



USAF Center for Unconventional Weapons Studies (CUWS) Outreach Journal

Issue No. 1145, 12 December 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 resource will help enhance the overall awareness of these important national security issues and lead to the further discussion of options for dealing with the potential use of unconventional weapons. **All of our past journals are now available at http://cpc.au.af.mil/au_outreach.aspx.**

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FEATURE ITEM: *"Iran: Interim Nuclear Agreement and Talks on a Comprehensive Accord"*. Authors; Kenneth Katzman, Specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs; Paul K. Kerr, Analyst in Nonproliferation; and Mary Beth D. Nikitin, Specialist in Nonproliferation. Published by the Congressional Research Service; 26 November 2014, 22 pages.
<http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/234999.pdf>

On November 24, 2013, Iran and the six powers that have negotiated with Iran about its nuclear program since 2006 (the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Russia, China, and Germany—collectively known as the "P5+1") finalized an interim agreement ("Joint Plan of Action," JPA) requiring Iran to freeze many aspects of its nuclear program in exchange for relief from some international sanctions. The period of the interim deal was to be six months, during which time Iran and the P5+1 would attempt to reach a comprehensive deal on the long-term status of Iran's nuclear program.

The main elements of the JPA are requirements that Iran freeze, in effect, its production of enriched uranium containing up to 5% uranium-235 during this period by converting the material to a uranium compound unsuitable for further enrichment; refrain from producing enriched uranium hexafluoride containing 20% uranium-235—the form of enriched uranium in Iran's stockpile that has caused the most concern; halt key elements of its heavy-water reactor and uranium enrichment facilities; and provide the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) with additional information about its nuclear program, as well as access to some nuclear-related facilities which are not covered by Iran's IAEA safeguards agreement.

Under the JPA, the P5+1 countries agreed to refrain from imposing new sanctions and permit Iran to repatriate to Iran about \$700 million per month in oil sales proceeds. Iran's oil exports are capped at about 1 million barrels per day—a 60% drop from 2011 levels of about 2.5 million barrels per day. The JPA also permits Iran to sell petro-chemicals and trade in gold and other precious metals, and to conduct transactions with foreign firms involved in Iran's auto sector. The estimated value of the revenue that accrues to Iran from these sources is about \$250 million per month. Iran also is permitted to access about \$65 million per month of hard currency for tuition for Iranian students, to buy spare parts for U.S.-made civilian aircraft, and to receive international facilitation of humanitarian purchases of food and medicine.

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Great Falls Tribune – Great Falls, MT

ICBM Modernization Becoming a Focal Point

By Jenn Rowell

December 8, 2014

Last week, the U.S. House and Senate reached an agreement on the bill that authorizes funding for the Department of Defense and the national security programs of the Department of Energy.

The bill doesn't authorize funding for major modernization of the intercontinental ballistic missiles operated by the U.S., including those at Malmstrom Air Force Base, but it does affirm the importance of maintaining and modernizing the nuclear triad, made up of ICBMs, nuclear bombers and submarines.

The Senate is expected to vote on the National Defense Authorization Act this week. The House passed a version last week.

Through the DOD Service Life Extension Programs, the current Minuteman III ICBM program is expected to last through 2030.

"We know that ICBMs are a cost-effective deterrent, and modernization funding will keep them safe and reliable for decades to come," Sen. Jon Tester, D-Mont., told the Tribune last week. "I am hopeful that Congress and the Defense Department will continue moving forward in the agreement that investing in our ICBM fleet should be a priority."

A 2014 RAND Corp. study found that sustaining the current Minuteman III force with gradual upgrades is relatively inexpensive way to retain current ICBM capabilities. The study also found that a new ICBM system would likely cost two to three times as much as incremental modernization and sustainment of the current ICBM system.

"We are optimistic that Congress will continue providing needed support for our nation's ICBM mission," said Rep. Steve Daines, R-Mont.

