadline.

Remaining differences could be settled through goodwill and flexibility, he said.

In the nuclear talks the main stumbling block has been the permissible scope of Iran's uranium enrichment. The lack of progress in bridging gaps has left the parties' deadline for a long-term settlement looking increasingly unrealistic and Iran has said a six-month extension may be necessary.

Rouhani also added that Iran stands ready to help Iraq's government in its fight against Sunni Muslim insurgents within the framework of international law, although Baghdad has so far not requested assistance.

Shi'ite Muslim Iran, which has strong leverage in Shi'ite-majority Iraq, is so alarmed by the Sunni jihadist advance from Iraq's north that it may be ready to cooperate with longtime arch-enemy Washington in helping Baghdad fight back.



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A senior Iranian official told Reuters earlier this week that the idea is being discussed within the Tehran leadership. For now, officials say, Iran will send its neighbor advisers and weaponry, although probably not troops, to boost Baghdad.

<http://www.ipost.com/International/Rouhani-Nuclear-deal-by-July-20-deadline-still-possible-359305>

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Ha'aretz Daily News – Jerusalem, Israel

Iran Ready for 'Final Step' in Nuclear Deal, but Rifts Remain

Rohani says Iran just needs West's commitment to recognize its right to nuclear program for peaceful purposes, but disagreement rife over number of centrifuges the Islamic Republic will be allowed to keep.

By Barak Ravid

June 18, 2014

Iran will be ready to take the "final step" toward resolving the nuclear issue if the world recognizes Iran's right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, Iranian President Hassan Rohani said on the third day of a critical round of nuclear talks in Vienna between Iran and six world powers.

"If the international community recognizes Iran's right for peaceful use of nuclear energy, Tehran will be ready to take the final step towards resolution of the issue," Rohani told a large crowd in the Iranian city of Khorramabad on Wednesday, Iran's Fars News Agency reported.

The Islamic Republic and major powers are still at odds over significant issues that would be included in a final deal, however, namely the number of centrifuges Iran will be allowed to keep in its possession, conversion of various nuclear facilities, and the period of time in which the country's nuclear program will be under international supervision.

The fifth round of talks on a final agreement on the Iranian nuclear program began in Vienna on Monday, with a meeting between EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton and Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, followed by trilateral talks that also included U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Bill Burns and lead U.S. negotiator Wendy Sherman.

The Iranian delegation said it wants to reach a first draft of the final agreement by the end of the current round of talks Friday. "If we reach a preliminary text at the end of this round, that will be good progress," said Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi.

Araghchi said the sides were trying to minimize disagreements so they could start drafting the preliminary text. He said there was general willingness to try to reach an agreement by July 20. Araghchi said does not see "any sign" Washington is trying to prolong negotiations, adding: "Americans are serious."

All the same, the disagreements remain significant, primarily centering around the level of uranium enrichment capability Iran will be allowed to maintain once an agreement is reached.

The six world powers are prepared to let Iran keep a few hundred centrifuges only for the purpose of enriching uranium on Iranian territory. The powers are demanding that Iran dismantle almost all of the 20,000 centrifuges currently in its possession and agree to limit its inventory of enriched uranium.

Iran, however, is demanding to expand the number of centrifuges in its possession from 20,000 to 150,000, some of which are planned to be more advanced than those it currently has.

As far as the powers are concerned, dramatically reducing Iran's ability to enrich uranium – in such a way to make it impossible for the Islamic Republic to make a "forward breakthrough" to nuclear weapons – is an essential part of any permanent deal.

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There are, however, other disagreements. The powers are demanding that Iran convert its fortified underground facility in Fordow from a uranium enrichment plant to a different kind of facility altogether. The Iranians are refusing to accede to this request, and are demanding the right to continue enrichment.

The powers are also demanding that Iran redraft its plans for the heavy water reactor in Arak and turn it into a light water reactor, in which it would be impossible to make plutonium for a nuclear weapon. The Iranians are prepared to implement technical changes in the reactor that would restrict how much plutonium could be created, but will not agree to convert the reactor into one for light water.

The two sides are also in disagreement over the timetable dictating when the restrictions on Iran's nuclear program will be lifted. The United States has demanded that as part of the agreement, Iran be prepared to restrict its nuclear program for up to 20 years. Within the first 20 years, Iran's nuclear facility would be under tight supervision, and the limits would be gradually lifted over the course of the final 10 years. The Iranians, however, are prepared to agree to a timetable of just 15 years, and want the lifting of the restrictions to begin within just a few years.

<http://www.haaretz.com/news/middle-east/1.599622>

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The London Daily Telegraph – London, U.K.

Chemical Weapons Including Chlorine still Being Used in Syria Says UN

Conclusion by Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons follows Telegraph investigation into fatal attacks

By Damien McElroy, and agencies

18 June 2014

Chemical weapons such as chlorine have likely been used in a "systematic manner" in **Syria**, according to a report by a team from the world's chemical weapons authority to investigate alleged attacks following a Telegraph investigation that established chlorine had been used in three attacks in the north of the country in March.

The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) mission said evidence "lends credence to the view that toxic chemicals, most likely pulmonary irritating agents such as chlorine, have been used in a systematic manner in a number of attacks," according to a copy of a report by a UN fact-finding mission.

President Bashar al-Assad's regime and rebels have both accused the other side of using chemical agents, including chlorine, in the bloody uprising that began in March 2011 and in spite of Damascus promising to hand over all its chemical arms.

The OPCW team investigating the allegations was attacked with a roadside bomb and gunfire on May 27, preventing them accessing the site of an alleged attack in the village of Kafr Zita.

"The attack on the team and the resulting denial of access prevents it from presenting definitive conclusions," the report added.

Nevertheless, the allegations "cannot be dismissed as unconnected, random, or of a nature attributable to purely political motives," the report said.

Despite not being able to visit the alleged site of the chlorine attack, OPCW officials spoke to doctors in Kafr Zita "and obtained their verbal medical reports relating to the treatment of individuals allegedly affected by exposure to chlorine."

The team also saw video footage of the alleged attack and of alleged munitions used in the attack, some of which remained intact.

Soil samples from the scene of three recent attacks in the country **were collected by trained individuals known to the Telegraph** and subsequently analysed by a chemical warfare expert.

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The results showed sizeable and unambiguous traces of chlorine and ammonia present at the site of all three attacks. The report noted that chlorine is a widely available chemical, that is non-persistent and so conclusively proving its use is "a challenging task".

Syria has set up a committee to investigate further allegations of chemical attacks, the report said, with Damascus claiming to have captured chemicals from rebels, who had also seized a chlorine-producing plant 25 miles from Aleppo.

The attacks, which in some cases used canisters marked with their chemical contents, were conducted by helicopter. In the Syrian civil war, only the regime has access to aerial power, so the chemical attacks in Idlib province could only have been carried out by the regime, not the opposition.

