



USAF Center for Unconventional Weapons Studies (CUWS) Outreach Journal

Issue No. 1131, 05 September 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: "FY 2015 Weapon Systems Factbook". Authored by Todd Harrison and Jacob Cohn; Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments. Published September 4, 2014; 93 pages.

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/238666331/FINAL-Weapon-Systems-Factbook>

Each year, the Department of Defense (DoD) submits a Selected Acquisition Report (SAR) to Congress detailing the status, plans, and funding requirements for more than 80 major acquisition programs. The most recent SAR, submitted in December 2013, projects funding and quantities for major acquisition programs extending more than 30 years into the future. The SAR projects these programs will need \$324 billion over the Future Years Defense Program (FYDP), spanning FY 2015 to FY 2019, and an additional \$498 billion in FY 2020 and beyond.

This report summarizes the program plans and funding for each of the major acquisition programs included in the SAR and two additional programs. The Air Force's Long Range Strike-Bomber (LRS-B) and the Navy's Ohio-Class Replacement programs are not yet reported in the SAR, but enough is known about each program to construct a reasonable cost estimate. The LRS-B and Ohio Replacement programs are among the largest acquisition programs in DoD's portfolio, as shown in the figure on the following page, and any discussion of major acquisitions would be incomplete without them. The programs included in this report represent 39 percent of the total acquisition budget in the FY 2015 FYDP. The remaining 61 percent of funding is used for hundreds of smaller acquisition programs not reported in the SAR or other programs too early in development to be included in the SAR.

The report is divided by categories of weapon systems: aircraft, air and missile defense, communications and electronics, ground systems, missiles and munitions, nuclear forces, shipbuilding, and space systems. The aircraft category is the largest among these, both in terms of the number of programs and the total funding projected. It includes fixed-wing, rotary-wing, and manned and unmanned aircraft for all four Services.

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Air Force Times.com – Washington, D.C.

Air Force to Begin Rotating Launch Officers

By Brian Everstine, Staff writer
August 30, 2014

The latest change in the nuclear missile career field will let airmen trade places with each other, opening up opportunities for officers to work on a different base for three months.



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The program, announced Wednesday, will transfer small groups of airmen to give them first-hand experience with operations in another squadron. Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota, has received four officers from Malmstrom Air Force Base, Montana, and three from F.E. Warren Air Force Base, Wyoming. Seven officers from Minot were sent to fill the places of the airmen from Malmstrom and F.E. Warren.

“The idea is that the folks embedding with us for 90 days would be able to experience at the ground level some of the changes and initiatives we’re implementing as part of the Force Improvement Program,” Lt. Col. David Rickards, deputy group commander of the 91st Operations Group at Minot, said in a release announcing the program.

The airmen who transfer to Minot will see changes the base has implemented in testing. Missile officers will be tested quarterly, as opposed to monthly, and will have a second simulator session each month to practice, according to Global Strike Command. The purpose of the changes is to emphasize hands-on training and empower crew commanders to be responsible for the proficiency of their crews.

This is the second recent “changing places” initiative announced by the command.

Last month, the command launched a program to send Air Force missile officers to work in Navy submarine commands. The program, called Striker Trident, will rotate up to four missile and nuclear operations officers in three-year assignments.

The changes stem from Global Strike Command’s Force Improvement Program — a bottom-up review of morale and career development issues among nuclear missile officers. The program started following the disclosure that more than 90 missile officers at Malmstrom had been caught up in a investigation of cheating on proficiency tests.

<http://www.airforcetimes.com/article/20140830/NEWS/308300048>

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Breaking Defense.com – Washington, D.C.

LRS-B, Next Boomer May Force Weapons Cuts

By Colin Clark

September 04, 2014

WASHINGTON: It won’t happen tomorrow, but the Pentagon may have to start eating its young to pay for two of the most expensive weapons in US history: the Air Force’s Long Range Strike bomber and the Navy’s replacement for the *Ohio* class nuclear missile submarine.

That’s the estimation of Todd Harrison, the top budget expert at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessment. His conclusions are based on a new detailed report, *Analysis of the FY 2015 Budget Request* being released as you read this.

Why? While the budget picture appears sustainable for the next few years, LRS-B and Ohio Replacement will begin to cost so much as the programs ramp up — along with the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter — that Harrison concludes there just won’t be enough money to pay for it all.

“If you look at fiscal 2020 as a snapshot in time (one year after the end of the FYDP [Future Years Defense Plan]), the Air Force will need \$7 billion for the F-35A, \$3.4 billion for the KC-46A [tanker], \$2.9 billion for EELV [rockets], and \$2.2 billion for C-130J [cargo planes]. I’m projecting they will need about \$3.5 billion for LRS-B that year. The question becomes,” Harrison says, “can they do all of those major programs at the same time?”

The same is true for the Navy in 2020. They will need about \$3.4 billion for *Ford*-Class aircraft carriers, \$6 billion for Marine F-35Bs and Navy F-35Cs, \$1.4 billion for the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS), Harrison projects, “and an unspecified amount for SSNs [attack submarines] and DDGs [destroyers] (their SAR projections don’t account for procurements beyond the FYDP, even though the shipbuilding plans says they will keep buying something). My estimate shows they will likely need more than \$4 billion that year for Ohio Replacement.”

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He analyzed whether they can fund all of those programs at the same time.

"In both cases, I think the answer is no — they will not be able to afford all of the programs currently planned if the topline DoD budget is capped at the BCA level or the PB level."

The Navy has already admitted it cannot fund its shipbuilding plans because of the costs of the Ohio Replacement in its latest 30-year shipbuilding plan: "The DON can only afford the SSBN procurement costs with significant increases in our top-line or by having the SSBN funded from sources that do not result in any reductions to the DON's resourcing level."

The Air Force and Navy would need to cut back on some combination of force levels, acquisitions, and readiness to make enough budget headroom for these programs, Harrison estimates. Since both services have already substantially cut their force levels and lowered readiness, Harrison believe they will have to cut other major acquisition programs to fund LRS-B and Ohio Replacement.

Now the so-called out-years are notoriously difficult to predict, especially in this era of sequestration, Continuing Resolutions and general congressional messiness, but Harrison is making his estimates based on DoD's own figures and reasonable extrapolations.

<http://breakingdefense.com/2014/09/lrs-b-next-boomer-may-force-weapons-cuts/>

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Winnipeg Free Press – Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

What the US Military Wants for Missile Defence: Multi-Use Sensors in the Arctic

By Alexander Panetta, The Canadian Press
September 1, 2014

PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. - American military officials have shed some light on what Canada could contribute to the missile-defence program should it choose to join after a decade spent on the sidelines.

Several conversations with high-ranking U.S. military officers point to a common desire: multi-purpose sensors in Canada's Arctic that would sniff out a wider range of potential threats than just intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Those state-of-the-art systems would be designed to track maritime vessels, airplanes and small cruise missiles — all in addition to any large missile fired off by North Korea or some hypothetical rogue state.

That means the missile-defence system that has prompted so much debate in Canada over the years could, potentially, be just one single piece integrated into the broader binational military relationship.

American military brass are aware that the missile-defence debate has been revived in Ottawa, nine years after domestic political pressure prompted the Paul Martin government to abstain.

They're weighing their public utterances carefully, wary of being seen as interfering in Canadian policy-making.

"We respectfully want them to have all the space and time to consider it now that it's been brought to the table, it seems," said U.S. Gen. Charles Jacoby, who heads Norad — the Canada-U.S. North American Aerospace Defence Command.

"If Canada decided not to belong to missile defence, then I'm sure that they would continue to play all of their robust roles that they play in missile warning and in the other Norad missions. And if they did decide (to join), I'm sure we'd take great advantage of the capabilities and commitment that Canada brings to every mission."

Since the Arctic horizon is a high-potential route for incoming missiles, so-called long-range discrimination radar — which tracks objects with greater precision than the current system — would make sense, he added.



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"We're also interested in capabilities that are multi-mission, not single mission," said Jacoby, who's also commander of U.S. Northern Command, based in the same Colorado Springs facility as Norad.

"I think both countries no longer care to invest in single-mission, one-trick-pony capabilities. So we would want multi-mission kinds of sensors up there."

Canadian officials say the message has been similar in private, with the American military having made its wish-list known.

Because the missile-defence system is monitored from the same Colorado air force base that houses Norad, Canadians work alongside Americans who operate a major program to which they don't belong.

A new partnership on ballistic missile defence would "open up the door for all kinds of conversations" about deeper Canada-U.S. co-operation, said Brig.-Gen. Matt Molloy, the American general who oversees the missile-defence unit under Jacoby.

"Our polar approach, it's a vulnerability," Molloy said.

"That polar approach is of supreme importance to North American defence. And that is, I think, a great area to look at — what we can do with sensor capacity up there. There's room for capacity up there."

Japan, Australia, and several European countries have already signed on to join the missile-defence program. In Canada, a Senate committee has endorsed the idea, but the Harper government has said little.

In its early conception phase in the Reagan era, the program was known as Star Wars, a label its critics continue to use. The system includes one space-based detection satellite, several land- and sea-based sensors and rockets in California and Alaska designed to launch a 64-kg interceptor vehicle.

Bill Graham, the Liberal defence minister from a decade ago, recalls that at the time, all the U.S. government initially wanted from Canada was political support.

"It was a little bit like Iraq — they just wanted the flag," Graham said. "They wanted us to say yes. But we were not asked to put any money in, we were not at that time asked for any location for a radar-warning site."

Graham did recall one proposal to install radar in Newfoundland. The pitch came from a private company.

Nine years later, that same company — Raytheon, a Massachusetts-based defence contractor — continues to produce sensors for the program, ranging in size, capability and price tag.

Lobbying records suggest it has held meetings recently in Ottawa to discuss missile defence with at least one senator, one civil servant and, just last week, with Public Works Minister Diane Finley.

In its latest annual report, the company lays out a strategy for growth beyond the U.S. It warns that Raytheon relies on the U.S. government for 72 per cent of its sales, and needs new markets because of American budget-cutting.

Raytheon recently began building its 12th AN/TPY-2 radar for the U.S. program, at a cost of US\$172.7 million. It's also one of the contractors for the more sophisticated Air Missile Defence Radar, which will cost the U.S. government US\$299.9 million per unit.

One advocate for the program says Canada could possibly buy another technology, similar to the Dutch. Last week, the Netherlands announced a US\$71 million plan to install radar on a frigate as part of NATO's contribution to the missile program.

Riki Ellison of the Virginia-based Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance said Canada has a responsibility to upgrade some of its Cold War-era radar infrastructure in the Arctic, designed for big fleets of Soviet bombers. Modern risks include small, hard-to-detect rockets fired from ships, he said.

"The game's evolved," Ellison said. "There are organizations trying to get this capability that are non-state actors, that are small-state actors."

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Kalamazoo Gazette – Kalamazoo, MI

Resolution Supporting Missile Defense System at Fort Custer OK'd by Kalamazoo County Board

By Alex Mitchell

September 02, 2014

KALAMAZOO, MI — A proposed ballistic missile defense system for Fort Custer received the support of the Kalamazoo County Board of Commissioners Tuesday.

The board voted to approve a resolution stating it is in favor of the proposed development, with commissioner Carolyn Alford, D-Kalamazoo, absent. Commissioners Julie Rogers, D-Kalamazoo Township, and John Taylor, D-Kalamazoo, both abstained.

Fort Custer, a 7,500-acre training base for the U.S. Army Reserves and other branches of the military that straddles Calhoun and Kalamazoo counties, is one of four locations currently undergoing an environmental impact study that will be used to partially determine the area best suited for the project.

The resolution doesn't mean Kalamazoo County will be chosen for the development, but instead serves to show the federal government that county representatives are on board with the missile system if Fort Custer is selected to receive it.

Prior to the vote, commissioners heard comments from a string of citizens, the majority of whom opposed the installation by saying it furthers the agenda of war culture in the U.S.

"I think we need to think not about the jobs, but about the project itself, about what it does, about whether it helps to protect us, whether it helps to protect our freedoms; or whether it actually creates more tension in the world, more militarism in the world," said Harold Beu during the public comment portion of the meeting.

The missile defense system would involve 20 to 60 non-weaponized missiles, according to Lt. Col Mark Gorzynski, commander of the Fort Custer Training Center in Augusta. They are hit-to-kill missiles that don't carry an explosive element. Each would be about 55 feet long and weigh 22 to 27 tons, and would be launched from in-the-ground, double-cement silos.