One constraint on the lifespan of the current system is the declining quantity of missile bodies due to required annual test launches. The Air Force conducts three tests per year, and the ICBM system program office has recommended increasing that to four times annually to account for the aging system, according to RAND.

If test launches increased to four annually in 2017, a force of 420 operational ICBMs is not sustainable beyond 2030 without new units and the entire missile asset will be depleted by 2135, RAND said.

The report also found that the current silo basing system is the most cost-effective.

In the last year, the Montana delegation and other military supporters in Montana have expressed concern that nuclear reductions would mean closing an ICBM base, but the NDAA requires that all existing ICBM silos be maintained through the New START treaty expiration in 2021, and the treaty includes the option to extend to 2026.

The RAND study found that closing an ICBM base to reduce cost would likely save less than \$500 million since it would take time to realize all savings, and much of the nuclear spending is outside of the three ICBM wings.

Over the last year, problems within the nuclear fleet have made headlines and the Air Force has put a renewed focus on the nuclear force.

That renewed focus has included increased spending on personnel, facilities and equipment. It's also renewed national attention in maintaining and modernizing the ICBM force.

In recent months, the Air Force has also been awarding major contracts related to the ICBM force.

Last week, the Air Force awarded a \$46.8 million contract to provide maintenance and sustainment services on the guidance system, which navigates the ICBM. Boeing has maintained the guidance systems since 1998.

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In August, the Air Force awarded a \$6.4 million contract to General Dynamics Advanced Information Systems, a component of General Dynamics, to develop and evaluate architecture options for the ICBM guidance modernization.

Under the contract, the company will do performance analysis and develop test strategies and life-cycle support plans for the next-generation missile guidance set architecture.

According to General Dynamics, the study will give the Air Force information needed to decide the next phase of the program to ensure compatibility with the current Minuteman III missile and the future ICBM systems. General Dynamics has also worked on guidance systems for the submarine launched ballistic missiles used by the U.S. Navy.

In September, the Air Force awarded a \$4.9 million contract to Boeing for the development of a new guidance data-acquisition system. Boeing will update the current aging system, which tests the guidance system of the Minuteman III missile.

The improved system will be designed for nuclear hardness and survivability testing, according to Boeing.

<http://www.greatfallsribune.com/story/news/local/2014/12/08/icbm-modernization-becoming-focal-point/20118211/>

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Global Times – Beijing, China

U.S. Cruise Missile Rearmament Poses Threat to Russia: Arms Designer

Xinhua

December 09, 2014

MOSCOW, Dec. 8 (Xinhua) -- The U.S. rearmament program of cruise missiles poses a main threat to Russia's security as it would have the capability of launching a barrage of up to 7,000 missiles at the first-strike stage against Russia in 2015-2016, a senior Russian air defense designer said Monday.

About 5,000 of those cruise missiles will be launched from submarines, said Pavel Sozinov, chief designer of Russia's air and missile defense systems producer Almaz-Antei company.

The United States has been redesigning three Ohio-class nuclear submarines to arm them with cruise missiles instead of inter-continental ballistic missiles. Each of these submarines can carry up to 154 cruise missiles, he added.

"This is a huge potential of the first stage massive strike, which must be taken into account while building (Russian) anti-missile defense," as it could result in disastrous damage to Russian strategic nuclear force, Sozinov said at a scientific conference here.

Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu said in October that Russia will create a space-based ballistic missile warning system capable of detecting launches of inter-continental and tactical missiles, as part of the country's efforts to strengthen its national defense.

The space-based early warning system is expected to put into operation by 2020, or even earlier, Sozinov said, "to provide a constant warning of ballistic missile launches."

Meanwhile, Russia has also been developing its own missile defense systems similar to the U.S. Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) and long-range ballistic missile shield Ground-based Midcourse Defense, Sozinov said.

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The move is aimed at further strengthening the capabilities of Russia's security system to identify targets at medium-and high- altitude missiles. Currently, their capabilities are limited to detecting enemy targets at low or very low altitudes, he said.