Syria has already shipped out 92 per cent of its stockpile of chemical weapons under the terms of a UN-backed and US-Russia brokered deal agreed last year.

However, eight per cent of its stockpile remains at one site and cannot be taken to Latakia port because of the security situation.

The chlorine inquiry came after France and the United States alleged that Assad's forces may have unleashed industrial chemicals rebel-held village in recent months.

Syria did not have to declare its stockpile of chlorine – a weak toxic agent that can be considered a chemical weapon if used offensively – as part of the disarmament deal as it is widely used for commercial and domestic purposes.

Danish and Norwegian ships are to take all of Syria's chemicals from Latakia port to a US ship for destruction at sea, along with sites in Finland, the US and Britain, by a now-impossible June 30 deadline.

The deal was reached after a sarin nerve gas attack in a rebel-held Damascus suburb killed around 1,400 people. Damascus agreed to hand over its chemical arsenal after the US threatened air strikes against Assad in response.

The report from the OPCW Technical Secretariat noted that a ceasefire had been agreed between the regime and rebels on the day of the May 27 visit.

Despite the attack on the OPCW team that day, in which a car was destroyed but no one was seriously hurt, the report said that "while field visits are not envisaged for the immediate future, these remain an option."

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/syria/10910070/Chemical-weapons-including-chlorine-still-being-used-in-Syria-says-UN.html>

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Reuters – U.S.

U.S., Iran Experts Dispute Nuclear Bomb 'Breakout' Timeline

By Fredrik Dahl

Wednesday, June 18, 2014

VIENNA (Reuters) - A U.S. security institute estimates that Iran could amass material for a nuclear bomb in three months or less while Iranian experts cite a time frame six times longer - a dispute going to the heart of talks between Tehran and global powers.

Differences over how fast Iran could "break out" a nuclear weapon complicate the quest for a deal by late July under which Iran would scale back its atomic energy programme in exchange for a lifting of crippling sanctions.

The West wants Iran to significantly cut back its uranium enrichment capacity to ensure it would not be able to quickly produce a nuclear bomb. Iran says it needs to expand its programme to fuel a planned network of atomic energy plants, denying accusations of a secret nuclear weapons agenda.

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With only some five weeks to go before the self-imposed July 20 deadline for a deal, the negotiating positions between Tehran and the United States, France, Germany, Russia, China and Britain remain far apart. A fifth round of talks since February is being held in Vienna this week.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry has said that Iran has the ability to produce highly-enriched uranium for one bomb in two months, if it so decided. [ID:nL6N0N010U] Western officials and experts say this potential timeline must be substantially extended under any deal to end the decade-old nuclear dispute.

In an apparent attempt to counter that view, an Iranian website this month published a report saying it would take at least 18 months to do so, a time frame that would reach three years if conversion of the material into uranium metal and moulding - steps required to make a bomb - were included.

Yet more time would be needed to develop a vehicle, a missile for example, for a nuclear warhead to be delivered to its target.

"It is impossible for Iran to break out in months through the uranium route. The required time span is in years," the report published on www.nuclearenergy.ir said, stressing that this was a "hypothetical" scenario.

The website says it is "dedicated to providing accurate and factual information" about the Iranian nuclear programme, which the Islamic Republic says is entirely peaceful.

NUCLEAR BREAKOUT "MYTH"

The Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS), a U.S.-based think-tank which closely monitors Iran's atomic activities, said on Wednesday that the Iranian website "expresses common government stances" on nuclear issues.

"This study contains mistakes and uses unwarranted assumptions to arrive at its conclusions," ISIS said of the Iranian report. "Using its data and correcting for mistakes, we arrive at a breakout estimate of 2-3 months in terms of the time to produce 25 kg of WGU (weapons-grade uranium)." That is the amount traditionally seen as sufficient for one bomb.

Uranium enriched to a fissile concentration of around 5 percent is used to fuel civilian nuclear power plants, Iran's stated ambition. If processed to a much higher degree, to about 90 percent, it can provide the fissile core of a nuclear bomb, which the West fears may be Tehran's covert aspiration.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, the country's chief nuclear negotiator, criticized what he called the breakout "myth".

"For years, small but powerful constituencies have irrationally advanced the idea that Iran can produce enough fissile material for a bomb in months," he said in a June 13 article for the Washington Post.

If Iran ever wanted to take such a step, he said, it would have to expel U.N. nuclear inspectors and reconfigure its enrichment programme to make weapon-grade fissile material, which would then need to be turned into metal and "undergo countless other complex weaponisation processes".

"None of these capabilities exist in Iran and would have to be developed from scratch. This would take several years — not a few months," Zarif said.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/06/18/us-iran-nuclear-breakout-idUSKBN0ET1JV20140618>

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Khaleej Times – Dubai, U.A.E.

Title Agreed, but Not Much Else, in Iran Nuclear Talks

A Western diplomat said that Iran was refusing to budge on most issues and that drafting language in the text on the "complex issues" had not begun.

Agence France-Presse (AFP)

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19 June 2014

Racing against the clock, nuclear talks between Iran and six world powers appeared tough going Thursday with both sides warning of major differences as they tried to draft an accord.

The hoped-for agreement would see Iran scale back its nuclear programme, in order to ease fears Iran wants atomic weapons, and avert a conflict in the Middle East.

Iran, which has seen its relations with the West thaw somewhat since the 2013 election of President Hassan Rouhani, wants painful UN and Western sanctions lifted. It denies wanting the bomb.

On a fourth day of talks in Vienna, Iran and the five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany have started haggling over the wording of a deal, officials said.

But beyond agreeing a title for the accord, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said that “fundamental differences” were dividing the two sides.

On Wednesday negotiations “slowly” began to draft the final agreement, “but there are still many differences” over the text, ISNA news agency quoted Zarif as saying from Vienna.

He added that the talks had been “very difficult”.

A Western diplomat said that Iran was refusing to budge on most issues and that drafting language in the text on the “complex issues” had not begun.

“It is worrying that there is no evolution on the part of the Iranians on most subjects,” the diplomat told AFP on condition of anonymity.

Differences between the two sides on uranium enrichment, the central issue not only in this fifth round of talks but for the past decade, remain “major,” the envoy said.

Enrichment is front and centre of Western concerns about Iran’s nuclear ambitions, as the process can produce both fuel for nuclear power plants and, when highly purified, the core of an atomic bomb.

The West wants Iran to slash the number of centrifuges, the machines that enrich uranium, from the current 20,000, but Tehran wants to install many more in order, it says, to fuel a future fleet of nuclear plants.

Other thorny issues include the duration of the mooted accord, the pace of any sanctions relief and a reactor being built at Arak that might give Iran plutonium, the alternative to highly-enriched uranium for a bomb.