Jan Frantz, director of corporate projects for Battle Creek Unlimited, the city's economic development organization, told commissioners at their Sept. 2 meeting that the project is expected to have a \$3.2 billion positive economic impact on the region's economy, according to the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research. That is expected to include 300 additional jobs in the area.

Beu's statements were echoed by several others, but it ultimately was not enough to sway commissioners, most of whom said that while they may not support the philosophy of increasing the militarization of the country, they recognize the economic boon brought on by the development would be too significant to pass on.

"I wish there was a better way to spend money ... but the reality is the military just doesn't give the money back," said commissioner Michael Seals, D-Kalamazoo. "They are going to find somewhere to build this facility whether we like it or not. I have to support this because I know economically, this is the right thing to do."

Board vice chair David Buskirk, offered similar statements in support of the development and said he hopes local union employees will be hired to perform some of the construction of the system if it comes to Kalamazoo County.



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Vietnam war veteran Wade Adams said he understood the commissioner's position that the development will likely go somewhere else if it's not placed at Fort Custer, but he still urged them to vote "no" to voice to the federal government that the money could be better spent on needs like infrastructure or education.

"You can say somebody else is going to take this money, but this money should not be going toward boondoggle projects that are destroying the earth," Adams said.

Other detractors said that missile defense systems have too low of a success rate to be considered a viable development and that the system could potentially make Kalamazoo County a target for future attacks, to name a few of the concerns raised.

Alfred Sarquiz, a Korean war veteran, was one of the few citizens to offer support of the board's decision prior to the vote. Sarquiz pointed out that the military is the reason why the community had the opportunity to debate this decision.

"We would not be here exercising our freedom of speech except for the military," Sarquiz said. "I think there's four communities that are in the run for this missile defense system and if we stick our head in the sand, it's going to go in in one of these other three communities."

After hearing the public comments, commissioner John Zull, R-Portage, offered his rationale for supporting the development, saying the world isn't as safe as some would think and that it's defense systems such as this one that help keep the peace.

"We heard a lot of people with passion express some fear, but I don't think that I can agree that that fear is realistic in a sense that I wish the world was noble," Zull said. "I wish all people were as noble as what you seem to think more of than I do.

"It's hard for me to say you're wrong ... but I think you're wrong and I think that's what's gotten the world in trouble from time to time -- the most noble of us want to trust everybody too much."

http://www.mlive.com/news/kalamazoo/index.ssf/2014/09/resolution_supporting_missile.html

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The Washington Free Beacon – Washington, D.C.

U.S. Fears ISIL Smuggling Nuclear and Radioactive Materials

ISIL could take control of radioactive, radiological materials

By Adam Kredo

September 5, 2014

U.S. and Iraqi authorities have jointly ramped up their efforts to prevent terrorists from acquiring nuclear and radioactive materials as concerns mount that Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL or ISIS) is seeking to recover these sensitive materials and use them in a terror attack.

ISIL now controls about half of Iraq, potentially giving it access to some low-level radioactive and radiological materials, according to a State Department official.

The threat has been deemed "critical" by the U.S. State Department, which announced on Wednesday that it had inked a new deal with Baghdad to ramp up joint efforts to detect and recover sensitive nuclear materials before ISIL and other terrorist entities can get to them.

While the United States currently has no evidence that ISIL has yet to locate these types of materials, there are concerns that lawless areas under the group's control could be used as a new smuggling route by rogue actors.

"The signing and donation of radiation detection equipment reflect the common conviction of the U.S. and Iraqi governments that nuclear smuggling and nuclear and radiological terrorism are critical and ongoing global threats that require a coordinated, global response," the State Department said in a statement. "Iraq's central location

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and the challenging security environment it faces reinforce the urgency with which these problems must be addressed.”

The United States, which started working on the agreement in 2012, is now providing the Iraqi government with radiation detection and identification equipment, according to the State Department. These tools are expected to help Iraqi authorities “locate, identify, characterize, and recover orphaned or disused radioactive sources in Iraq thereby reducing the risk of terrorists acquiring these dangerous materials.”

The concern is that sensitive materials could be smuggled outside of Iraq and potentially used by extremists.

“There’s always a concern about radiological or radioactive sources,” said a State Department official who would only discuss the issue on background.

While the United States is “not aware of any cases of these types of material being smuggled out of the country thus far,” ISIL could potentially use radioactive materials found in hospitals and some medical devices to create a crude bomb, the official said.

“This is the kind of thing where if ISIL got its hands on enough radioactive sources or radioactive sources of a sufficient radioactivity level and they decided to turn it into a bomb and blow it up in a market, that would be a very unpleasant thing,” the official said, noting that “there’s no indication that ISIL is planning to do that.”

Yet there is evidence that terrorists stole some nuclear materials in Iraq earlier this year.

Iraqi officials revealed to the United Nations in July that insurgents had seized uranium that was being used for research purposes at an academic institution in the northern part of the country.

Nearly 90 pounds of low-level uranium was stolen from Iraq’s Mosul University by “terrorist groups,” Iraq’s U.N. ambassador was quoted as saying at the time by Reuters.

“Terrorist groups have seized control of nuclear material at the sites that came out of the control of the state,” Iraqi Ambassador Mohamed Ali Alhakim wrote in a letter claiming that these material could be “used in manufacturing weapons of mass destruction,” according to Reuters.

However, the United States is not overly concerned about the loss of these nuclear materials because it is mostly depleted or naturally occurring. There is currently no enriched uranium “that we know of” in Iraq, according to the State Department official.

“It continues to be our assessment that there is no indication ISIL has gotten hold of any material that would pose a nonproliferation threat, and no indication frankly that they are actively [seeking it out] ... even if they do control some significant portion of territory in Iraq,” the official said. “There’s been no indication, thankfully, that they are on the lookout for what we would consider to be a WMD.”

“And even if they found it they wouldn’t know what to do with it,” the official added.

Concern about these materials slipping into the wrong hands seems to have become more pressing for the United States and Iraq in recent months as ISIL gains control of more Iraqi territory, mainly in the northern and central parts of the country, including Mosul and Falluja.

“There are some concerns about the rule of law and security control in parts of the country, that they can’t necessarily control what’s going through they’re territory, [and] suddenly, even though we haven’t seen radioactive or nuclear smuggling, there’s a concern that if you’re a smuggler from the Middle East, or from the Caucasus, or Central Asia, you’d have a new smuggling route you might want to avail yourself of,” according to the State Department official.

Reports also indicate that ISIL has stolen chemical weapons from a facility in Muthanna, though the United States has no evidence to confirm this.

Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel warned earlier this week that ISIL cannot be left to seize any more areas in Iraq and Syria, where it also controls about half the country.

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The terror group will not end its radical mission “unless the U.S. along with our partners and coalitions stop it,” Hagel said Wednesday during a speech.

“You gotta destroy it. Because if we don’t destroy it, it will get worse. And it will get wider and deeper,” Hagel said, warning that more than 100 U.S. citizens have been identified as fighting alongside ISIL in the Middle East.

American citizens fighting with ISIL currently have little trouble returning to the United States, a legal loophole that some in Congress are pushing to clamp down on.

ISIL has continued to expand outside of Iraq and Syria, with recruitment efforts ramping up in South East Asia, particularly in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The group also is close to overtaking the international green zone in Baghdad, according to the latest reports from the Pentagon.

<http://freebeacon.com/national-security/u-s-fears-isil-smuggling-nuclear-and-radioactive-materials/>

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Yonhap News Agency – Seoul, South Korea

White House says U.S. Policy on N. Korea Remains Unchanged

By Chang Jae-soon

August 31, 2014

WASHINGTON, Aug. 31 (Yonhap) -- The U.S. policy on North Korea remains unchanged that Pyongyang must demonstrate its denuclearization commitment through action if it wants to reopen negotiations with the U.S., the White House said Sunday.

Patrick Ventrell, a spokesman of the National Security Council, issued the statement amid growing talk of a possible shift in Washington's policy on Pyongyang following an unconfirmed report that a U.S. official made a secret trip to the North.

Also adding to such speculation was a planned trip to the U.S. by the North's foreign minister, Ri Su-yong, to attend this year's meeting of the U.N. General Assembly set to begin in mid-September. Ri's trip, if realized, will mark the first visit to the U.S. by a North Korean foreign minister in 15 years.

"We remain open to dialogue with North Korea but will continue to judge North Korea by its actions, not its words. We are not interested in talks for the sake of talks," Ventrell said in a statement to Yonhap News Agency.

"U.S. principles in this regard remain the same and unchanged. North Korea must show it is serious and prepared to abide by its commitments, particularly concerning denuclearization, before authentic and credible negotiations are possible," he said.

The six-party talks aimed at ending North Korea's nuclear program have been stalled since late 2008. Pyongyang calls for their unconditional resumption, but the U.S. and South Korea have demanded the North must first take concrete steps to prove it is serious about giving up its nuclear program before the negotiating process resumes.

That stance reflects the deep skepticism Washington and Seoul have about North Korea, a country that has a track record of starting a crisis, coming to negotiations and reaching an agreement in exchange for economic and other concessions, before reneging on its promises.

Ventrell said National Security Advisor Susan Rice made clear in her Georgetown University speech last November that Pyongyang's attempts to engage in dialogue while keeping critical elements of the North's weapons programs running are unacceptable.

"Nothing has changed since then," he said.

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The spokesman said that the U.S. has instituted an "unparalleled international sanctions regime that has successfully impeded proliferation, constrained the growth of North Korea's nuclear and missile programs, and driven up the cost Pyongyang's misbehavior."

Ventrell made no mention about the reported secret trip to the North by a U.S. government official. But he said that the U.S. has "direct channels of communication with the DPRK (North Korea), including liaison with the DPRK Mission in New York."

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/search1/2603000000.html?cid=AEN20140901000200315>

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The Korea Times – Seoul, South Korea

Korea Top Choice for U.S. Missile Shield

By Jun Ji-hye

September 1, 2014

The United States has put South Korea at the top of a list of countries where it can station missiles for the U.S. anti-missile defense shield, sources said Monday.

This contradicts the government's position that it will not join the Washington-led network of interceptors against ballistic missile attacks not just from North Korea but also China.

China has been adamant in its opposition to U.S. missiles being stationed on the Korean Peninsula.

"The U.S. has finished an on-the-spot survey and a review of military influence that the deployment may bring about early this year," said a source on condition of anonymity.

"The final decision will be made soon about whether the U.S. military will bring the Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missile defense battery into South Korea."

There has been speculation that the defense chiefs of the two countries will make a final decision at their annual Security Consultative Meeting (SCM) in Washington in October.

Defense Minister Han Min-koo plans to attend the meeting.

The advanced missile-defense system, with a range of 150 kilometers, is regarded as an indispensable element of the defense system, along with the SM-3 that can intercept missiles at an altitude of 400-500 kilometers.

Washington reportedly wants to bring the system into South Korea to help deter threats from North Korea.

The possible deployment has prompted opposition from Russia and China, which are concerned that the system would negatively affect the regional situation and provoke an arms race.

Seoul has maintained that the deployment of THAAD would help strengthen the nation's security.

"If the U.S. deploys THAAD on the Korean Peninsula, it would help to deter North Korea's nuclear or missile attacks, and enhance security on the peninsula," Minister Han said in July.

Observers believe that a recent visit by U.S. Deputy Defense Secretary Robert Work was also part of efforts to deploy the system.

Speaking at a news conference at the Osan Air Base in Pyeongtaek, Gyeonggi Province, Work said his country hoped that South Korea's plan to develop its own missile defense system would be compatible with the U.S. system.

"What we hope is to have an extremely interoperable system between the U.S. theater missile defense and the KAMD (Korea Air and Missile Defense) ... We really want interoperability," he said, noting that there were "very low-cost, high-impact ways to link these systems."

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A Ministry of National Defense official declined to elaborate, simply saying, "We have not been notified of anything from the U.S."

<http://www.koreatimesus.com/korea-top-choice-for-u-s-missile-shield/>

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The Korea Herald – Seoul, South Korea

N. Korea Condemns U.S. Plan to Station THAAD in S. Korea

September 02, 2014

North Korea criticized the United States Tuesday for seeking to deploy an advanced missile defense system in South Korea.

Pyongyang accused the U.S. of exacerbating the security situation on the peninsula by pushing for the establishment of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system here.

The U.S. is considering deploying a THAAD battery to one of its military bases in South Korea.

The Pentagon has already completed a related field survey, according to defense sources.