"A system analogous to THAAD is under development and will begin trials soon in Russia, allowing us to intercept medium-range ballistic missiles and intercontinental ones on a limited scale," RIA Novosti news agency quoted Sozinov as saying.

Significant progress has been made toward producing fuel for interceptor missiles and thermal barrier coatings that can withstand heat up to 3,500 degrees Celsius, the chief engineer added.

Also on Monday, Air Force Commander Viktor Bondarev said that at least five S-400 air defense missile regiments and more than 20 Pantsir-S air defense artillery and missile battalions would join Russian Aerospace Defense Forces, including fighter aircraft capable of destroying hypersonic and ballistic missiles such as SU- 35S.

In early September, President Vladimir Putin said that to keep up its containment potential, Russia needs to rearm its strategic and long-haul air forces and complete the establishment of airspace defense, especially the first-strike nuclear weaponry.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/895718.shtml>

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Retuers.com – U.K. Edition

U.S. Says Reduced Defence Role for Atom Bombs, Britain against Ban now

By Fredrik Dahl
Tuesday, December 9, 2014

VIENNA (Reuters) - The United States said on Tuesday it is relying less on nuclear weapons as part of its defence planning, but Britain argued against banning such arms now.

Both powers, taking part for the first time in an international conference on the humanitarian impact of atomic bombs, spoke in support of pursuing the goal of a world free of such weapons of mass destruction.

The three other officially recognised nuclear weapon states -- Russia, France and China -- stayed away from the meeting. Many of the 157 states taking part are critical of what they see as slow progress on nuclear disarmament.

"We have reduced the role of nuclear weapons in the defence of our nation and our allies and it is the policy of the United States to not develop new nuclear warheads," U.S. non-proliferation envoy Adam Scheinman said.

He gave no more details on the reduced role.

However, in a possible allusion to tense ties with Russia, he added: "Progress requires a willing partner and a conducive strategic environment."

The United States and Russia hold more than 90 percent of the world's nuclear warheads.

The conference comes amid talk of a new Cold War between the West and Russia over the Ukraine crisis, during which President Vladimir Putin has pointedly stressed Moscow's nuclear arsenal.

Under the 1970 nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the five recognised atomic bomb "haves" agreed to work towards eliminating their bombs, while the "have-nots" pledged not to pursue them. A treaty review conference is scheduled for 2015.

Pakistan and India, which both have nuclear weapons, have not signed the NPT. They attended the Vienna talks, as did Iran, which rejects Western accusations it too wants to build a bomb.

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Israel, which is believed to have the Middle East's only nuclear arsenal and is also outside the NPT, did not attend.

Critics say there has been more emphasis on meeting the non-proliferation goal than getting the five major powers to fulfil their part of the deal. The five say that much progress has been made since the Cold War, with a sharp reduction in stocks.

Britain said the approach of those arguing for banning such bombs now or for fixing a timetable for their elimination failed "to take account of, and therefore jeopardises, the stability and security which nuclear weapons can help to ensure".

"A declaratory ban, or a timetable not underpinned by the necessary trust, confidence and verification measures, would jeopardise strategic stability," Ambassador Susan Le Jeune d'Alleghershecque added, advocating a step-by-step approach.

Mexico earlier called for a "diplomatic process leading to the negotiation and conclusion of a legally binding instrument for the prohibition of nuclear weapons".

Editing by Angus MacSwan

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2014/12/09/uk-nuclear-arms-idUKKBN0JN1Y620141209>

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Air Force Link – HQ USAF, Washington, D.C.

AF Realigns Missions to Enhance Nuclear Support

Air Force News Service (AFNS)

December 10, 2014

WASHINGTON (AFNS) -- In response to a directive from the secretary of the Air Force and chief of staff of the Air Force, the 377th Air Base Wing in Albuquerque, New Mexico, will realign under Air Force Global Strike Command (AFGSC), and the Air Force Nuclear Weapons Center (AFNWC) will reorganize, combining the AFNWC commander and Air Force program executive officer for strategic systems positions into a single two-star (O-8) position.