“Bearing in mind the limited time that is left and the differences remaining, the progress is slow” in writing the draft, a senior Iranian diplomat at the talks told ISNA.

Iran’s top negotiator Abbas Araqchi told IRNA on Wednesday that choosing to push back the July 20 deadline — when an interim deal struck in November expires — “won’t be a catastrophe”.

But US President Barack Obama is not seen as keen, seeking ahead of November midterm US elections to silence accusations that the talks are merely giving Iran time to inch ever closer to the bomb.

Complicating the process is the shared interest of Washington and Shiite Iran in seeing a lightning onslaught by Sunni rebels in Iraq stopped in its tracks.

On Monday US and Iranian officials briefly discussed the crisis on the sidelines in Vienna, although Washington said this would not be repeated.

On Wednesday a senior aide to Rouhani, his chief of staff Mohammad Nahavandian, appeared to say that any US-Iranian cooperation in Iraq depended on progress in the nuclear talks.

“If that comes to a final resolution, then there might be opportunities for other issues to be discussed,” Nahavandian said in Norway.

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In Israel, assumed to have nuclear weapons itself and which has not ruled out bombing Iran, a minister on Thursday expressed fears that the crisis may prompt Washington to make concessions in Vienna.

But US State Department Jen Psaki said Wednesday that any discussion of Iraq would be “entirely separate” from the nuclear negotiations.

“Any effort to connect the two is a nonstarter for the United States,” Psaki told reporters.

http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=data/middleeast/2014/June/middleeast_June211.xml§ion=middleeast

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Chicago Tribune – Chicago, IL

Enigmatic Iranian Military Man at Center of U.N. Nuclear Investigation

By Fredrik Dahl, Reuters

June 19, 2014

VIENNA (Reuters) - He is believed to top the list of elusive Iranian officials the U.N. nuclear watchdog wants to query. Exiled foes of the Islamic state cite him as the mastermind of clandestine efforts to design an atomic bomb. Tehran is mum about him, while denying having any nuclear arms agenda.

Probably living under tight security, Mohsen Fakhrizadeh did not join this week's talks in Vienna between Iran and six world powers directed at striking a deal by late July to end a decade-old dispute over Tehran's nuclear aspirations.

But Western officials and experts think the shadowy military figure played a pivotal role in suspected Iranian work in the past to develop the means to assemble a nuclear warhead behind the facade of a declared civilian uranium enrichment program.

They say shedding light on his alleged activities is critical for understanding how far Iran advanced and ensuring they are not continuing now, which the West wants any settlement with the Islamic Republic to guarantee.

But that will be easier said than done: an aura of deep mystique surrounds a man who rarely - if ever - seems to surface in public. Few outside Iran know with any certainty what he looks like, let alone have met him.

"If Iran ever chose to weaponize (enrichment), Fakhrizadeh would be known as the father of the Iranian bomb," said a Western diplomat who is critical of Iran's nuclear program but is not from any of the powers now negotiating with Tehran.

Iran says it is refining uranium only for a planned network of nuclear power plants, not as fuel for nuclear bombs, and dismisses such allegations as fabrications by Western enemies.

The U.N. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has long wanted to meet Fakhrizadeh as part of a protracted investigation into whether Iran carried out illicit nuclear weapons research.

Showing no sign it will heed the request, Iran several years ago acknowledged Fakhrizadeh's existence but said he was an army officer not involved in the nuclear program, a diplomatic source with knowledge of the matter said.

There was no immediate comment from Iran or the IAEA.

MULTIPLE PASSPORTS, SUPPORT OF KHAMENEI

A high-ranking Iranian source, however, described Fakhrizadeh as "an asset and an expert" dedicated to Iran's technological progress and enjoying the full support of its most powerful man, clerical Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.



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The source added that Fakhrizadeh had three passports and traveled a lot, including in Asia, to obtain "the latest information" from abroad, but would not elaborate. Western security sources say Iran has been adept in obtaining nuclear materials and know-how from the international black market.

The assassinations of four Iranian scientists associated with the nuclear program between 2010 and 2012 may have stiffened Tehran's unwillingness to give the IAEA access to Fakhrizadeh - for fear this could lead to information about him and his whereabouts leaking. Iran accused its arch-adversaries the United States and Israel of being behind the killings.

A landmark IAEA report in 2011 identified Fakhrizadeh as a central figure in suspected Iranian work to develop technology and skills needed for atomic bombs, and suggested he may still have a role in such activity.

Believed to be a senior officer in the elite Revolutionary Guards, Fakhrizadeh was the only Iranian the report identified.

"MOST-WANTED LIST"

"If the IAEA had a most-wanted list, Fakhrizadeh would head it," Mark Fitzpatrick, director of the non-proliferation program at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) think-tank in London, said.

He was also named in a 2007 U.N. resolution on Iran as a person involved in nuclear or ballistic missile activities.

"Dr Fakhrizadeh is considered to be the leader of Iran's nuclear weaponization program that existed before 2003," said Gary Samore, until last year the top nuclear proliferation expert on U.S. President Barack Obama's national security staff.

"The IAEA would like to interview him about his past and current activities," he said.

A senior Western official said the possibility that Iran may be continuing secret work related to atomic bomb research while negotiating with the powers was hardly a surprise.

Pressing ahead with the talks was all the more important, the official said, because Tehran must end any bomb-related activity to get the sanctions relief it seeks. "They want something and we need something in return."

One intelligence source from an IAEA member state said Fakhrizadeh seemed to be a "very qualified manager" inspiring loyalty among those working for him.

The Iranian official commented: "He is a very modest person who supports the team working for him."

An exiled Iranian opposition group, the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), in May issued a report with what it said was a photograph of Fakhrizadeh, with dark hair and the customary beard stubble sported by backers of Iran's Islamic leadership. It was not possible to independently verify it. A NCRI spokesman said it was "not very recent" but gave no detail.

The NCRI said Fakhrizadeh was born in 1958 in the holy Shi'ite Muslim city of Qom, is a deputy defense minister and a Revolutionary Guards brigadier-general, holds a nuclear engineering doctorate and teaches at Iran's University of Imam Hussein. It said he was the head of a secretive body which it called "the command center" behind atomic bomb-related activity.

"The information is consistent with the mainstream view that Fakhrizadeh ran and may still be running some kind of program, where the parts look related to nuclear weaponisation development," nuclear expert David Albright said.

TRANSPARENCY KEY ISSUE IN TALKS

The NCRI exposed Iran's uranium enrichment plant at Natanz and a heavy-water facility at Arak in 2002. But analysts say it has a mixed track record and an agenda of regime change in Iran.