Pyongyang's state-controlled media claimed the move is part of Washington's military strategy aimed at destroying the "strategic balance" in the region and overpowering other countries.

"China, which views the U.S. THAAD system to be deployed in South Korea as targeting it, issued warnings several times," the North's main newspaper Rodong Sinmun said. "China has made preparations for dealing with it in case of an emergency situation."

The U.S. push for a missile defense system in the South has put not only the peninsula but also Northeast Asia in great danger, the paper claimed. (Yonhap)

<http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20140902000734>

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The Korea Times – Seoul, South Korea

Seoul to Persuade Beijing on THAAD

By Kang Seung-woo

September 4, 2014

The government is moving to ease China's concerns about the possible deployment of U.S. missile interceptors on Korean soil.

National Security Office (NSC) chief Kim Kwan-jin is expected to undertake this hard mission on a visit to Beijing to meet with State Councilor Yang Jiechi in October.

Government officials have recently dropped hints that they would not object to the U.S. Forces Korea (USFK) plan to bring in a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system.

The advanced missile-defense system that has a range of up to 100 kilometers is regarded as an indispensable element of the U.S. missile defense system.

"The NSC chief will try and acquire China's understanding on THAAD," a government official said. The resumption of six-party talks aimed at stopping North Korea's nuclear programs would also be on the agenda, he said.

The U.S. has reportedly completed its survey of candidate sites for THAAD, with a final decision likely to be made before the annual defense ministers' Security Consultative Meeting in October.

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China is anxious about Washington's defense shield, which purportedly aims to neutralize the North's ballistic missile attacks but, on a large scale, is seen to weaken Beijing's projection of nuclear capability.

Chinese President Xi Jinping asked President Park Geun-hye to tread carefully over the deployment of THAAD batteries during his state visit to Seoul in July, according to diplomatic sources.

In July, Russia's foreign ministry said that THAAD deployment can cause concern and it would inevitably have a negative impact on the strategic situation in the region. Moscow also warned of the possibility that it could provoke an arms race in Northeast Asia.

"China will never agree to the U.S. plan," said Paik Hak-soon, a researcher at the Sejong Institute. He added that Kim may have to visit Russia in the future.

Seoul is sticking to a peculiar approach on the U.S. missile shield.

Its officials have publicly stated that Seoul has no intention to join it, insisting that THAAD can be brought in because its purpose is to protect U.S. soldiers stationed here.

Defense officials say they are developing a low-tier missile shield called the Korea Air and Missile Defense (KAMD) system.

However, Paik said the deployment of the advanced missile interceptor in Korea itself is a de facto sign of Korea joining the U.S. defense system.

"Previous governments stood against the U.S. missile defense system due to possible conflict with China, but now the nation may pay the price from China such as trade retaliation," he said.

Meanwhile, President spokesman Min Kyung-wook said, "The NSC chief currently has no plan to visit China," while the foreign ministry said that nothing has been fixed regarding his trip.

https://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2014/09/116_164183.html

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AsiaOne.com – Singapore

US, S Korea Set Up Wartime Unit to Destroy North's Nukes: Report

Agence France-Presse (AFP)

Thursday, September 04, 2014

SEOUL - South Korea said Thursday it would create a joint military unit with the United States, as a report suggested the contingent would target North Korea's weapons of mass destruction if a full-scale conflict broke out.

The mechanised unit led by a US major general will be set up in the first half of next year, the South's defence ministry said, as part of elaborate preparations for any future war between the two Koreas.

"It will be the first combined field combat unit to carry out wartime operations," a defence ministry spokesman said without elaborating on its mission.

He declined to confirm a Yonhap news agency report that its remit would include eliminating weapons of mass destruction in the nuclear-armed North if war breaks out.

The ministry said the contingent would have a joint office of US and South Korean staff in Uijeongbu, north of Seoul, where the US 2nd Infantry Division guards a strategically important area as a deterrent to an invasion by North Korea.

In the event of an all-out conflict, a mechanised South Korean brigade would join forces with the US division, which is armed with helicopters and other advanced weapons, it said.

"This would be a symbol of a strengthened military alliance between the allies," a military official said.

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Because the Korean conflict ended in an armistice instead of a peace treaty, the two Koreas are still technically at war.

Nearly 30,000 US troops are stationed in the South under a bilateral military accord.

If fresh hostilities broke out, the US commander in South Korea would assume control of the South's 640,000 troops.

A transfer of command in a wartime setting was set for 2015, which would allow South Korea control of its own troops, but Seoul wants a postponement citing the increased threat from North Korea's nuclear and missile development.

In June, North Korea announced the successful test of new high-precision, tactical guided missiles, and in the following months the North conducted a series of missile and rocket tests.

Meanwhile South Korea and the United States held an annual military drill in August despite condemnation by North Korea which had threatened a "merciless" retaliatory strike.

The drill simulated the response to a nuclear attack threat for the first time, according to the South's defence ministry, using a strategy of "tailored" deterrence developed last year in the course of joint defence talks.

South Korea is protected by the US nuclear umbrella, and in wartime American soldiers in the South would be reinforced by military contingents from the continental United States and its presence in East Asia.

UN resolutions bar Pyongyang from conducting any launches using ballistic missile technology. But the North has defended its missile launches as a legitimate exercise in self-defence.

<http://news.asiaone.com/news/asia/us-s-korea-set-wartime-unit-destroy-norths-nukes-report>

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Daily Mail Online.com – London, U.K

IAEA says Sees Signs North Korea Reactor may be Operating

By Fredrik Dahl, Reuters

September 4, 2014

VIENNA, Sept 4 (Reuters) - The U.N. nuclear watchdog said it has seen releases of steam and water indicating that North Korea may be operating a reactor, in the latest update on a plant that experts say could make plutonium for atomic bombs.

North Korea announced in April of last year that it would revive its aged five-megawatt research reactor at the Yongbyon nuclear complex, saying it was seeking a deterrent capacity.

The isolated and poverty-stricken state defends its nuclear programme as a "treasured sword" to counter what it sees as U.S.-led hostility.

North Korea's nuclear programme "remains a matter of serious concern", the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said in an annual report posted on the U.N. agency's website.

The Vienna-based IAEA continued to monitor developments at Yongbyon through satellite imagery, it said.

"Since late August 2013, the Agency has observed, through analysis of satellite imagery, steam discharges and the outflow of cooling water at the 5 MW(e) reactor, signatures which are consistent with the reactor's operation," the IAEA said.

"However, since the Agency has had no access to the 5 MW(e) reactor since April 2009, it cannot confirm the operational status of the reactor," it said. North Korea expelled IAEA inspectors in 2009 and the agency has had no inspectors in the country since then.

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The Yongbyon reactor has been technically out of operation for years. North Korea destroyed its cooling tower in 2008 as a confidence-building step in talks with South Korea, China, the United States, Japan and Russia.

When North Korea said it planned to revive it, experts said it would probably take about half a year to get it up and running, if it had not suffered significant damage from neglect.

DEVELOPING NUCLEAR CAPABILITIES?

Late last year, IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano said North Korea may be seeking to restart the Yongbyon research reactor.

Last month, the U.S.-based Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS) said that commercial satellite imagery from late June showed that the reactor was active.

"North Korea has apparently made a decision to renovate the aged 5 MW (e) reactor to make plutonium for nuclear weapons for many more years," it said. "However, without more data, such as regular steam production, it is hard to determine the operational status of the reactor and thus to estimate the amount of plutonium produced by the reactor."

While North Korea has long boasted of making strides in acquiring a "nuclear deterrent", there had been general scepticism that it could master the step of miniaturising a nuclear warhead to mount on a ballistic missile.

But there has been a shift in thinking since it conducted a nuclear test in February last year - its third since 2006 - and some experts have said it may be closer than previously thought to putting a nuclear warhead on a missile.

Yongbyon is also the site of other nuclear facilities and the IAEA said in its report that it had "observed ongoing renovation and new construction activities at various locations within" the complex.

"Although the purpose of such activities cannot be determined through satellite imagery alone, they appear to be broadly consistent with (North Korea's) statements that it is further developing its nuclear capabilities," it said.

Editing by Larry King

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/reuters/article-2743609/IAEA-says-sees-signs-North-Korea-reactor-operating.html>

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Xinhua News – Beijing, China

No Decision on U.S. Missile Deployment: S. Korea

September 5, 2014

SEOUL, Sept. 5 (Xinhua) -- The U.S. Defense Department confirmed nothing has been decided yet on its reported plan to deploy an advanced missile-defense battery to the Korean Peninsula, South Korea's defense ministry said Friday.

The confirmation came after local newspaper Donga Ilbo reported citing a senior U.S. Defense Department official as saying that talks about bringing a Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missile battery into South Korea were at a final stage, and the deployment would be officially announced as early as in October.

Seoul's Defense Ministry spokesman Kim Min-seok told a press briefing that the U.S. government made clear that no decision has been made on the THAAD deployment, saying the U.S. stance was confirmed through its defense department.

The U.S. forces in South Korea called for the THAAD deployment, on which the defense department has reached no conclusion, Kim said, noting that the U.S. gave no request to South Korea for consultations on the missile-defense system.

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Despite the denial, speculations escalated that the THAAD system would be introduced on the peninsula. U.S. Forces Korea (USFK) Commander Gen. Curtis Scaparrotti said in early June he called for Washington to bring the THAAD into the peninsula.

Former South Korean Defense Minister Kim Kwan-jin, who now serves as top national security adviser to President Park Geun-hye, told lawmakers in mid-June that it would be "no matter" if the U.S. forces deploy the THAAD to the peninsula.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2014-09/05/c_133623308.htm

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RT (Russia Today) – Moscow, Russia

Russia Outraged after Kiev Accuses Moscow of Nuclear Attack Threats

September 01, 2014

Following comments from Ukraine's Defense Minister Valery Geletey of Moscow threatening with a nuclear attack on its neighbor, Moscow said it was shocked by the statement. Russia warned that such rhetoric only deepens the civil stand-off in Ukraine.

"Geletey's calls to get ready for 'tens of thousands' of new victims in what he called 'Great Patriotic War' and what in fact is a new punitive operation in his own country are appalling. He only drags the Ukrainian people into a new round of the bloody civil stand-off," Russia's Foreign Ministry said in a statement Monday.

Earlier Geletey wrote in his Facebook that the operation *"to cleanse Ukraine's east from terrorists"* was over. He, however, proceeded to accuse Russia of direct military involvement in the east that followed the rebels' "defeat."

"A big war has come to our home, a war Europe has not seen since WWII," Geletey wrote alleging that Russia not only attempted to secure its position on the rebel-held territories, but also advance onto other regions.

He said that Moscow - through *"unofficial channels"* - has *"repeatedly threatened to use tactical nuclear weapons"* on Ukraine if Kiev continues to resist.

"It is hard to believe that such statements can come from a defense minister of a civilized state. Otherwise, it's just not clear how tens of thousands of Ukrainian families could entrust this official with lives of their children, brothers and husbands, mobilized into the Ukrainian army to wage a fratricidal war in their own country," Moscow said, adding that this was a *"blatant"* attempt on Geletey's behalf to secure his own post.

Earlier on Monday, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov stressed there would be *"no military intervention by Russia into the conflict in Ukraine"*.

Lavrov said he hopes that the Monday peace talks held in Minsk will pave the way to agreeing on *"an immediate unconditional ceasefire"* in eastern Ukraine.

The minister called the peace plan offered by the Ukrainian president Petro Poroshenko *"unrealistic"* and called of the US and the EU to persuade Kiev to stop using heavy artillery and airstrikes against the civilian population in the country's east.

"We assume that the most important thing is for Washington and Brussels to demand Kiev do the same thing they demand in any other conflict: stop using heavy artillery, aviation against the cities, against civilians; not to destroy schools, hospitals," Lavrov said.

While Kiev and NATO have repeatedly voiced claims of Russian military "invasion" in eastern Ukraine, no evidence proving Moscow's interference into the country's civil war has ever been presented, except for several satellite images dismissed by Russian Defense Ministry as *"fake"*. The images were provided by a commercial company DigitalGlobe operating civilian satellites.



The only confirmed crossing of Russian troops over the Ukrainian border took place end August when a group of 10 paratroopers patrolling a border area accidentally stepped over the largely unmarked border and were detained by Kiev troops. Ukrainian authorities transferred the detained soldiers to Kiev, used the incident for publicity purposes and agreed to release the troops only after days of negotiations.