The realignment of the 377th ABW and reorganization of the AFNWC under Air Force Materiel Command (AFMC) are designed to enhance support to the nuclear mission. The transition will phase in gradually and is scheduled to be complete in fall 2015.

"The nuclear mission is the Air Force's top priority," said Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James. "The U.S. Air Force provides the U.S. president and our nation ready and reliable nuclear forces. Maintaining the credibility of our nuclear deterrent requires a long-term, visible commitment to sustainment, and modernization."

The AFNWC will reorganize into three directorates, two of which focus on the two Air Force legs of the nuclear triad, intercontinental ballistic missile systems and air delivered capabilities. The third directorate will focus on unique nuclear requirements and interagency engagement.

"The Air Force is always seeking to improve the ways we do business through the innovation of our Airmen and the Nuclear Enterprise is no different," said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III. "We have identified and are in the process of improving critical mission shortfalls to ensure we remain the most credible, capable and reliable Air Force on the planet."

The 377th ABW is the host wing for Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico, and provides installation support to all mission partners on the base; that role will not change with this realignment under AFGSC.

"We expect the transfer to be imperceptible to the majority of Airmen at Kirtland AFB as they will continue to work for the same supervisors and units," said Maj. Gen. Garrett Harencak, the Air Force assistant chief of staff for strategic deterrence and nuclear integration.

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Realigning the 377th ABW and reorganizing the weapons center is one step of many the Air Force is taking along with the AFGSC and AFMC Force Improvement Programs. Force Improvement Programs are aggressive grass-roots feedback programs designed to quickly provide senior Air Force leaders with actionable recommendations for improvement.

“As long as nuclear weapons exist, there will be no mission more important than maintaining the nation’s nuclear capability, ensuring strategic deterrence and assurance,” James said. “The Air Force will continue to maintain this strategic capability and guarantee its credibility, as American Airmen have done for more than 60 years.”

<http://www.af.mil/News/ArticleDisplay/tabid/223/Article/555829/af-realigns-missions-to-enhance-nuclear-support.aspx>

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Press TV – Tehran, Iran

US Threatens Russia with Deploying Nuclear Missiles in Europe

Friday, December 12, 2014

The Pentagon has threatened Russia with redeploying nuclear cruise missiles to Europe, accusing Moscow of violating two arms control treaties.

“We don’t have ground-launched cruise missiles in Europe now obviously because they’re prohibited by the treaty,” said Brian McKeon, principal deputy undersecretary for policy at the Department of Defense.

“But that would obviously be one option to explore,” he added.

Washington says Moscow violated the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe.

However, Russia denied the allegation and said the testing of a ground-launched cruise missile in July 2014 was in compliance with the INF treaty.

Undersecretary for Arms Control and International Security Rose Gottemoeller announced that US President Barack Obama has written his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin about the violation.

Gottemoeller said that the United States were considering a list of “military countermeasures” against Russia.

McKeon also warned Russia not to engage in an “escalatory cycle of action and reaction.”

He said Russian and US counter-actions “will make Russia less secure.”

“This violation will not go unanswered, because there is too much at stake,” he said.

Russia says the US missile plans across the globe are a real threat not only to Russia but also to the whole world, adding the missile systems harm the strategic balance of forces across the globe.

In October, the US military commissioned its new missile base in southern Romania amid strong opposition by Russia.

The military base will be the first to feature the Aegis Ashore ballistic missile system and it will be operational by the end of 2015.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2014/12/12/389870/us-threatens-russia-with-missiles/>

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Yonhap News Agency – Seoul, South Korea

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Missile Defense Systems around N.K. Could Change China's Thinking on N.K.: U.S. Report

December 12, 2014

WASHINGTON, Dec. 11 (Yonhap) -- The deployment of ballistic missile defense systems around North Korea by the United States and its allies could be an effective way to change China's strategic thinking about Pyongyang, a U.S. congressional report said.