Tariq Rauf, a former senior IAEA official who is critical of the U.N. agency's inquiry, said the NCRI might be trying to stymie the negotiations between Iran and the powers.

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"I would doubt that nuclear weapon-related work is still going on," Rauf, now at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), said in an email to Reuters.

The IAEA has for years been investigating what it calls the possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear program. Iran says the allegations are false but has offered to help clarify them since pragmatist Hassan Rouhani became president last year.

However, Western officials say Iran should step up the pace of cooperation with the Vienna-based U.N. agency and that this is crucial for the chances of a successful outcome of the separate negotiations between Iran and the global powers on curbing the nuclear program and lifting sanctions on Tehran, a deal that would head off the risk of a new Middle East war.

"Interviewing Fakhrizadeh is critical. If not, there will always remain strong suspicions that Iran is hiding a capability to build nuclear weapons," Albright said.

NUCLEAR YIELDS, NUCLEAR TRIGGERS

Citing information from member states and other sources, the IAEA's 2011 document painted a picture of a concerted weapons program that was halted in 2003 - when Iran came under increased Western pressure - but some activities later resumed.

They included alleged computer studies regarding nuclear yield calculations and a nuclear trigger - activities that may have been carried out after 2003, some as late as 2009.

Around 2002-03, the IAEA said, Fakhrizadeh was the executive officer of the so-called AMAD Plan, which according to its information conducted studies related to uranium, high explosives and the revamping of a missile cone to accommodate a nuclear warhead.

More recently, he became head of a body called the Organisation of Defensive Innovation and Research, according to intelligence from one unidentified country cited by the report.

"The Agency is concerned because some of the activities undertaken after 2003 would be highly relevant to a nuclear weapon program," added the IAEA document.

A source familiar with intelligence information on the issue said Fakhrizadeh appeared to have objected to the decision by the leadership to shelve bomb research over a decade ago, indicating that he was personally committed to the project.

"There is no chance that Iran will make him available. They will argue that it would expose him to danger, and he may well be on a real hit list," Fitzpatrick said.

Additional reporting by Louis Charbonneau; Editing by Mark Heinrich

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/sns-rt-us-iran-nuclear-fakhrizadeh-20140619,0,5704130,full.story>

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Press TV – Tehran, Iran

Key Differences Remain on Iran Nuclear Issue: Zarif

Friday, June 20, 2014

Iran's foreign minister says differences remain between Tehran and the six world powers over key issues related to the Islamic Republic's nuclear energy program.

"We entered the phase of drafting the [final] accord, but we did not reach agreement on the main issues," Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Friday after the end of the fifth round of talks between Iran and the world powers in Vienna.

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He said Iran and the five permanent members of the UN Security Council – the United States, France, Britain, Russia, China – plus Germany remain divided on the “content” of the accord.

The Iranian foreign minister said Tehran will continue to stand by its “views” which are in line with “international law.”

Zarif said Tehran started its talks with the six powers with “goodwill” since the very beginning with a view to “reaching an agreement,” adding that the “opposite party” is not yet ready for “serious talks based on realities.”

“We feel there are [still] maximalist stances. Iran will not give up the interests and the rights of the Iranian nation in the face of excessive demands,” Zarif stated.

A spokesman for European Union’s foreign policy chief, Catherine Ashton, who leads the six powers in the talks, said the two sides are to resume negotiations in Vienna on July 2.

“We presented each other with a number of ideas on a range of issues, and we have begun the drafting process,” Michael Mann said in a statement.

Iran and the six countries have been holding talks to iron out their differences and finalize a deal, which would end the standoff over the Islamic Republic’s nuclear energy program.

In November 2013, the two sides signed an interim deal, dubbed the Joint Plan of Action, in the Swiss city of Geneva. The agreement came into force in January.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2014/06/20/367848/key-differences-on-iran-nissue-zarif/>

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The Hindu – Mumbai, India

Canister-Based Trial of Agni-V after Monsoon

Final ‘Missile Ejection Test’ in simulated conditions successful

By Y. Mallikarjun

June 15, 2014

Hyderabad -- The first canister-based trial of the 5,000 km-plus, nuclear weapons-capable Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile, Agni-V, “in final induction configuration” is to be conducted after the monsoon season from Wheeler Island, off the Odisha coast.

As a prelude to the actual firing, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) technologists successfully carried out the final ‘Missile Ejection Test’ from a canister in simulated conditions on Saturday, according to Scientific Adviser to the Defence Minister and DRDO Chief, Avinash Chander.

The test validated all the parameters that would have to be met during the actual launch. The final test was completed, he said, and added that the launch from the canister would now be carried out from Wheeler Island after monsoon.

During the actual launch, the first stage of Agni-V would be ignited at a height of 25-30 metres after its ejection from the canister, DRDO sources said. The solid propellant-based gas generator at the bottom of the canister would provide a force equivalent to 300-370 tonnes to push Agni-V to a height of 30 metres when the first of the three stages gets ignited.

Ensuring mid-air ignition of the first stage would eliminate the need to use jet deflectors when the flames erupt as the missile takes off. Also, canister launch would provide operational flexibility to the user to fire the missile from anywhere and makes the transportation of the weapon system much easier and safer. “It is better to carry the missile in a canister than in an open vehicle,” say the sources.

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/canisterbased-trial-of-agniv-after-monsoon/article6117200.ece>

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The New Indian Express – Chennai, India

Contrary to Claims, Arihant Not Prepared for Sea Trials

By N C Bipindra
18th June 2014

NEW DELHI: Contrary to claims, India's first indigenous nuclear-powered submarine INS Arihant is still not ready for sea trials, a stage critical for testing the vessel's systems and weapons before it can be commissioned into the Navy.

Arihant's miniaturised nuclear reactor, built with Russian help, had gone critical in last August and since then the 6,000-tonne vessel has been put through a series of harbour acceptance trials, which could take a few more months, according to top navy sources here.

The vessel, powered by a 83-MW pressurised light-water reactor operated with enriched uranium fuel, was to sail out for sea trials earlier this year, but the Navy has not been able to take the vessel out, as more tests are being conducted to ensure foolproof sea trials of all systems on board, sources said.

The vessel going out to sea trials is critical for India to test its home-grown submarine-launched ballistic missile with nuclear weapon capability. The DRDO has already developed and successfully tested from a submerged pontoon a missile code-named Bo5, but called in popular parlance as K-15, having a 750-km range.

Once Arihant goes for the sea trials and does a six-to-eight months of testing of systems, it will also get to fire the Bo5, 12 of which will be carried by the vessel. The DRDO has maintained that its missile is ready and is awaiting the Arihant to fire it and validate the nuclear triad.

The DRDO is keenly awaiting that moment, as it will successfully complete India's nuclear triad -- the capability to launch nuclear-capable ballistic missiles from surface, air and undersea platforms.