Meanwhile, hundreds of Ukrainian army troops have crossed the Russian border in the ongoing conflict, with many of them receiving safe shelter and food in temporary camps. On Wednesday, a group of 62 Ukrainian soldiers crossed into Russia seeking refuge.

<http://rt.com/news/184324-russia-ukraine-nuclear-shock/>

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Reuters.com – U.K.

British Government says it Has No Contingency Plans for Possible Scottish Breakaway

Monday, September 1, 2014

LONDON (Reuters) - The British government said on Monday it was not drawing up contingency plans for a surprise vote in favour of Scottish independence, less than three weeks before Scotland holds a referendum on whether to leave the United Kingdom.

Voters in Scotland will decide on Sept. 18 whether they want to form an independent state with opinion polls showing Scots are likely to vote to keep their 307-union with England intact.

However, one survey last week showed the anti-independence campaign's lead had halved following a televised debate and experts say that the unique nature of the vote - the first of its kind in British history - makes it unusually difficult to predict.

The debate has raised big questions such as what currency an independent Scotland would use and what would happen to Britain's Scotland-based nuclear submarines. But the government on Monday refused to discuss how it would handle a split.

"No such work (is being) undertaken," Prime Minister David Cameron's official spokesman told reporters when asked if the government had drawn up contingency plans for a "Yes" vote.

"The government's entire focus is on making the case for the UK staying together."

Reporting by William James; Editing by Andrew Osbor

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2014/09/01/uk-scotland-independence-contingency-idUKKBN0GW27120140901>

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ITAR-TASS News Agency – Moscow, Russia

Three Yars Mobile ICBM Regiments to be Put on Combat Duty December — Defense Ministry

The RS-24 Yars intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) with a multiple warhead was designed by the Moscow-based Institute of Thermal Technology

September 02, 2014

MOSCOW, September 02. /ITAR-TASS/. Russia's Strategic Missile Forces (RSMF) by the end of the year will re-equip their three regiments with the Yars mobile missile systems to be put on trial combat duty in December, RSMF spokesman Major Dmitry Andreyev told ITAR-TASS on Tuesday.



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“By the end of 2014, two more RSMF mobile regiments are planned to be equipped with the Yars system - in the Tagil and Novosibirsk missile formations and another stationary regiment - in the Kozelsk division. These three regiments are to be put on trial combat duty in December 2014,” he said.

According to Andreyev, with the re-equipment of a number of RSMF formations with Yars, the missile system’s share in these forces has already reached 50%. “Further plans for equipping other missile formations with the Yars system have already been made,” the RSMF spokesman added.

The RS-24 Yars intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) with a multiple warhead was designed by the Moscow-based Institute of Thermal Technology. “This missile was designed with the science and technology solutions applied in the Topol-M missile system, which considerably cut the time and costs for its creation,” Andreyev said.

According to him, the RS-24 ICBM will boost the combat capability of the RSMF cutting edge against missile defense systems, thus strengthening the deterrence potential of Russia’s strategic nuclear forces. “In the future, along with the single-warhead RS-12M2 ICBM (Topol-M missile system), the RS-24 ICBM will form the backbone of the RSMF main attack force,” the spokesman added.

<http://en.itar-tass.com/russia/747694>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

Russia to Update Military Doctrine by End-2014 – Russian Security Council

2 September 2014

MOSCOW, September 2 (RIA Novosti) - Russia will update its military doctrine by the end of 2014 to reflect new security threats, including the expansion of NATO, US missile shield plans and the political crisis in Ukraine, the deputy head of the Russian Security Council said Tuesday.

A special working group was set up within the framework of the council to introduce amendments to the doctrine, which was last updated in 2010.

“We plan to finish amending the military doctrine this year,” Mikhail Popov, the council’s deputy chairman, told RIA Novosti in an interview.

“I have no doubts that the issue of NATO military infrastructure encroaching on our borders, including through the expansion of the alliance, will remain among the biggest military threats to the Russian Federation,” the official said.

“In 2010, this point of the military doctrine triggered a sharp reaction ... A number of high-profile officials reproached our country’s leaders in outdated thinking, claiming that NATO is not Russia’s enemy ... We were assured of good intentions, but the moves of the recent years suggest completely another thing,” Popov added.

Among other security threats, Popov named the determination by the United States and its NATO allies to enhance their strategic offensive potential by building a global missile defense system.

The updated security doctrine will also mention “the emergence of new military threats to the Russian Federation, related to the Arab Spring events, the military conflict in Syria and the situation in Ukraine and around it.”

Amendments to the military doctrine will also touch on Russia’s independence in producing weapons, hardware and other military equipment production.

“Life shows that the reliability of our certain Western partners is a temporary thing, and it is, unfortunately, closely linked with the political situation,” Popov stressed.

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The European Union and the United States imposed a few waves of economic sanctions on Russia following Crimea's reunification with the country in March. The West argues that the referendum allowing the peninsula to join Russia was illegal, while Moscow claims it was fully legitimate. The list of sanctions includes restrictions on Russia's banking and oil sectors and, in particular, an embargo on arms trading.

<http://en.ria.ru/russia/20140902/192551616/Russia-to-Update-Military-Doctrine-by-End-2014--Russian-Security.html>

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The London Daily Telegraph – London, U.K.

Kazakhstan on High Alert after Radioactive Container Falls off Transport Vehicle and Disappears

Workers were carrying a shipment of caesium-137, a radioactive isotope which can cause burning and death after high exposure

Agence France-Presse (AFP)

02 September 2014

The authorities in Kazakhstan are on high alert after a shipment of radioactive caesium-137 disappeared while being driven across the country.

A police spokesman for the western Mangistau region said the material - commonly used for military and medical purposes - appeared to have fallen off a vehicle that was transporting it.

"The container with the radioactive isotope caesium-137 has not been found so far," police spokesman Azamat Sarsenbayev told AFP, adding that authorities learned it had gone missing last Wednesday.

High exposure to caesium-137, which has a half-life of 30 years, can result in severe burns or even death, and locals have been warned not to open the container if they find it.

The security services, emergency response workers and the military have been involved in efforts to find the container, which weighs some 50-60 kilogrammes.

The origin of the missing material was not revealed by authorities in Kazakhstan, which inherited more than 1,400 nuclear warheads and a weapons test site when the Soviet Union collapsed.

By April 1995 the country had transferred its nuclear warheads back to Russia

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/kazakhstan/11070582/Kazakhstan-on-high-alert-after-radioactive-container-falls-off-transport-vehicle-and-disappears.html>

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The Moscow Times – Moscow, Russia

Russian General Calls for Preemptive Nuclear Strike Doctrine against NATO

The Moscow Times

September 03 2014

A Russian general has called for Russia to revamp its military doctrine, last updated in 2010, to clearly identify the U.S. and its NATO allies as Moscow's enemy number one and spell out the conditions under which Russia would launch a preemptive nuclear strike against the 28-member military alliance, Interfax reported Wednesday.

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Russia's military doctrine, a strategy document through which the government interprets military threats and crafts possible responses, is being revised in light of threats connected to the Arab Spring, the Syrian civil war and the conflict in Ukraine, the deputy chief of the Kremlin's security council told RIA Novosti on Tuesday.

But within the Defense Ministry there are voices calling for different priorities.

"First and foremost, the likely enemy of Russia should be clearly identified in this strategic document, something absent from the 2010 military doctrine. In my view, our primary enemy is the U.S. and the North Atlantic bloc," General Yury Yakubov, a senior Defense Ministry official, was quoted as saying by Interfax.

The 2010 doctrine defines NATO expansion as a threat to Russian national security and reaffirms its right to use nuclear weapons in a defensive posture, but stops far short of declaring NATO as Moscow's primary adversary and laying preemptive nuclear strike scenarios on the table, a posture unmistakably reminiscent of the Cold War.

Yakubov said the information war being waged over the crisis in Ukraine — where the West accuses Russia of arming separatists fighting the government in Kiev — and NATO's announcement that it would establish a permanent military presence in Eastern Europe have validated earlier fears that the alliance's claims of non-aggression toward Russia were insincere.

The general added that special attention should be paid to integrating the functions of the newly created Air and Space Defense Forces with Russia's land, sea and air based nuclear forces. "In addition, it is necessary to hash out the conditions under which Russia could carry out a preemptive strike with the Russian Strategic Rocket Forces," he said.

<http://www.themoscowtimes.com/business/article/russian-general-calls-for-preemptive-nuclear-strike-doctrine-against-nato/506370.html>

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ITAR-TASS News Agency – Moscow, Russia

Strategic Missile Troops to Conduct Planned Exercise in September

"It is the first time that an extensive use of the Air Force, including supersonic jets Mig-31, has been planned in the exercises of that kind," the spokesman says

September 03, 2014

MOSCOW, September 03./ITAR-TASS/. Russia's strategic missile troops will be employed in large-scale command-staff exercises to be conducted jointly with the Barnaul-based missile troops unit in September under command of strategic missile troops' Commander Colonel-General Sergei Karakayev, a spokesman for the defense ministry's department in charge of the strategic missile troops told Tass on Wednesday.

"The aim of the exercises is to practice operations to rebuff subversive activities and attacks made by a presumed enemy with the use of high-precision weapons and fulfill combat tasks despite the enemy's strong radio-electronic resistance and active operations the enemy conducts in the area where the strategic troops are deployed," the spokesman, Major Dmitry Andreyev, specified.

"It is the first time that an extensive use of the Air Force, including supersonic jets Mig-31, has been planned in the exercises of that kind," the spokesman said. Combat planes SU-24 MP will be used for air reconnaissance operations, he added.

<http://en.itar-tass.com/russia/747811>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

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Expert: NATO's Missile Defense System Has No Capability Against Russian Deterrent Force

4 September 2014

MOSCOW, September 4 (RIA Novosti) - Proposals from Baltic and Polish leaders ahead of the NATO summit, requesting that NATO's anti-ballistic missile defense system be focused on Russia are unrealistic, as the system has no capability against potential Russian threat, according to representatives of the US Missile Defense Agency (MDA).

"From a technical standpoint, it's really not arrayed or capable against a Russian threat. It's not designed that way, it has no capability that way," Brigadier General Kenneth Todorov, Deputy Director of the MDA told RIA Novosti on Wednesday.

"Our missile defense system has absolutely no capability against the Russian strategic deterrent force," said MDA public affairs director, Rick Lehner.

Asked directly whether the proposals by Poland and Baltic countries to target Russia with the system were technically feasible, Lehner said they were not.

"Not from a technical standpoint, because our system is really geared toward the Middle East, so that's the way it faces. We're only talking about probably 48 interceptor missiles between Poland and Romania... Russia has hundreds and hundreds of short, medium, and long-range ballistic missiles, so it's no threat," Lehner stated.

German newspaper, Der Spiegel reported on August 26 that leaders from Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia proposed focusing the European Phased Adaptive Approach BMD system be directed against Russia ahead of the Thursday NATO summit in Wales. The proposal was criticized because it would undermine repeated assurances by the US that the system is strictly intended to defend against rogue states in the Middle East.

"I really don't think the system was designed for defense against Russia, but the system is very capable," Deputy Director of the MDA said, asserting that Russian capabilities would overwhelm the limited number of sensors and interceptors.

"We are confident at MDA that the system that is going into Romania and Poland is designed to meet the requirements and policy commitments that our President and Congress have asked us to do," he added.

NATO members are scheduled to meet this week in Wales to discuss the alliance's response to Russia, which it accuses of interfering in Ukrainian affairs.

NATO has been strengthening its military presence in Eastern Europe, following the escalation of the Ukrainian crisis in spring. In particular, the bloc sent additional warships to the Black Sea and bolstered air patrolling missions over the Baltic states.

Russia has criticized NATO's actions, arguing they lead to greater instability in the region.

<http://en.ria.ru/analysis/20140904/192613178/NATOs-Missile-Defense-System-Has-No-Capability-Against-Russian-Deterrent-Force.html>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

Russia's Modified Military Doctrine Not Providing for Preventive Nuclear Strikes

5 September 2014



USAF Center for Unconventional Weapons Studies
CUWS Outreach Journal

Maxwell AFB, Alabama

MOSCOW, September 5 (RIA Novosti) - The provisions of Russia's updated military doctrine concerning the use of Russian nuclear weapons, do not and cannot presuppose preventive nuclear strikes, former Chief of the General Staff of the Russia's Armed Forces told RIA Novosti.