The Congressional Research Service made the point in a recent report, "North Korea: U.S. Relations, Nuclear Diplomacy, and Internal Situation," saying Beijing would find it not in its national interest if provocative actions by the North lead to increased military deployments in the region.

When North Korea fired a long-range rocket in April 2012, a key focus of Chinese media coverage of the case was Patriot missile deployments that were made by the U.S. and its allies in response to the North's launch, the report noted.

A subtext of those reports was that the North's actions are feeding military developments that are not in China's interests, it said.

"As part of the efforts by the United States and its allies to change China's strategic thinking about North Korea, the BMD (ballistic missile defense) deployments may have an impact," the report said. "Many observers, particularly in the United States and Japan, argue that continued North Korean ballistic missile development increases the need to bolster regional BMD capabilities and cooperation."

As a key provider of economic assistance and diplomatic support for North Korea, China is considered by many the only country with any meaningful influence over Pyongyang, but Beijing has been unwilling to use that leverage.

Analysts say China, which considers North Korea as something of a buffer zone, fears that pushing Pyongyang too hard could lead to its collapse, instability on its border and ultimately the emergence of a pro-U.S. nation next door.

China has a track record of providing diplomatic support for the North and softening sanctions on the regime.

Beijing has reacted against U.S. deployments of missile defense systems, protesting strongly after the possibility surfaced earlier this year of the U.S. deploying an advanced missile defense system, known as Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD), to South Korea.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/news/2014/12/12/0200000000AEN20141212000300315.html>

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International Business (IB) Times – Sydney, Australia Edition

Russia in the Hotseat again this Time for Violating Nuclear Weapons Treaty, Could Face New Sanctions

By Esther Tanquintic-Misa
December 11, 2014

Russia is under the nerves of the United States again, this time for allegedly violating Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, or INF. Russia recently tested a ground-launched cruise missile, which under the treaty signed by the late former U.S. President Ronald Reagan and former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, is strictly prohibited.

Reports said it was in July when Russia conducted the testing of an R-500 cruise missile, according to News Max. Portal GlobalSecurity.org described the cruise missile was derived from the Iskander-K. It said it used the same TEL carrier vehicle and control system as with the Iskander-M ballistic missile. Only that the R-500 was armed with a

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turbojet-powered cruise missile. GlobalSecurity.org believed the missile was developed to "ensure nuclear parity with China, which is not a signatory to the treaty and within range of such weapons."

As expected, Russia maintained the procedure was in compliance with the treaty. Signed in 1987 and implemented on June 1, 1988, the INF effectively eliminated both countries of an entire class of nuclear weapons. It stipulated that both the U.S. and Russia "cannot possess, produce or test-fly a ground-launched cruise missile with a range of 300 to 3,400 miles (482 to 5472 kilometres)," the AP said.

The elimination of all declared missiles and launchers under the Treaty was completed in 1991. The Treaty is of unlimited duration.

Brian P. McKeon, principal deputy undersecretary of defense for policy, said the U.S. has engaged Russia using various diplomatic approaches to discuss the matter, while discussing other potential measures in coordination with allies. But Russia remained withdrawing information, he said. The country was even adamant that it did not violate any rule under the treaty. What occurred instead was Russia accused the U.S. of violating its obligations under the INF treaty, McKeon said.

But McKeon, along with Rose Gottemoeller, undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, believed Russia's violations of the treaty had been long happening based on pieces of evidence that Congressional aides had gathered. Russia's violations were believed to have started way back 2008, or even earlier.

During the Cold War, both the U.S. and Soviet Union developed and deployed nuclear-tipped Air Launched Cruise Missiles [ALCM] and Sea Launched Cruise Missiles [SLCM]. Only the U.S. developed and deployed nuclear tipped Ground Launched Cruise Missiles [GLCM]. Quoting Robert M. Gates, Chairman, National Intelligence Council, and Deputy Director for Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency, as telling before the Senate Committee on Armed Services and the Committee on Appropriations on June 1985, GlobalSecurity.org said Russian ALCM is the first in a series of deployments of long-range, land-attack cruise missiles. "Over the next 10 years, we expect them to deploy 2,000 to 3,000 nuclear-armed ALCM's, SLCM's, and GLCM's. The deployment of cruise missiles provides the Soviets with new multidirectional capabilities against U.S. targets," Gates had said 29 years ago.