The nuclear triad is critical for the country for a credible deterrence against a nuclear attack, considering that it has a stated 'no first strike' nuke doctrine.

India currently operates Russian-origin nuclear-powered INS Chakra submarine, leased from Russia in 2012 for use by the Navy for 10 years for nearly `5,000 crore, primarily to gain experience in operating such a platform, considering that it plans to have a fleet of at least five such indigenous vessels in its fleet in the immediate future.

India has maintained that its nuclear submarine fleet strength will be dictated by the maritime security dynamics of the Indian Ocean region and the extended neighbourhood.

<http://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/Contrary-to-Claims-Arihant-not-Prepared-for-Sea-Trials/2014/06/18/article2286134.ece>

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Daily News & Analysis – Mumbai, India

India Nuclear Enrichment Plant Expansion Operational in 2015: HIS

Reuters
20 June 2014

India is expanding a covert uranium enrichment plant that could potentially support the development of thermonuclear weapons, a defence research group said on Friday, raising the stakes in an arms race with China and Pakistan.

The revelation highlights a lack of nuclear safeguards on India under new Prime Minister Narendra Modi, while sanctions-bound Iran faces minute scrutiny in talks with world powers over its own nuclear programme.

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New units at the Indian Rare Metals Plant would increase India's ability to produce weapons-grade uranium to twice the amount needed for its planned nuclear-powered submarine fleet, IHS Jane's said.

The facility, located near Mysore in southern India, could be operational by mid-2015, the research group said, basing its findings on analysis of satellite imagery and public statements by Indian officials.

"Taking into account all the enriched uranium likely to be needed by the Indian nuclear submarine fleet, there is likely to be a significant excess," Matthew Clements, editor of IHS Jane's Intelligence Review, told Reuters.

"One potential use of this would be for the development of thermonuclear weapons."

No comment was available from the Indian government press office or the foreign ministry.

Unlike Iran, India is not a signatory to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. New Delhi tested its first nuclear weapon in 1974, provoking international sanctions that barred it from importing nuclear technology and materials.

It conducted tests again in 1998 that drew a quick response from Pakistan, triggering an arms race between the neighbours, who have fought three wars since independence in 1947.

A civil nuclear cooperation deal with the United States, sealed in 2008, gave India access to know-how and fuel in return for a pledge - so far unfulfilled - to bring in U.S. firms to expand India's nuclear power generation capacity.

The pact exempts military facilities and stockpiles of nuclear fuel from scrutiny by the International Atomic Energy Agency, a United Nations watchdog. The Mysore plant is not subject to IAEA safeguards.

The exemption, granted by the administration of President George W. Bush, faced opposition from China and Pakistan, India's regional rivals, and European nations who said it would undermine efforts to control the spread of nuclear weapons.

SATELLITE VIEW

Based on its analysis of commercial satellite images, IHS Jane's has identified what appears to be a new uranium hexafluoride plant that would increase the uranium enrichment capacity of the Mysore facility.

The plant would be able to produce a surplus of around 160 kilos a year of uranium enriched to 90 percent purity, IHS Jane's reckons. That is roughly double the needs of the nuclear submarine fleet India is developing to supplement its land-based missile arsenal - and enough to make five atomic bombs.

By blending the uranium with its existing stock of plutonium, India could develop thermonuclear weapons that have a complex detonation process and have a bigger impact than simpler weapons. "We aren't suggesting that this action alone will create an immediate standoff, but it's going to create a further level of complexity in an already difficult situation," said Clements, referring to the regional security implications.

The IHS findings have been corroborated by other analysts, with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) writing this week that the Mysore facility could signify India's intent to move towards thermonuclear weapons. India is estimated by SIPRI to hold 90 to 110 nuclear weapons in its arsenal.

The IHS assessment revealed incremental progress at Mysore since the Washington-based Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS), in a report last December, identified the construction of a new gas centrifuge plant.

India's new Arihant class of submarine is assessed to have an 80-megawatt onboard reactor that contains around 65 kg of uranium. One submarine is operational, a second is being built and a third is planned, according to ISIS.

NO FIRST USE

Modi, leader of the nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party, has sought to assert New Delhi's regional leadership in his first weeks in office while seeking to engage with major powers such as the United States and China.

But, although he invited Pakistan's prime minister to his inauguration, Modi has made clear that any rapprochement would require a halt to occasional military clashes on the de facto frontier of the disputed Himalayan region of Kashmir.

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Before Modi's landslide general election victory last month, sources close to his party had suggested India might abandon its 'no first use' nuclear doctrine, which committed it to refrain from any pre-emptive strike.

Modi later denied any planned shift and vowed to uphold 'no first use', a signature policy of India's last BJP prime minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who ordered the 1998 nuclear tests.

<http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-india-nuclear-enrichment-plant-expansion-operational-in-2015-ihs-1996852>

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Nukes of Hazard Blog.com

OPINION/Blog

B61s in Europe: Sharing is Caring

By Kingston Reif

June 14, 2014

One of the more glaring head-scratchers about U.S. nuclear policy is that we continue to forward deploy roughly 180 tactical B61s in Europe despite the fact that the military mission for which these weapons was originally intended – stopping a Soviet invasion of Western Europe because of inferior US/NATO conventional forces – no longer exists.

When asked in 2010 if there is a military mission performed by US tactical nuclear weapons in Europe that cannot be performed by either US strategic or conventional forces, Gen. James Cartwright, then-vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, flatly said: "No." Similarly, one senior official with European Command told a task force created by the defense secretary that "We pay a king's ransom for these things and...they have no military value."

The main rationale for the B61s in Europe is as a political symbol of the U.S. commitment to NATO, particularly the newer members that border Russia. Some also argue that transatlantic ties are strengthened when the risks and costs of deploying and securing nuclear weapons are shared between the US and the respective host nations.

But the truth is that even the political value of the deployment is questionable at best (see for example the recent U.S. deployment of B52-H and B-2 nuclear-capable *strategic* bombers to Europe for exercises in response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine) and the costs are not shared – not even close. In judging the continued need for and affordability of what is primarily a political mission (and a debatable one at that), it makes sense to have a better understanding of just how disproportionate the financial burden is and why other NATO members don't foot more of the bill.

On June 10, Rep. Mike Quigley (D-IL) successfully amended the FY 2015 Defense Appropriations bill to shed light on these issues by requiring the Secretary of Defense to report to Congress on the status and impact of the proportional contributions of NATO members to the cost of sustaining U.S. forward-deployed B61 tactical nuclear weapons in Europe. The Pentagon has already provided some Members of Congress with some information about the contributions of NATO members to the mission, but only after an informal request for information. The Quigley requirement in the defense appropriations bill would formalize the request and give it greater authority.