"First of all, it is not an issue of creating a new doctrine, but of amending the existing one. Where in the doctrine is the provision about preventive nuclear strikes? I recommend reading it carefully one more time ..., especially article 22. The issue of preventive nuclear strikes is not considered. The use of nuclear weapons will be only retaliatory," General Yuri Baluyevsky said.

The former Russian First Deputy Minister of Defense and Chief of General Staff was commenting on the recent media reports, claiming that "Russia's new military doctrine will not contain provisions on preventive nuclear strikes and potential enemies."

Baluyevsky is a member of a special working group set up within the framework of the Russian Security Council to introduce amendments to the doctrine, which was last updated in 2010.

Baluyevsky stressed that, according to the current doctrine, "Russia reserves the right to use nuclear weapon in response to the use of nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction against it or its allies, or in case of use of regular weapon, which threatens the existence of the entire state [of Russia]."

On Tuesday, the Russian Security Council announced that Russia will update its military doctrine by the end of 2014 to reflect new security threats, including the expansion of NATO, US missile shield plans and the political crisis in Ukraine.

According to the council, the amendments will also touch upon Russia's independence in producing weapons, hardware and other military equipment production.

http://en.ria.ru/military_news/20140905/192676390/Russias-Modified-Military-Doctrine-Not-Providing-for-Preventive.html

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The London Guardian – London, U.K.

Iran Says US Sanctions will Hinder Nuclear Talks

Foreign ministry warning follows US imposition of sanctions on more than 25 businesses, banks and individuals

By Kevin Rawlinson and agencies

Saturday, 30 August 2014

US sanctions against Iran will hinder talks over the country's nuclear programme, the Iranian foreign ministry has warned. The comments came as Iran's president, Hassan Rouhani, said the country should "resist" the measures.

On Friday, the US imposed sanctions on more than 25 businesses, banks and individuals it suspected of working to expand Iran's nuclear programme, support terrorism and help Iran evade existing sanctions.

The measures bar Americans from engaging in transactions with any of the designated parties, freeze their assets and block their property under US jurisdiction.

Iran's foreign ministry spokesman Marzieh Afkham said the new sanctions would jeopardise a nuclear deal between Iran and world powers, the official IRNA news agency reported on Saturday.

"These actions have a negative and non-constructive impact on the trend of the talks. The Islamic Republic of Iran rejects any unilateral and self-serving interpretation of last year's Geneva deal," she said. "Iran strongly believes that the sanctions are against commitments made by the United States under the Geneva deal."

Rouhani also attacked the sanctions, saying they were an "invasion of the Iranian nation". He said: "We should resist the invasion and put the invaders in their place. We should not allow the continuation and repetition of the invasion."

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Iran's state television also said the move violated an interim agreement reached with world powers under which western nations agreed to ease sanctions in exchange for Iran curbing its nuclear activities. However, Friday's action did not constitute an expansion of the sanctions regime, but rather the enforcement of existing sanctions.

Western nations have long suspected Iran of covertly seeking a nuclear weapons capability alongside its civilian programme, a charge denied by Tehran, which insists its programme is for entirely peaceful purposes, like power generation and the production of medical isotopes.

Iran and the P5+1 group of world powers – the US, Britain, France, China and Russia, plus Germany – hope to reach a comprehensive nuclear agreement by November that would address western concerns about the nuclear programme and lift crippling international sanctions on Tehran.

Rouhani, a reputed moderate, was elected last year after promising to engage the west diplomatically in order to get the sanctions lifted. But he has faced criticism from hardliners who say he has conceded too much in the nuclear talks.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/30/iran-us-sanctions-hinder-nuclear-talks>

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Gulf Times.com – Dubai, U.A.E.

Iran says it is Still Working on Steps Agreed with IAEA

Reuters

September 1, 2014

Dubai/Vienna -- Iran held talks with the UN nuclear watchdog on Sunday about its investigation into suspicions that Tehran has conducted atomic bomb research, and is still committed to implementing agreed transparency measures, official media reported yesterday.

Iran's envoy to the International Atomic Energy Agency, Reza Najafi, appeared to acknowledge, however, that Tehran had missed a deadline of August 25 to meet five requests from the International Atomic Energy Agency about its nuclear programme.

"Iran is in the process of implementing the five agreed steps," the official Irna news agency quoted him as saying.

Diplomats in Vienna told Reuters last week that Iran had apparently failed to meet the target date, but said contacts were continuing.

Western officials say addressing the IAEA's concerns is vital for Iran to have any chance of success in parallel negotiations to end a decade-old nuclear standoff with the West.

Iran's Press TV website said Iranian and IAEA experts had met in Tehran on Sunday. Najafi said they had exchanged information in "serious" discussions that would continue soon, Irna reported.

Diplomats in Vienna said they had heard about the IAEA's visit to Tehran, but had no details so far. The IAEA itself declined to comment, suggesting any information would be included in its quarterly report on Iran, expected this week.

The Vienna-based UN agency has for years been investigating intelligence suggesting Iran has carried out experiments and other activities that could be used to develop nuclear weapons.

Iran says its nuclear programme is entirely peaceful, but Western countries fear its real aim is to develop a weapons capability, and have imposed economic sanctions.

As part of accord reached in November in an attempt to revive the long-stalled IAEA investigation, Tehran agreed in May to carry out five specific steps by late August.

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They included providing information on alleged experiments on explosives that could be used for an atomic device, and on studies related to calculating nuclear explosive yields.

While denying such allegations as baseless and fabricated, Iran has been promising to co-operate with the IAEA since Hassan Rohani, seen as a pragmatist, was elected president in 2013.

“Three out of the five steps have been completely implemented,” Najafi said, without giving details.

Apart from the information, Iran also agreed to give IAEA inspectors access to sites including a centrifuge research and development facility by late August.

<http://www.gulf-times.com/region/216/details/406531/iran-says-it-is-still-working-on-steps-agreed-with-iaea>

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Tasnim News Agency – Tehran, Iran

Commander Reports Successful Tests of Iran’s Missile Defense Systems

September 02, 2014

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – A senior Iranian commander said three of the country’s missile defense systems have undergone operational tests successfully, adding that the homegrown systems have been integrated with the S-200 missile system for stronger performance.

Commander of Khatam al-Anbia Air Defense Base Brigadier General Farzad Esmaili on Tuesday presented the outstanding features of Iran’s domestically-made air defense systems, namely the Talash (Endeavor) 1, 2 and 3.

He was speaking in a special ceremony in Tehran, held to unveil the newest achievements in the air defense sphere.

The Talash 1 is employed for the low and medium altitudes, the Talash 2 for medium to high altitudes, and the third one for the high and very high altitudes, Esmaili explained.

He said integration of those missile defense systems with the S-200 enables Iranian forces to shoot down “any kind of enemy targets” in the sky.

Among the newly unveiled products were also the Keyhan and Arash 2 radar systems.

The Keyhan (Cosmos) long-range radar, which uses mixed frequencies to identify small flying objects with cruise missiles, is a mobile system that is suitable for detecting large number of aerial targets in the electronic warfare.

The Arash 2 radar system enjoys advanced technologies and enables the air defense units to transfer data very rapidly.

Iran has in recent years made great headways in manufacturing a broad range of military equipment, including the air defense systems that use cutting edge technologies.

Tehran has repeatedly stated that its military might is defensive in nature and poses no threat to other countries.

<http://www.tasnimnews.com/English/Home/Single/483474>

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The Times of Israel – Jerusalem, Israel

Iran says it’s Committed to Progress in Nuclear Talks

Islamic Republic’s foreign minister says he is ‘fairly optimistic’ on negotiations with Western officials

By Agence France-Presse (AFP)

September 2, 2014

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Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said he had “good discussions” Monday with EU foreign affairs chief Catherine Ashton and Tehran was committed to an accord over its contested nuclear program.

Iran wants progress on the issue, Zarif was cited as saying by the Belga state news agency after a meeting with Belgian Foreign Minister Didier Reynders.

He said he was “fairly optimistic” after talks earlier with Ashton that Iran and the five permanent UN Security Council members — Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States — plus Germany could reach a deal on Tehran’s nuclear program by a November deadline.

EU officials said earlier that there would be no statement on Monday’s Ashton-Zarif talks which they described as a “fairly standard” meeting.

Foreign Minister Zarif had come to Brussels to “discuss progress to date and how to take the process forward” after the latest round of talks in Vienna earlier this month, a spokesman said.

Ashton has overseen the talks between Iran and the major powers on reaching a comprehensive deal which would end a decade-long dispute over Tehran’s nuclear program.

The West suspects Iran wants to acquire nuclear weapons but Tehran insists the program is purely for peaceful purposes.

A July deadline passed without an accord but was extended to November 24.

Iran’s official IRNA news agency earlier Monday cited one of Zarif’s deputies, Abbas Araqchi, as saying the “suggestion of an impasse in the negotiations is not correct.

“There are key questions and if we answer these, it will address other issues as well. Hopefully we can reach a common understanding by November.”

In exchange for accepting curbs on its nuclear activities, Iran wants a vast array of US, EU and UN sanctions to be lifted.

The parties are expected to meet again on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York later this month.

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/iran-says-its-committed-to-progress-in-nuclear-talks/>

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Globes-online.com – Rishon Le-Zion, Israel

German-Made Dolphin Submarine Sailing to Israel

By Globes Correspondent

3 September 2014

German weekly "Der Spiegel" says the submarine has a nuclear capability and is part of Israel's efforts to counter Iran.

The first of three German-made Dolphin II class submarines will soon reach Israel, Israel Navy Commander-in-Chief Vice-Admiral Ram Rothberg said last night during the closing ceremony for a captain's course at the Haifa naval base. This will be the Israel Navy's fourth S-Class submarine and will be called the INS Tanin (Crocodile).

Vice-Admiral Rothberg said, "At this very moment, after leaving Germany, a fourth S-Class submarine for the Israeli Navy is making its way to the country."

He explained what the new and sophisticated submarine would mean in terms of strengthening the Israeli Navy. "The submarine can dive deeper and further and for longer and work more powerfully than anything we have previously known.

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The Israel Navy's S-Class Dolphin is considered the world's most advanced submarine and the most expensive war weapon in the IDF arsenal.

In February Haifa Base Commander Brigadier General Eli Sharvit said that in addition to the Dolphin submarine that would be delivered later in the year, two more such submarines would join the Israel Navy in the coming years. "This procurement is part of our five-year plan for taking in three new German-made Dolphin submarines that will increase the Israel Navy fleet to six submarines."

He added that an Israeli crew was in Germany to develop the project. Sharvit said that the new submarine is fitted with an air-independent propulsion (AIP) system, allowing extended underwater operations for weeks on end without the need to surface or snort - far longer than the submarines in the current fleet can.

The three submarines are being built for the Israeli Navy by ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems in Kiel, Germany. They are reportedly among the largest underwater craft being built in Germany since the end of World War II.

The German weekly "Der Spiegel" reported that the submarines have a nuclear capability and are part of Israel's weaponry to counter the nuclear threat from Iran.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel has denied that the submarines have a nuclear capability. However, research among senior figures in German's Defense Ministry has indicated that the submarines can carry nuclear weapons.

<http://www.globes.co.il/en/article-german-made-dolphin-submarine-sailing-for-israel-1000968793>

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The Global Times – Beijing, China

Nuclear Talks Deadline Extension 'Less Likely': Iranian Negotiator

Xinhua

September 4, 2014

Extending Iran's nuclear talks beyond a Nov. deadline is less likely and there are "very little" chances for such an extension, Tasnim news agency quoted Iranian senior nuclear negotiator, Abbas Araqchi, as saying on Wednesday.

"I see very, very little possibility to extend even more. We would be in a difficult position, I suppose, but I believe that diplomacy would never end," Araqchi said on Tuesday.

"We are still at the table and we will remain at the table until the last minute," he said as Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad-Javad Zarif continues his tour in Europe to communicate with some western leaders new developments in Iran's position.

On Tuesday, Zarif said in Brussels that he is "optimistic" over a nuclear accord between Iran and the world powers by a Nov. deadline.

Iran and the P5+1 group, including five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany, agreed on July 19 to extend their talks until Nov. 24 as disagreements remained over Tehran's uranium enrichment capacity and other issues.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/879774.shtml>

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Press TV – Tehran, Iran

Iran Nuclear Talks to Resume on September 18, Says EU Official

Thursday, September 4, 2014

Iran and the five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany will resume negotiations over a final deal on Tehran's nuclear energy program in New York on September 18, the European Union says.