The Pentagon, according to McKeon, had conducted a military assessment if Russia were to deploy a missile to Europe or the Asia-Pacific region that is banned under the treaty. Russia's noncompliance will generate three categories of military-related responses which are "active defenses to counter intermediate-range, ground-launched cruise missiles; counterforce capabilities to prevent intermediate-range, ground-launched cruise missile attacks; and countervailing strike capabilities to beef up U.S. or allied forces."

"We do not want to find ourselves engaged in an escalatory cycle of action and reaction," McKeon said. "However, Russia's lack of meaningful engagement on this issue, if it persists, will ultimately require the United States to take actions to protect its interests and security along with those of its allies and partners. Those actions will make Russia less secure. ... This violation will not go unanswered, because there is too much at stake."

Russian media, as early as 2005, have reported the government wants to withdraw from the INF treaty because it benefits the U.S. more than Russia. Sergei Ivanov, Kremlin chief of staff, said in June 2013 the U.S. doesn't need the weapon "because their effective radius doesn't extend to Europe... they could theoretically only attack Mexico and Canada with them... they face no regional threats to their security."

<http://au.ibtimes.com/articles/575631/20141211/russia-nuclear-weapons-treaty-inf-u-s.htm#.VInnRP4cTxI>

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Sputnik News – Russian Information Agency

US Government Alert to Possible Nuclear Weapons in Crimea: Undersecretary

The US Undersecretary of State for International Security stated that the US government has great concerns about the movement of nuclear capable or dual use weapons into Crimea.

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11 December 2014

WASHINGTON, December 11 (Sputnik) — The US government is closely monitoring the possible movement of nuclear capable or dual use weapons into Crimea, US Undersecretary of State for International Security Rose Gottemoeller said during Congressional testimony.

"We are very, very alert to statements that have been made by certain experts on the Russian side about deploying...dual capable aircraft, missile systems that could also be dual capable," Gottemoeller told House Armed Services subcommittee chairman Ted Poe Wednesday when asked if Russia was deploying or planning to deploy tactical nuclear weapons into Crimea.

Following the hearing, Gottemoeller confirmed to Sputnik that the US government has sincere concerns about the movement of nuclear capable weapons into Crimea.

The State Department has expressed concern to the Russian leadership about any option of reintroducing nuclear weapons into Crimea, Gottemoeller said.

Multiple members of Congress on the Subcommittee on Strategic Forces asked witnesses from the State Department and Defense Department to confirm or deny the movement of nuclear capable weapons into Crimea.

Department of Defense Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, Brian McKeon was asked whether he was aware of open-source reports of nuclear weapons being moved to Crimea and stated that the department "refrains from using open source reports," adding that he had not seen such evidence.

McKeon was pressed for details as to whether or not Russia is developing a new nuclear weapon. McKeon answered that he would "take that up in a closed session."

The subcommittee held a closed session with the witnesses later in the day.

Allegations of the movement of nuclear capable missiles into Crimea emerged in November, based on statements by NATO's top General Philip Breedlove. The Russian Defense Ministry denied the claims, stating that there were "no facts" behind NATO's accusations.

<http://sputniknews.com/military/20141211/1015721022.html>

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DoD Buzz.com – Washington, D.C.

Pentagon Launches New Future Weapons Research Effort

By Kris Osborn

Monday, December 8th, 2014

The Pentagon is starting a massive research and development effort aimed at finding and developing next-generation technologies able to ensure the U.S. military retains its technological edge.