The acceptance of the language by the Republican majority demonstrates growing congressional concern about the rising costs of keeping U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe and the unwillingness of NATO members to bear a fair share of these expenditures.

In 2011, the Pentagon estimated that the average annual operating costs for the United States to support forward deployed nuclear weapons in Europe is approximately \$100 million. The Pentagon is also planning to pay an additional \$154 million to enhance security at the European military bases that store the B61s. The five European states that still host the weapons contribute to the cost of the mission by funding facility and installation costs. They also maintain their dual capable aircraft to deliver these weapons. But apart from the United States, no NATO members are believed to directly contribute to the deployment.

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These costs are slated to grow significantly over the next decade. According to a 2013 Congressional Budget Office Report, the cost of U.S. tactical nuclear forces will total about \$7 billion between FY 2014 and FY 2023. The vast majority of these costs, including all of the costs of the \$10-\$12 billion B61 life extension program and of equipping the F-35A with a nuclear capability, will be shouldered exclusively by the United States.

Given the Congressional mandate for reductions in military spending, it is not unreasonable to assess NATO's contribution to a multi-billion dollar nuclear deployment, the mission of which is primarily political/psychological and to illustrate burden sharing.

It is especially reasonable given that most NATO members are not meeting their defense spending commitments. Only a handful of European countries meet NATO's target of spending 2 percent of their gross domestic product (GDP) on the military. In 2013, only four NATO members met that target: the United States, the United Kingdom, Estonia, and Greece. The United States has over the years repeatedly urged the other members of NATO to increase military spending, most recently in response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

Another reason for increased financial burden sharing is that the Departments of Defense and Energy rejected a less costly refurbishment of the B61 that would have extended the life of the weapon until the early 2030s for approximately \$5 billion – billions less than the current life extension plan. The pursuit of an unnecessarily extravagant refurbishment is putting greater strain on the military budget, strengthening the argument for European help.

Furthermore, it's not clear why the United States should be pursuing such an expensive modernization plan given that the five NATO host nations have yet to commit to spend the political capital and economic resources necessary to upgrade their existing aircraft or purchase new aircraft to deliver the new B61. For example, Germany is planning to procure a next-generation fighter aircraft that won't be configured to carry nuclear weapons. This shouldn't be surprising, given that a significant number of NATO members see little use for these weapons and have little interest in paying for them. There have been some hints that the United States could pick up the slack if the current host nations begin removing tactical nuclear weapons from their soil, but that is not certain and would place the burden even more heavily on the United States.

Meanwhile, even if the current host nations do decide to purchase new dual-capable aircraft, such as the F-35A, Congress last year zeroed out the Pentagon's \$10 research and development request to make the F-35A nuclear-capable. The cost of the dual capability, estimated to be in the hundreds of millions, will compete with the conventional needs of the program, which is behind schedule and overbudget. This raises the possibility that the refurbished B61s slated to be deployed in Europe may not have aircraft to deliver them after the existing European aircraft capable of carrying nuclear weapons are retired over the next decade. Former Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz has argued "that without financial buy-in by the NATO partners, either the F-35 nuclear integration or through fielding of an independent or equivalent European manufactured aircraft, F-35 investment dollars should realign to the long range strike bomber."

So to summarize the situation, the rising costs of providing political reassurance to NATO via forward deployed nuclear weapons that serve no military purpose is falling almost exclusively on the American taxpayer. Not only that, but the countries that currently host B61s might not make the investments necessary to host the weapons in the future. Yet even if they do make the investments, the U.S. Congress might not fund the needed capability for the next-generation aircraft to deliver the refurbished weapons.

That's messed up, right?

All the more reason, then, to assess NATO's willingness to bear more of the financial burden for forward deploying tactical nuclear weapons on their behalf.

Kingston Reif is the Director of Nuclear Non-Proliferation at the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, where his work focuses on arms control, nuclear nonproliferation, nuclear weapons, and preventing nuclear terrorism.

<http://nukesofhazardblog.com/story/2014/6/14/123059/305>

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Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies (IPCS) – New Delhi, India

OPINION/Analysis

INS Arihant: A ‘Giant Stride’ For India?

By Amit Saksena

#4519, 16 June 2014

When the INS Arihant’s nuclear reactor went critical in August 2013, India not only joined the blue-water navy club of countries with the capability to build nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines, but also picked on a major doctrinal headache. This, apart from the specification concerns and limited intended utility, puts the Indian Advanced Technological Vessel (ATV) programme in a quagmire. With the Indian Navy expecting to acquire and deploy the vessel in the first quarter of 2015, certain aspects of this project must be discussed to gauge New Delhi’s capability to field and utilise such technology.

Manufacturing

The ATV project is believed to have been started with the objective of manufacturing SSNs –fast moving deep-diving nuclear powered attack submarines – largely based on the K-43 Charlie class vessel, leased from the Soviet Union at a time when India did not overtly possess nuclear capability. The project since then has been covertly developing in the backdrop of India conducting the Pokhran-II tests, declaring an ambiguous nuclear strategy, and making impressive strides in the development of Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs). The Arihant class seems to be a derivative of the Charlie class, with the specifications scaled up to the Akula class to accommodate a Vertical Launch System (VLS) for ballistic missiles. Although this would not hamper the general functioning of the vessel, as per reports of the sea trials, the full implications of this tweak will only emerge when the Sagarika SLBMs are integrated into the of the INS Arihant in early 2015. Furthermore, the inclusion of sail planes and a towed array pod are surprising, as they are generally avoided to counter limitations to speed and fragility.

The pressurised water reactor (PWR) aboard the vessel has also been developed with considerable assistance from the Russians, contradicting New Delhi’s claims of the Arihant being an indigenously developed submarine. With no word on the progress of a domestic generator in India, the Arihant class’s core component still uses Russian intelligence and technology. The initial vessel consumed more than a decade to be rolled out for primary tests, as opposed to the average five years taken for the development of vessels of the same class/category by the five other navies that possess this technology.

With the first vessel of the Arihant class still undergoing final trials, India’s decision to start work on subsequent vessels is a little hurried. An ideal strategy would have been to concentrate on finishing the INS Arihant and observing it in a deployed state and then diverting time and resources on the succeeding vessels. If the claims of the INS Aridhaman (second vessel in the Arihant class) being built with ‘bigger and better’ specifications is true, then the Indian government has not taken any pointers from this endeavour and embarked on a new project without successfully completing the first. In any case, the US\$ 2.9 billion per unit price of the vessel does not justify its results, especially in comparison with other navies building the same submarine at a significantly lower price.