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Michael Mann, spokesman for EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton, said on Tuesday that the nuclear negotiations between Iran and the six countries – Russia, China, France, Britain, the United States and Germany – will “continue in New York as of September 18,” AFP reported.

The new round of talks will be held on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly.

According to Mann, Iran and its negotiating sides will also hold preparatory meetings in Vienna and Geneva with similar but smaller groupings of officials in attendance ahead of the September 18 talks.

Ashton’s spokesman also stated that senior diplomats from France, Britain and Germany would hold a separate round of talks with Iranian officials in Vienna on September 11.

Earlier on Thursday, representatives from Iran and the United States kicked off bilateral negotiations over the Islamic Republic’s nuclear energy program in Geneva.

On September 1, Iran’s Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and Ashton, who represents the six countries, met in Brussels, Belgium, to discuss the process of the ongoing nuclear talks.

Following the negotiations with Ashton, the Iranian foreign minister said he is optimistic that the issues related to the Iranian nuclear energy program “can be resolved in time” within the November 24 deadline.

Iran and its negotiating sides are currently in talks to work out a lasting accord aimed at ending the longstanding dispute over Tehran’s civilian nuclear activities.

Last November, the two sides signed an interim deal in Geneva, which took effect on January 20 and expired six months later on July 20. In July, Tehran and the six countries agreed to extend negotiations until November 24 after they failed to reach common ground on a number of key issues.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2014/09/04/377684/iran-ntalks-resume-on-september-18/>

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Tasnim News Agency – Tehran, Iran

Nuclear Deal Possible Before November Deadline: Iranian Negotiator

September 05, 2014

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – A senior Iranian nuclear negotiator said an agreement on Iran’s peaceful nuclear program is possible before the November 24 deadline if world powers are sincere in the upcoming negotiations.

“As long as the Group 5+1 (the five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany) are sincere and they have a constructive approach, we can reach a good result before November 24,” Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister for European and American Affairs Majid Takht Ravanchi was quoted by AFP as saying on Friday.

Meanwhile, senior diplomats from Iran and the US on Friday began the second day of talks on Iran’s peaceful nuclear program.

The talks are underway in the Swiss city of Geneva as part of regular bilateral meetings between Iran and the members of the Group 5+1 (Russia, China, the US, Britain, France and Germany) which are negotiating to settle a decade-long standoff on Tehran’s nuclear work.

The Iranian team is led by Deputy Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araqchi, while the US Undersecretary of State Wendy Sherman heads the American delegation.

The Iranian and American teams held a six-hour meeting on Thursday. There was also a meeting between the two sides’ technical experts which lasted three hours.

These nuclear talks come ahead of forthcoming meetings between Iran and the Group 5+1 (Russia, China, the US, Britain, France and Germany). The two sides are expected to continue negotiations on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly, due to be held in New York later this month.

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<http://www.tasnimnews.com/English/Home/Single/488713>

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BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) News – London, U.K.
5 September 2014

'Iran Misses' Nuclear Probe Deadline

Iran has missed a deadline to answer questions about its nuclear programme, the global nuclear watchdog IAEA says.

Iran had agreed to provide information to help allay concerns about a military dimension to its programme, but had failed to do so, the IAEA reported.

These include suspected work on detonators which can set off nuclear bombs and high explosive charges.

It comes weeks before a deadline for Iran and world powers to reach a final deal to resolve the nuclear issue.

The US, EU and other powers suspect Iran is secretly seeking to develop nuclear weapons. Iran has strongly denied the charge, insisting its programme is purely for peaceful purposes.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-29081998>

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Business Insider – New York, NY

Japanese Researchers Develop a 30-Minute Ebola Test

Agence France-Presse (AFP)
September 2, 2014

Tokyo (AFP) - Japanese researchers said Tuesday they had developed a new method to detect the presence of the Ebola virus in 30 minutes, with technology that could allow doctors to quickly diagnose infection.

Professor Jiro Yasuda and his team at Nagasaki University say their process is also cheaper than the system currently in use in west Africa where the virus has already killed more than 1,500 people.

"The new method is simpler than the current one and can be used in countries where expensive testing equipment is not available," Yasuda told AFP by telephone.

"We have yet to receive any questions or requests, but we are pleased to offer the system, which is ready to go," he said.

Yasuda said the team had developed what he called a "primer", which amplifies only those genes specific to the Ebola virus found in a blood sample or other bodily fluid.

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Using existing techniques, ribonucleic acid (RNA) -- biological molecules used in the coding of genes -- is extracted from any viruses present in a blood sample.

This is then used to synthesise the viral DNA, which can be mixed with the primers and then heated to 60-65 degrees Celsius (140-149 Fahrenheit).

If Ebola is present, DNA specific to the virus is amplified in 30 minutes due to the action of the primers. The by-products from the process cause the liquid to become cloudy, providing visual confirmation, Yasuda said.

Currently, a method called polymerase chain reaction, or PCR, is widely used to detect the Ebola virus, which requires doctors to heat and cool samples repeatedly and takes up to two hours.

"The new method only needs a small, battery-powered warmer and the entire system costs just tens of thousands of yen (hundreds of dollars), which developing countries should be able to afford," he added.

The outbreak of the Ebola virus, transmitted through contact with infected bodily fluids, has sparked alarm throughout western Africa and further afield.

<http://www.businessinsider.com/afp-japanese-researchers-develop-30-minute-ebola-test-2014-9>

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Fox News.com – New York, NY

Ebola Outbreak 'Out of Control,' says CDC Director

By John Roberts

September 02, 2014

Just back from a week in the Ebola hot zone, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Director Dr. Tom Frieden had a dire assessment of the situation on the ground there.

"The bottom line is that despite tremendous efforts from the U.S. government, CDC, from within countries, the number of cases continues to increase and is now increasing rapidly," Frieden told a press conference at the CDC today.

The virus is moving faster than anyone anticipated and that's why we need to move now, he said.

During his trip, Frieden visited the three countries hardest hit by the Ebola epidemic – Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea. In Liberia, Frieden donned the familiar yellow suits, face masks and goggles healthcare workers in Africa wear and visited a ward where Ebola patients are being treated.

"There is a window of opportunity to tamp this down", Frieden said, "but that window is closing...we need action now to scale up the response."

The World Health Organization (WHO) today said that the "magnitude of the Ebola outbreak has been vastly underestimated." According to the latest WHO figures, 3,069 people have come down with Ebola. Of them, 1,552 have died— a fatality rate greater than 50 percent. Dr. Frieden told Fox News that unless urgent action is taken to contain the epidemic, it may be impossible to stop. There are not enough hospitals, wards, clinics, doctors or nurses to take care of the numbers of people who are coming down with Ebola, he said.

The world, Frieden said, needs to come together to open more wards and clinics and train health care workers or Ebola could continue to spread to other countries. The West African nation of Senegal yesterday declared a first-priority health emergency after a 21-year-old student who traveled to Senegal from Guinea showed symptoms of Ebola. His brother had died from the disease days earlier. The Democratic Republic of Congo is investigating 24 cases of Ebola hemorrhagic fever, though those cases are believed to be caused by a different strain than the virus that is devastating West Africa.

Frieden says every nation of the world should be worried.

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"It's not just in the interest of these countries to get it under control. For every day that this continues to spread in West Africa, the likelihood of someone getting infected and becoming sick elsewhere increases," he told reporters.

The CDC is dispatching a team to Senegal in an attempt to prevent any further spread of the disease there.

But Frieden issued an ominous prediction for what might happen if the world doesn't come together to fight the disease. Rather than the sporadic outbreaks of Ebola that have come and gone since the virus was first described in Congo in 1976, Ebola may become endemic— that is, there will always be a certain level of infection in some African nations, marked by more frequent outbreaks than in the past.

It's certainly possible to feel hopeless," Frieden said today. "But it's not hopeless. We do know how to stop Ebola. The window of opportunity is not yet closed. We can turn this around."

Frieden also warned that the virus may threaten the economies of African nations struggling to dig themselves out of third-world poverty. The more it spreads on the continent, the greater the risk becomes that a traveler will touch down in an American city— infected with Ebola.

<http://www.foxnews.com/health/2014/09/02/ebola-outbreak-out-control-says-cdc-director/>

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London Daily Express – London, U.K.

Stolen Libyan Jets Feared to Have Been Taken by Extremists for Major Terrorist Plot

TERROR experts fear Libyan fanatics are planning a 9/11 copycat attack after 11 commercial planes were stolen from Tripoli airport.

By Cyril Dixon

Wednesday, September 3, 2014

They believe the jets were taken by Islamic militant groups who seized control of the war-torn capital city's international hub.

Analysts say there is "credible intelligence" that they will use next Thursday's anniversary to fly the planes into high-profile targets.

One official said: "There are a number of commercial airliners in Libya that are missing.

"We found out on September 11 what can happen with hijacked planes."

The scare comes amid the rise of Libyan militants after the fall and assassination of dictator Colonel Muammar Gaddafi three years ago.

Libyan Dawn and Ansar al Sharia - which boasts links to the Islamic State - have controlled parts of the airport.

But Moroccan military expert Abderrahmane Mekkaoui said the planes were captured by a third Islamic group, the Masked Men Brigade.

He added that there is "credible intelligence" that they are "plotting to use the planes in attacks" throughout North Africa.

As well as marking the anniversary of the Twin Towers outrage of 2001, September 11 was when the US consulate in Benghazi, Libya, was attacked.

Four Americans - including US Ambassador Christopher Stevens - were killed when the militants fired rockets at the compound.

Sebastian Gorka, a counter-terrorism expert, told the Washington Free-Beacon news website the planes could be used in two ways.

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"The first would be how commercial airliners were used on Sept 11, 2001, literally turning an innocent mode of mass transit into a super-high precision guided missile of immense potency.

"The second tactic could be to use the airframe with its civilian markings as a tool of deception to insert a full payload of armed terrorists into a locale that otherwise is always open to commercial carriers."

US officials have not publicly confirmed the 11 planes' disappearance, but are reportedly working to track them down.

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/506746/Tripoli-airport-stolen-planes-terrorism>

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Bulletin of the Atomic Scientist – Chicago, IL

OPINION/Feature

The Argument for a Hypersonic Missile Testing Ban

By Mark Gubrud

September 02, 2014

China and the United States recently conducted development tests of hypersonic missiles, designed to travel many times the speed of sound and reach targets thousands of miles away in an hour or less. Both tests failed, showing that hypersonic propulsion and flight—which involve extreme airspeeds, temperatures, pressures, and stresses, along with compact airframes and low weight—remain unproven technologies, even after decades of development. Solutions to the technological challenges of hypersonic flight may soon be within reach, using new materials and high-performance computing. But it is inconceivable that hypersonic weapons could be perfected and validated for operational use without extensive additional testing programs.

For this reason, it is important for the United States—the world leader in hypersonic missile development—to pursue an international hypersonic missile test ban, which could be easily verified and, once put in place, would end an arms race that already involves the United States, China, Russia, and India, with France, the United Kingdom and probably other countries lurking in the wings.

What are hypersonic missiles? Hypersonic missiles fall into two distinct categories. In what is known as a boost-glide weapon, the hypersonic vehicle is first “boosted” on a ballistic trajectory, using a conventional rocket. It may cover considerable distance as it flies to high altitude, then falls back to Earth, gaining speed and finally, at some relatively low altitude, pulling into unpowered, aerodynamic, horizontal flight. After that, it glides at hypersonic speed toward its final destination.

Hypersonic cruise missiles, on the other hand, typically are launched to high speed using a small rocket, and then, after dropping the rocket, are powered by a supersonic combustion ram jet, or scramjet, for flight at five times the speed of sound (some 3,800 miles per hour) or greater.

The recent failed Chinese and American tests were of boost-glide systems; the X-51 WaveRider, which the US successfully tested last year after a string of failures, is an example of the scramjet cruise missile. The boost-glide test failures were probably caused by issues with booster rockets rather than with the hypersonic gliders themselves. Regardless, these systems didn't work, demonstrating that both boost-glide and powered hypersonic cruise missiles require testing. Such tests are easily observable from space and via radar and signals intelligence gathering (not to mention old-fashioned human spying). A test moratorium would throw a huge obstacle in the path of hypersonic programs, and a permanent test ban would make it clear that they aren't going anywhere. And that would be a good thing, because where they are going is nowhere good.