Utility: Intended Vs. Delivered

Former Naval Chief Nirmal Verma described the INS Arihant as primarily a ‘technology demonstrator’. However, it remains to be seen as to what ‘technology’ the vessel will be demonstrating. A simple comparison of the Arihant with other submarines of comparable class/category will reflect this issue. The Arihant has an advertised maximum speed of only 24kts (submerged), as opposed to the average 30kts afforded by all the other classes. Not only does this reflect poorly on India’s – DRDO and BARC’s – technological capabilities, but also impedes the operational capability of the vessel. Once discovered, the propellant potential becomes the deciding factor for the survivability of a submarine.

Also, the armament capacity of the INS Arihant is acutely inferior, with the vessel only fielding 12 K-15 short-range SLBMs. In contrast, the Astute, the Virginia and the Akula class all have provisions for at least 40 missiles.

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With its slow speed and limited strike range, INS Arihant does not contribute significantly to India's second-strike capability, with both China and Pakistan fielding advanced anti-missile and early warning systems.

Doctrinal Shortcomings

The INS Arihant poses a new dilemma for the Modi government. For 'credible minimum deterrence', New Delhi is believed to have kept its nuclear weapons in a 'de-mated' state with the civilian authority exercising absolute control. For a ballistic nuclear submarine, the government will not only have to increase the readiness of the weapons, but also relinquish their command to naval officers on board the vessel. This increases the possibility of an unauthorised/erroneous launch. Also absent are well-defined protocols to dictate the steps to be taken in the event of a communications failure with the central command authority, or dealing with a hostile take-over. The INS Arihant is a classic example of governments going into the production stage of weapons without developing concomitant doctrines.

The INS Arihant maybe a landmark achievement, but it cannot stand up to China's newest Jin class vessels, reported to be one of the current best. Similarly, the implication of inducting a nuclear submarine in the Indian Navy on Pakistan remains to be seen. There are already talks of Beijing selling submarines and technology to Pakistan. In that case, the INS Arihant has only initiated another arms race in the region.

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<http://www.ipcs.org/article/india/ins-arihant-a-giant-stride-for-india-4519.html>

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All Things Nuclear.org
Union of Concerned Scientists
Opinion/Commentary

Missiles and Morale

Eryn MacDonald, analyst
June 16, 2014

In response to the recent string of bad news for the ICBM force, the Air Force has announced that it will make a number of changes to try to alleviate some of the morale problems that have been plaguing the force. The commander in charge of ICBM forces will be upgraded from a three star general to a four star, in keeping with equivalent commanders of other branches in the service; missileers will be eligible for new bonuses and incentive pay; a service medal for launch officers will be instituted; new ROTC scholarships for missile duty have been added, with ten already awarded; and more mid-level command personnel will be added, along with improved training for missile launch officers.

These changes are in response to complaints that the missile force, despite the importance of its mission, has long been neglected by the Air Force and has come to be seen as a career dead end, especially by younger service members.

The morale problem stems not just from perceived neglect, but also from the tediousness of the duty, which requires launch officers to continually practice to carry out a mission that everyone hopes will never be needed, and spend 24 hours or more in an underground command center when they are on alert, waiting for an order that is unlikely ever to come. It has been compounded by a culture that requires officers to achieve perfection on frequent written exams to have any hope of moving ahead in their careers. The Air Force has tried to address that problem as well by making the exams pass/fail (previously, although the official "pass" level was set at 90%, 100% was viewed as the actual requirement for those who hoped to move up) and increasing the emphasis placed on performance in simulations and field exercises when evaluating an officer's performance.

An unpublished RAND study obtained by the Associated Press cited high rates of "burnout" —defined as feeling exhausted, cynical, and ineffective on the job—among launch officers. Andrew Neal, a 28-year-old launch officer who recently completed a four-year tour at a Minuteman III base, said that part of the morale problem is also due

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to a new view of the ICBM mission among the younger generation in the Air Force. “We all acknowledge their importance, but at the same time we really don’t think the mission is that critical,” he said, and among his peers the threat of full-scale nuclear war is seen as “simply non-existent...So we practice for all-out nuclear war, but we know that isn’t going to happen.”

Another former launch officer, Brian Weeden, who was on alert during 9/11, said that the experience left him and his colleagues feeling helpless. “The mantra had always been that the nuclear deterrent would keep America safe. But it didn’t. So I felt, not only did we fail to deter those attacks, but we couldn’t do anything about it after.”

It is worth pointing out that there were plenty of problems with the ICBM forces even during the cold war, when presumably launch officers riding the elevator down to begin their shifts believed that they were a crucial part of the country’s defense and could be called on at any moment to carry out an order to launch one of the most powerful weapons in the world. Still, sitting in an underground capsule for 24 hours at a time, the vast majority of them with nothing much happening, is no one’s idea of excitement. As Eric Schlosser notes in his book *Command and Control*, drug and alcohol use was a longstanding problem in the nuclear forces, as well as the rest of the military. Several former launch officers have claimed that cheating on exams is also nothing new.

Nonetheless, the comments of those serving in the post-cold war, and especially post-9/11, era provide an interesting insight into the dilemma currently facing the ICBM force more generally. The danger of a full-scale nuclear war, in which the United States would deliberately launch hundreds of warheads at enemy targets, is so far out of the realm of reality that even those who constantly practice for it, and whose careers depend on preparing for it, can’t conceive of a situation in which it might actually happen. The average American, who has no such immediate day-to-day connection to nuclear weapons, is even less capable of this.

Unfortunately, U.S. political and military leaders have better imaginations. So, these missiles remain on high alert—ready to launch in minutes, with missileers still sitting in their underground capsules around the clock, waiting for something to happen. This high alert posture creates the risk of launching by accident, without authorization, or in response to a false warning of an incoming attack. We should be worried about much more than poor morale.

Ms. MacDonald received her MA in International Relations and Comparative Politics from Cornell University in 2009, specializing in China. Before coming to UCS in 2011 she worked at the MIT International Science and Technology Initiatives (MISTI) program, and was an instructor at Endicott College teaching courses on international relations.

<http://allthingsnuclear.org/missiles-and-morale/>

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OPINION/Voices of Tomorrow

Breaking the Nuclear Gridlock: It’s Time to Ban Land-Based MIRVs

17 June 2014

By Zachary Keck

There is a growing consensus that arms control needs to innovate to survive. Although Russia and the United States have greatly reduced the size of their arsenals, their bilateral arms control agreements increasingly seem like Cold War relics in a second nuclear age.

Moreover, even these arms control agreements are now in jeopardy, as Russia has said it will not agree to further reductions until other nuclear states—most notably, China—join the arms control process. For their own part, nuclear states such as China and India claim that the limited size of their nuclear arsenals requires that they maintain a high degree of secrecy, and they refuse to agree to reductions so long as Russia and the United States maintain about 90 percent of the world’s nuclear weapons.