In the US, hypersonic missiles have been billed as a method for quickly delivering conventional warheads when time is of the essence; one example often given is attacking a terrorist stronghold promptly when intelligence indicates the opportunity to kill a high-value target. In practice, however, the most successful attacks in counter-

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terrorism operations have been launched not from thousands of miles away but from nearby, using ground forces, manned aircraft, or drones.

Some proponents are more open in contending that hypersonic weapons should be developed to provide a capability for attacking strategic military targets within the territory of a major military power, including, as defense consultant Timothy A. Walton suggests, “space downlink systems, fixed anti-satellite tracking and firing systems, key radars and associated systems, command and control nodes, long-range surveillance systems, and possibly even transporter erector launchers (TELEs), TEL reload points, or ships in port.” Proponents claim that the use of hypersonic weapons with conventional warheads (or pure kinetic energy) would permit such attacks to be carried out on the home territory of a nuclear power without the risk of a nuclear response. But Chinese and Russian officials have indicated they fear that US hypersonic weapons could be used to lead a nuclear first strike, and both those countries have begun hypersonic missile programs of their own, suggesting that, absent controls, a full-scale hypersonic arms race is just around the corner.

It’s not often that one can say an entire technology should be banned because it has no conceivable good use. Hypersonic missiles, however, may present just such a case. Hypersonic air travel seems economically unjustifiable in an era of climate change, high-cost energy, and low-cost video telepresence. But if civilian hypersonic air travel ever did become a reality, it would take the form of a large airplane, not a small missile. Low-cost satellite launches? Hypersonic space planes such as DARPA’s planned XS-1, which would lift rockets to high altitude, might make some sense. But again, to achieve economies of scale, such hypersonic boosters would need to be large, which the hypersonic missiles under military development are not.

Because hypersonic missiles now in development have no foreseeable civilian role and no likely military role outside of major war between nuclear-armed states, and because a hypersonic arms race would contribute to strategic destabilization, it would seem reasonable to seek a way to avert such a race. A ban on hypersonic missile testing could do just that with, most likely, little need for extensive negotiations on verification.

How the hypersonic race started. In the days after the 9/11 terror attacks on New York and Washington, hypersonic weapons were sold as a form of “conventional prompt global strike,” fulfilling the supposed need for a weapon that could be launched from fortress America and strike Osama bin Laden’s lair on the other side of the world in less than an hour. That was an idea so unlikely that, unfortunately, few outside policy circles took the matter seriously, even when it was later revealed that another aim of prompt global strike was to destroy Chinese anti-satellite weapons before they could be launched. It was never very clear why China would be less offended by our targeting their weapons and facilities deep inside the Chinese mainland with hypersonic cruise missiles rather than somewhat faster ballistic missiles. The vague reasoning is that the different flight profile of these weapons would distinguish them from nuclear ballistic missiles, and the Chinese (or Russians, in some other scenarios) would trust that American hypersonic missiles do not carry nuclear warheads. But US non-nuclear hypersonic weapons could well be targeting nuclear weapons and supporting facilities, possibly in preparation for a follow-on nuclear strike. Furthermore, there is no physical reason why hypersonic missiles could not deliver nuclear warheads.

Although these weapons are slower than ballistic missiles, they are still very fast and offer an attack profile that presents a qualitatively new threat to adversaries. The idea that they might be used to attack a nuclear power, because they would be easily distinguished from ballistic missiles and the enemy would be willing to believe that no hypersonic weapon carried a nuclear warhead, can hardly be considered stabilizing. Rather, it is a challenge to nuclear deterrence and a threat that potential adversaries have to take seriously. They will respond by seeking countermeasures, including symmetrical capabilities, as China and Russia are doing, via their own hypersonic missile programs. To imagine that a strategic attack could be carried out on military forces based in the homeland of a major nuclear power without the risk of a nuclear response is a dangerous fantasy. But the race to develop and deploy hypersonic weapons is serious.

Hypersonic missiles are not intended only for deep land attack; they are also likely to be used at sea, for attacking ships, island bases, and shore facilities. BrahMos, a Russian-Indian joint venture, has already produced the world’s fastest supersonic cruise missile, and that venture is working on a hypersonic version, with the anti-ship role as a



major aim. Shortening the strike time for naval missile warfare is a recipe for hair-trigger confrontation between major powers contending for regional or global dominance. If there is a way to stop or slow this development, the world should take it.

How to stop the hypersonic missile race in its tracks. Fortunately, a hypersonic missile test ban would be one of the most rigorously verifiable arms control measures one could imagine. It could begin with an informal moratorium, agreed and announced among the major players, and followed up by negotiations for a binding, permanent ban treaty.

To speed its approval, any such moratorium would have to define hypersonic missiles in a way that does not require elimination of already existing cruise missile systems. I would propose a ban on flights of any aerodynamic vehicle of less than, say, 15 meters length or 2 meters diameter, traveling in powered or unpowered flight at speeds in excess of 1 kilometer per second, over a horizontal distance greater than 100 kilometers. Space and ballistic missile launches and reentries could be specifically excepted. The numbers are somewhat arbitrary and could be fine-tuned or adjusted substantially while preserving the intent of the agreement. The numbers suggested here would permit Russia and India to retain their BrahMos 1 supersonic cruise missile, while forcing them to cancel the hypersonic BrahMos 2. The United States and China would then be permitted to develop supersonic systems comparable to BrahMos 1 but would have to cancel their hypersonic programs. While an even lower speed limit would be desirable, canceling future programs verifiably via a test ban should be an easier sell to other countries than eliminating existing, proven, deployed systems.

The United States should take the lead in proposing a hypersonic missile test moratorium and seeking a permanent hypersonic test ban. Of course, production, deployment, and use of hypersonic missiles should eventually be prohibited under a permanent treaty. But a test ban is the critical element; it would be reliably verifiable, and it would all but preclude production and deployment. Nations do not generally go to war relying on untested weapons, and hypersonics are a technology particularly in need of thorough testing both to perfect and to validate weapon systems. Tests of hypersonic missiles are easily identified by their flight profiles, speeds, and the heat and turbulence generated by hypersonic flight. US tests are conducted at sea and could be observed by China and Russia from international waters; Chinese and Russian tests over land could be observed by the US from space and, to some extent, from friendly countries.

Hypersonic missiles are a new class of weapon that no country actually needs. Their military advantages are ill-defined, and their capacity to destabilize relations among major powers and contribute to a costly and dangerous strategic arms race is enormous. Even so, the United States can't expect that just because it proposes a test ban, other nations will line up to renounce hypersonic missiles. What America can reasonably hope is that other nations will see their shared interest in avoiding or slowing a dangerous escalation of the arms race. I am therefore proposing that the United States suspend testing for a while, to show good faith as it seeks agreement on an international ban on hypersonic testing.

If the suspension does not draw a positive response from other countries, the United States can always resume its programs, while still advocating a general moratorium, thereby seizing the moral high ground. That others might not join America there immediately is a poor excuse for not proposing a hypersonic testing ban and calling the others to join. Indeed, if the United States is unwilling to forgo hypersonic testing for a time, others have every reason to be cynical about its real motives and intentions. I'm not sure that I understand those motivations. But I am reasonably certain that hypersonic missiles will not help to make America stronger or more secure, because it is clear, from their programs already in progress, that other nations will not allow the United States to claim a monopoly on hypersonic weaponry.

One repeated criticism of hypersonic weapons programs is that they are technology-driven rather than mission-driven, i.e., the United States and other major powers seem to be developing this technology just because they can. Indeed, every step in the history of the nuclear arms race, from the first fission bombs to thermonuclear weapons to intercontinental ballistic missiles and their multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles—one might even say the history of all weapons—has been technology-driven to a greater or lesser degree. Those programs that were driven more by a specific goal than by capability, such as the dream of rendering nuclear



weapons impotent via missile defense, have largely failed. Today, a resurgent arms race is being driven by emerging technologies—hypersonic weapons, space weapons, autonomous weapons controlled by artificial intelligence—and the question before humanity is whether in the 21st century, technology will be the driver of history, or humans will assert the sovereign right to determine their own future. I believe the cause of humanity is served by placing roadblocks in the path of a technology-driven arms race. A ban on the testing of hypersonic missiles presents one terribly important and relatively simple opportunity to do just that.

Mark Gubrud is a physicist and a member of the International Committee for Robot Arms Control.

<http://thebulletin.org/argument-hypersonic-missile-testing-ban7412>

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The National Interest.com – U.S.

OPINION/The Buzz

America's Nuclear Arsenal is Back

Rod Lyon

September 2, 2014

Given the intensity of media focus on a series of crises this year—Iraq, Syria, Ukraine, Ebola, and the South China Sea to name just a few—readers may be forgiven for having failed to notice that another important, though more incremental, development has also occurred. With each passing month it becomes clearer that a mood of nuclear realism is unfolding in US strategic policy. While President Obama is still remembered most clearly in the public mind for the anti-nuclear language in his Prague speech of 2009, a string of events in 2013–14 suggest that a shift of emphasis is occurring in relation to nuclear weapons.

First, the administration has committed to the long-overdue modernization of the US nuclear arsenal. True, the initial funding decisions are merely the opening salvoes of a program that will take decades to unpack, and key decisions about the shape and size of the arsenal remain unresolved. But the administration has signaled a commitment to renovate the strategic triad, and even to modernize its principal tactical weapon, the B-61 bomb.

Second, Washington has been busy putting its nuclear “house” in order. By January of this year, almost 20% of US Air Force officers in its nuclear weapons corps had been implicated in a proficiency-assessment cheating scandal. The Navy wasn’t immune either—earlier this month it expelled 34 sailors caught up in the nuclear cheating scandal. A senior naval officer was dismissed in October last year for inappropriate behavior in Moscow. Some might even see the sacking of James Doyle by Los Alamos National Laboratory as part of that pattern. Certainly a more restrictive approach to nuclear information management and a more disciplined approach to command and control of the arsenal seem to be the flavor of the day.

Third, evidence points to a determination to rebuild the intellectual capital necessary to sustain the nuclear mission for another generation. A senior State Department official, at the Annual Deterrence Symposium in mid-August, spoke of the need to recruit a new wave of “political scientists, lawyers, physicists, geologists, engineers, and more,” in order to “bring the next generation into the nuclear deterrence enterprise.”

Fourth, what we might call the “three musketeers” (Brent Scowcroft, Stephen Hadley and Franklin Miller) seem to have displaced—at least temporarily—the “four horsemen” (George Shultz, Henry Kissinger, William Perry and Sam Nunn), as the media commentators of the day. The four horsemen have published a range of important op-eds since 2007 about the need to move away from nuclear weapons (see, for example, here, here, and here). Their arguments have generally gone unanswered. The musketeers’ recent article in the *Washington Post*, underlining the importance of forward-deployed nuclear weapons in Europe, was obviously written with one eye on the approaching NATO summit in Wales. But it has wider implications: after all, if forward-deployed nuclear weapons are so important in Europe, why aren’t they just as important in other theatres?

Fifth, the administration seems to have wound back slightly the significance it attaches to the imperative of “nuclear security”—a protracted exercise to round up insecure warheads and quantities of fissile material in the

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world. Clearly that mission's still important: Washington continues to fund it during straitened budgetary times. But one gets the sense that, for the coming few years, rounding up stray quantities of fissile material is not as strategically important as resuscitating the US nuclear weapons arsenal.

And sixth, the administration seems to have gone back to taking seriously the nuclear policies of the other nuclear-weapon states: witness the State Department's recent finding that Russia is in violation of the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty.

Now, some will argue that those are all just straws in the wind, and that if Obama wanted to shift his nuclear policy, he would just say so. But one year out from another NPT Review Conference, could he? Besides, has policy changed, or are we just seeing a shift of emphasis? In 2009 Obama said he thought a non-nuclear world would be safer and the US should work towards that goal. The goal, he said, might not be reached in his lifetime. And in the meantime, the US would need to ensure it could rely upon a safe, secure and effective nuclear arsenal. So a theme of continued reliance always sat side by side with the grander goal of nuclear disarmament.

I think the straws tell a story: that nuclear weapons are making a comeback in US strategic policy—driven by a growing mood of strategic realism in Washington. The strategic environment of 2014 looks different to that of 2009. True, the comeback will probably be limited. But when future historians look back on 2013–14, they're likely to paint it as a turning of the tide on nuclear weapons policy, occurring—ironically—under the administration of one Barack Obama.

Rod Lyon is a fellow at ASPI (Australian Strategic Policy Institute) and executive editor of The Strategist where this piece first appeared.

<http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/americas-nuclear-arsenal-back-11178>

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Bulletin of the Atomic Scientist – Chicago, IL

OPINION

Why NATO Should Eliminate its Tactical Nukes, Despite Russian Belligerence

By Hans M. Kristensen and Adam Mount

September 3, 2014

Leaders attending the upcoming NATO summit at Cardiff, Wales, will face, once again, the question of what to do about the US nuclear weapons stationed at NATO bases throughout Europe. A holdover from the Cold War, when it was thought that the deployment could mute European nuclear ambitions and strengthen the threatened alliance, nearly 200 of these tactical bombs have remained in hangars in Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, and Turkey.

Several commentators have argued that Russia's aggression in Eastern Ukraine is evidence that the weapons are needed now more than ever. However, the evidence suggests the opposite: US tactical nuclear weapons detract from more useful defense initiatives, as is shown in several ways.

First, there is no evidence that these weapons have had any effect on Russian President Vladimir Putin's transgressions in Ukraine, Georgia, or the Baltic States. Russia took each of these aggressive actions, despite the presence of tactical nuclear bombs elsewhere in Europe. Nor have those bombs reassured eastern European NATO allies about US commitments to defend them. The newer NATO members closest to Russia are more concerned than ever and look to the West's non-nuclear forces instead for support. The reason tactical nuclear weapons are irrelevant in these cases is simple: The threat to NATO territory is not nearly severe enough for nuclear weapons to play a role.

Also, leaders meeting at Cardiff should not ignore the consistent calls from NATO allies that host tactical nukes for their withdrawal. Exalting the preferences of Estonia and Latvia for assurance they will be defended against

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Russian attack over the preferences of Germany and Belgium to be rid of the nuclear bombs at their airfields is a dangerous gamble that overlooks the need for consensus among NATO members. Resolution of the issue requires a substantive compromise. Overlooking pleas for real assurance, some commentators continue to insist that these few bombs, deployed far from the Baltic states, actually do assure the leaders of those countries. In so doing, they miss the crucial opportunity to shift funds from the tactical nuclear mission and pay for defensive capabilities that will counter the threats these countries actually face.

The recent creation of a NATO Response Force is an example of a more useful conventional response to the conventional threats that NATO's eastern members face. At Cardiff, NATO leaders should agree to more actions in this vein, including stronger coordination to deter and defend against cyber threats, and initiatives to ensure that existing NATO forces can be deployed effectively and appropriately if needed. Because NATO countries are unlikely to significantly increase current levels of defense spending, maintaining costly tactical nuclear bombs in Europe essentially robs the alliance of resources urgently needed to buttress its non-nuclear forces.

NATO is and will remain a nuclear alliance, but as the 2010 Strategic Concept emphasized, the "supreme guarantee of the security of the Allies is provided by the strategic nuclear forces" of alliance members. Those who reflexively claim that the tactical bombs are necessary to demonstrate US commitment to European security confuse the pledge NATO members make for mutual defense; it is the US strategic arsenal that makes NATO a nuclear alliance. In June, when Pentagon planners decided to send a subtle nuclear signal warning against further Russian aggression, tactical weapons were useless: The United States deployed strategic bombers to Europe.

The calls to retain tactical nuclear bombs in Europe obscure the significant benefits that would flow from eliminating the weapons. To keep the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty strong, nuclear states will need to demonstrate progress toward nuclear disarmament at the upcoming NPT review conference. Withdrawing tactical nuclear weapons and focusing on non-nuclear defense in Europe would send a strong signal that NATO is serious about its promise to "[create] the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons." By eliminating this expensive and militarily irrelevant class of bombs, the United States could generate significant cost savings and avoid undercutting its disarmament pledge by deploying new nuclear capabilities in Europe; under a \$10 billion-plus modernization program, the B61 tactical bombs currently deployed in Europe will be enhanced and deployed on new, stealthy F-35 fighter-bombers.

Tactical nuclear bombs in Europe are no longer useful for defense, deterrence, or assurance. Calls to retain such weapons in Europe are an echo from the past rather than a solution for the future. The bombs distract and divide the alliance, rather than bind it together. With deadlines looming on expensive decisions to modernize the bombs and the planes that carry them, the NATO Summit instead should decide to shift scarce resources to non-nuclear efforts that strengthen the alliance and actually reassure European allies.

Hans M. Kristensen is the director of the Nuclear Information Project with the Federation of American Scientists (FAS) in Washington, DC. His work focuses on researching and writing about the status of nuclear weapons and the policies that direct them. Adam Mount is a Stanton Nuclear Security Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, where he is writing a profile of nuclear disarmament in the United States.

<http://thebulletin.org/why-nato-should-eliminate-its-tactical-nukes-despite-russian-belligerence7415>

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Foreign Policy.com – U.S.

OPINION/Article

Putin's Nuclear Option

Would Russia's president really be willing to start World War III?

By Jeffrey Tayler

September 4, 2014



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Ever the one to administer bracing doses of Geopolitics 101 to his opponents, especially those inclined to underestimate his nerve, President Vladimir Putin, at a youth forum north of Moscow last week, reminded the world that "Russia is one of the most powerful nuclear nations. This is a reality, not just words." (Indeed it is.)

Fifteen days earlier, on Aug. 14, at a conference in Yalta, the Russian president had told the assembled factions of the State Duma that he soon planned to "surprise the West with our new developments in offensive nuclear weapons about which we do not talk yet." This came as Russian strategic nuclear bombers and fighter jets have been accused of violating the airspace of the United States and Western European countries with mounting frequency, while under the surface of the world's seas Russian and U.S. nuclear submarines have been involved in confrontations recalling the worst days of the Cold War. As NATO leaders convene for their summit in Wales, Russia just announced that its strategic nuclear forces will hold exercises of unprecedented dimensions this month. And the Kremlin, for its part, just declared that it will amend its military doctrine to reflect Russia's growing tensions with NATO. What this means exactly remains unclear, but in view of the rising tensions with the Western alliance, it cannot be good.

Russia has also been purportedly breaching the terms of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, which prohibits Russia (and the United States) from possessing the sort of missiles that could be used against targets in Europe. If Barack Obama entered the White House hoping to reduce atomic weapons stockpiles and make the world a safer place, it looks like he will leave it with a Russia boasting a more lethal arsenal of nuclear weapons than at any time since the Cold War.

But Putin would never actually use nuclear weapons, would he? The scientist and longtime Putin critic Andrei Piontkovsky, a former executive director of the Strategic Studies Center in Moscow a political commentator for the BBC World Service, believes he might. In August, Piontkovsky published a troubling account of what he believes Putin might do to win the current standoff with the West -- and, in one blow, destroy NATO as an organization and finish off what's left of America's credibility as the world's guardian of peace.

In view of the Russian leader's recent remarks and provocative actions, the scenario Piontkovsky lays out becomes terrifyingly relevant. Worse, if the trigger events described come to pass, it becomes logical, maybe even inevitable.

Piontkovsky explains the positions of the two camps presenting Putin with advice about how to resolve the Ukraine crisis. The first, the "Peace Party," as he calls it, composed of those occupying posts in influential think tanks, including, in this case, Sergey Karaganov, the head of Moscow's Higher School of Economics, urges Putin to declare victory in Ukraine now and thereby end the conflict. Having taken note of the lengths to which Moscow will go to prevent Ukraine from slipping out of its orbit, NATO will almost certainly never invite the former Soviet republic to join its ranks, the Peace Party argues. And Russia has already won tacit acceptance from the international community of its acquisition of Crimea.

Piontkovsky dismisses out of hand the possibility of Putin pursuing this solution. If Putin chose to go this route, he would look defeated, and looming before him would be the fate of Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev, who was deposed and forced into retirement following his failed, and nearly catastrophic, 1962 attempt to secure communism in Cuba by stationing nuclear missiles there.

The other camp putting pressure on Putin, the "War Party," however, gives the president two options. The first, writes Piontkovsky, is a "romantic and inspiring scenario: World War IV between the Orthodox Russian World, now risen from its knees, against the rotting and decadent Anglo-Saxon World." (World War III, in his view, has already happened: the Cold War.) This World War IV would be a conventional war with NATO -- and it would not go well. Given NATO's superior armed forces and Russia's comparative economic, scientific, and technological weaknesses, a conventional campaign would, Piontkovsky concludes, end with Russia's defeat.

That leaves Putin only one option: a nuclear attack. Not a massive launch of intercontinental ballistic missiles at the United States or Western Europe, which would bring about a suicidal atomic holocaust, but a small, tactical strike or two against a NATO member that few in the West would be willing to die to protect. Piontkovsky surmises that, in such a conflict, the nuclear-armed country with the "superior political will" to alter the geopolitical "status quo"

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and -- most importantly -- with the "greater indifference to values concerning human lives" would prevail. Any guesses which country that would be?

But what would trigger a Russian attack? According to Piontkovsky's scenario, it could be something as simple as a plebiscite: the Estonian city of Narva, overwhelmingly ethnically Russian and adjacent to Russia, deciding to hold a referendum on joining the Motherland. To help them "freely express their will" at the polls, Russia could send in a brigade of "little green men armed to the teeth," much like it did in Crimea in March. Estonia would thereupon invoke Article 5 of the NATO charter -- "an armed attack against one or more [NATO members] ... shall be considered an attack against them all" -- and demand that the alliance defend it. Speaking in the Estonian capital of Tallinn on the eve of NATO's summit in Wales, this is just what Obama promised. "The defense of Tallinn and Riga and Vilnius is just as important as the defense of Berlin and Paris and London," he said.

Suddenly, the most terrifying nightmare becomes reality: NATO faces war with Russia.

How would Putin then react? Piontkovsky believes that NATO would balk at attacking Moscow over a small country remote from NATO's heartland and the hearts of its citizens. Piontkovsky imagines the course of action open to Nobel Peace Prize laureate Obama as he contemplates unleashing a planetary holocaust over a "damned little city no one has even heard of" while the American public cries out, "We don't want to die for fucking Narva, Mr. President!" Piontkovsky also cites a German public opinion poll asking what Berlin should do if Estonia enters an armed conflict with Russia: 70 percent would want their country to remain neutral.

Piontkovsky then tries to envision the situation in which Putin would find himself if NATO intervened to drive his little green men from Narva. Would Putin commit suicide by letting his missiles fly against the United States? No. Rather, he would respond with a limited nuclear strike against a couple of European capitals -- not London or Paris, but smaller ones, presumably in Eastern European countries that have only recently joined NATO. Warsaw, against which Russia has already conducted a drill simulating a Russian nuclear attack, first comes to mind. Or, say, Vilnius, Lithuania's capital. The point is, Putin would bet on decision-makers in Washington, Berlin, London, and Paris not retaliating with nuclear weapons against Russia if it had "only" hit a city or two most Westerners have barely heard of -- and certainly do not want to die for.

The outcome of Putin's putative gambit is that NATO effectively capitulates. The alliance's credibility as guarantor of security for its member states would be utterly destroyed, as would U.S. hegemony, which largely rests on the threat of using force. Putin would then be free to do what he wanted in Ukraine and anywhere else he perceived Russia's interests to be threatened.

It might all sound a bit far-fetched. On the surface, there are obvious reasons that Putin would not want to be the first to fire nuclear weapons at anyone, even his die-hard adversaries in NATO. It would be, to put it mildly, risky, and would irremediably besmirch his place, and Russia's, in history. The world would unite against him and could do more damage to the Russian economy, which is highly dependent on food imports and the export of hydrocarbons, than anyone now can imagine. And domestically, Russian anti-war sentiment is formidable. The Russian public has, throughout the crisis, adored Putin for standing up to the West and retaking Crimea, and it even supports Russia's arming the separatist rebels in eastern Ukraine. But Russians have shown no appetite for direct military intervention, which is one reason the Kremlin repeatedly asserts that it has no troops or materiel on Ukrainian soil.

But it's worth remembering that since 2000 Russian nuclear doctrine has foreseen the deployment of battlefield nuclear weapons to *de-escalate* a conflict with NATO, if Russian forces were about to suffer defeat in a conventional conflict -- which shows that the Kremlin has already been betting that neither Obama nor the leaders of other nuclear powers would push the button if they could avoid it.

The Kremlin is probably right.

Jeffrey Tayler is a contributing editor at the Atlantic. His seventh book, Topless Jihadis: Inside Femen, the World's Most Provocative Activist Group, is out now as an ebook.

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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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