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Fortunately, there is a politically viable arms control agreement that could break the gridlock even as it greatly reduces impending nuclear dangers: The world's nuclear powers should come together to ban the land-based multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicle (MIRV) that allows ballistic missiles to carry up to 12 small nuclear warheads, each capable of being aimed at a different target.

As seen during the Cold War, MIRVs undermine strategic stability and invite a nuclear arms race. They are destabilizing primarily because they put a premium on striking first. This is true for a number of reasons. First, and most obviously, MIRVs can hit a number of targets with a single missile. Second, MIRVs make it easier for a country to launch multiple warheads at a single target, and multiple small warheads are more destructive than a single larger warhead with an equivalent yield. Third, having multiple re-entry vehicles makes it easier for MIRV missiles to penetrate anti-ballistic missile defense systems.

For all these reasons, MIRV missiles make small- and medium-size nuclear arsenals extremely vulnerable to decapitating first strikes. A rival's acquisition of a MIRV capability therefore forces nuclear states to greatly expand the size of their arsenals, as well as to further disperse them, to retain a secure second-strike capability. A nation's own acquisition of MIRV missiles also creates the need to build more nuclear weapons to equip the missiles with multiple warheads.

The United States and Russia have previously attempted to ban MIRVs, beginning with the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) that took place between 1969 and 1972. Not comprehending the destabilizing effects MIRVs would have, Henry Kissinger, who was then President Nixon's National Security Advisor, successfully killed the MIRV ban proposed during the talks. He came to regret it just a few years later, remarking in 1974, "I would say in retrospect that I wish I had thought through the implications of a MIRVed world more thoughtfully in 1969 and 1970 than I did."

At the beginning of the SALT negotiations, the United States had just begun testing MIRV missiles, and neither side had deployed them. Consequentially, a ban agreed-to early in the talks would not have required onsite inspections, since it could have been verified by monitoring missile tests. Once both sides had deployed MIRVs, however, verifying a ban required onsite inspections, which the Soviet Union refused to allow until the waning days of the Cold War. Later, both countries agreed to a ban on all land-based MIRVs under START II, but this treaty never came into force.

Today the world has another window of opportunity to ban land-based MIRVs. Although the United States and Russia have land-based MIRV missiles, both sides already allow onsite inspections. Meanwhile, both China and India are believed to be actively seeking a MIRV capability but have yet to acquire one. Once Beijing and Delhi have fully tested and deployed MIRV missiles, banning them will be politically impossible since neither side will allow onsite inspections.

The stakes could hardly be higher. If China and India acquire MIRV missiles, both sides are likely to expand the size of their nuclear arsenals exponentially, and to further disperse them. Delhi's MIRV capability will naturally force Pakistan to expand the size of its arsenal accordingly, and to seek a MIRV capability for itself. The expansion of China's nuclear arsenal will similarly push Russia to expand its strategic forces as it uses nuclear superiority to offset its growing conventional inferiority. That will put pressure on the United States to increase its nuclear arsenal to retain parity with Russia. Thus, China and India's acquisition of MIRV missiles will spark a nuclear arms race even as it greatly reduces the strategic stability of nuclear Asia.

Fortunately, an agreement between the United States, Russia, China, India, and Pakistan (and potentially others) to ban land-based MIRVs is possible, but only if all sides move quickly. (China has already tested its DF-31 intercontinental ballistic missile, which is believed to be MIRV-capable, twice.) The United States has every interest in the ban because it has already announced it will phase out land-based MIRV missiles. China, India, and Pakistan all have an interest in banning MIRVs in order to forestall a nuclear arms race that none of them can afford. A MIRV ban would also be in Russia's interest because it enables Russia to maintain its nuclear superiority over rising states such as China and India.

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A ban would also be easy to enforce. Russia and the United States could verify the ban through the onsite inspections they already conduct. Compliance by China, India, and Pakistan could be verified simply by monitoring their missile tests. If all goes well, the ban could be expanded to include MIRV submarine-launched ballistic missiles, with or without France and the United Kingdom.

A MIRV ban is both politically possible and entirely sensible. It would greatly reduce nuclear dangers, forestall a nuclear arms race, and create momentum for further multilateral arms control agreements. In other words, it would finally bring arms control into the 21st century.

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<http://thebulletin.org/breaking-nuclear-gridlock-it%E2%80%99s-time-ban-land-based-mirvs7245>

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The Hankyoreh – Seoul, South Korea

OPINION/Editorial

Time for a Clear Position on THAAD

June 20, 2014

Minister of National Defense Kim Kwan-jin told the National Assembly on June 18 that he would not object to USFK installing the US's Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system. With his hasty remarks, Kim showed a lack of consideration of Washington's aims and the ramifications of having THAAD on the Korean peninsula. In a nutshell, we have much more to lose from it than we stand to gain.

THAAD is one of the key components of the missile defense system currently being pushed by the US. It was developed for the interception of enemy missiles in the terminal phase, at altitudes between 40 and 150 km. The system is designed for the US to respond to hypothetical "strategic threats." It's also very pricey, with one system costing upwards of US\$1 billion. Three systems are currently operational; even when scheduled future ones are counted, the number rises to just seven. Any of them that is set up by USFK has to be seen as targeting China more than North Korea. That's certainly how China is going to see it. And, indeed, the X-band radar operated with it has a detection range of thousands of miles, which would put most of China's major regions within its sights. If USFK does install THAAD, that puts South Korea in the position of active cooperation with the US's attempt to hem China in.

In recent months, the US has been turning up the pressure on Seoul to join the missile defense system. The leaks about the US considering installing THAAD with USFK are a part of this. In the past, the South Korean government went on to purchase Patriot missiles that were first acquired by USFK; a similar outcome could be on the way with THAAD. Kim himself said South Korea has no intention of purchasing the system, but he also said having it in USFK would "improve our ability to intercept North Korean ballistic missiles." It's a statement that Washington is likely to take as a sign that a South Korean purchase may be forthcoming.

Having THAAD on the Korean peninsula will be a severe blow to South Korea's hard-won progress in relations with China. Depending on how things unfold, it could end up being a crucial turning point in our ties. The idea of THAAD being a useful safeguard against North Korean missiles is really just speculation at this point. Even within the US, the reliability of missile defense has been the subject of endless debate.

We also have to take into account the negative reaction we can expect from Pyongyang. North Korea is likely to respond by pouring more energy into its own missile development, leaving inter-Korean relations even less stable than now.

Washington's plan is to use missile defense as a way of beefing up military cooperation with Seoul and Tokyo. If South Korea lets itself get dragged into this, the result will be a situation where it, the US, and Japan are all pitted

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against China. The outcome of issues involving the peninsula, including North Korea's nuclear program, will be all the worse for it. Seoul needs to come out with a clear position now to stop that from happening.

http://www.hani.co.kr/arti/english_edition/e_editorial/643334.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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