Described as an effort to create a new technological offset strategy like that which the U.S. pursued in the 1950s and 1980s, the Long Range Research and Development Plan, or LRRDP, involves a solicitation to industry, academia, and small business to begin enterprising ideas on areas of focus for new weapons and technology research and development.

"The nature of future military competition suggests we cannot take our future military dominance for granted. We need to continue disruptive innovation and be sure that we have that differential advantage in the future," Stephen Welby, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Systems Engineering, told reporters Dec. 3.

The research effort is part of the Pentagon's recently announced Defense Innovation Initiative designed to preserve U.S. military technological superiority.

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Welby, Pentagon acquisition chief Frank Kendall and other senior Pentagon officials have often emphasized that the pace of global technological change is such that the U.S. can no longer be assured of the technological superiority it has experienced in recent decades.

What this means is that technologies such as precision-guided munitions, unmanned systems, sensors, long-range weaponry such as anti-ship guided missiles, large naval platforms and stealth fighter aircraft are increasingly being developed by rival nations and potential adversaries around the world. The U.S. no longer enjoys as large of a technological margin of difference when compared with other countries and non-state actors today.

As a result, the research will be sure to explore technologies for countering anti-satellite rockets, precision guided munitions and low-observable or stealth technology in the hands of potential adversaries, among other things.

The new plan, which resulted in the release of a formal request for information to industry Dec. 3, is intended to identify breakthrough technologies for the future. The idea, Welby explained, is to discover new technologies, build and test prototypes and help establish new systems and platforms giving the U.S. a continued strategic edge.

The idea is to learn enough about areas of focused research in order to inform the Pentagon's 2017 budget submission, Welby added.

The LRRDP effort breaks up concentrated technology research and innovation into five working groups; they are space, undersea, air dominance and strike, air and missile defense and a technology-driven group geared toward identifying and integrating promising commercial technologies.

Welby compared the current effort to two successful technological offset strategies in recent decades where focus research preceded military technological progress and strategic global advantage for the U.S. He referred to President Eisenhower's "New Look" national security policy in the 1950s which placed military assets in Europe as a counter to the Soviet threat during the early years of the Cold War.

A second offset strategy took place in the 1980s following a focused research and planning effort in the late 70s. This research led to the development of many of the technologies still used today's by U.S. military such as precision-guided munitions, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance platforms and fighter jets like the F/A-18.

"We've had a good 40 years run on those capabilities but both the Secretary (Hagel) and Mr. Kendall have been very active in talking about how our technology in the future may be challenged. Adversaries have had 40-years to study way we fight and build responses and global trends are making technologies more available," Welby said.

While Welby was clear to say the effort was not geared toward a particular adversary, he did say the initiative was focused on near-peer competitors, leaving one to assume he meant Russia and China, among others.

"We're largely focused on the future of near peer competition. Our real goal is to identify concepts that will shape future investments," Welby said.

The LRRDP effort plans to work closely with the individual services and the Pentagon's research arm, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency.

<http://www.dodbuzz.com/2014/12/08/pentagon-launches-new-future-weapons-research-effort/>

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The London Independent – London, U.K.

Risks of Nuclear War Rising because of Global Tensions and Insecure Stockpiles, Warn Experts

'Too many nuclear weapons in the world remain ready to launch on short notice,' the military, political and diplomatic figures say

By Ian Johnston

Monday, 08 December 2014

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Urgent action is needed to minimise the risk of a nuclear war, more than 120 senior military, political and diplomatic figures from across the world have warned.

Ahead of the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, which starts today, the experts wrote in a letter that the danger of such a conflict was “underestimated or insufficiently understood” by world leaders.

The signatories include people from across the political spectrum such as former Conservative Defence Secretary Lord King, a Labour counterpart Lord Browne, former Foreign Secretaries Margaret Beckett and David Owen, and former Liberal Democrat leader Sir Menzies Campbell. John McColl, former Nato Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe, Lord Richards, former Chief of the Defence Staff, and General James Cartwright, former Vice-Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, also signed the letter.

“Tensions between nuclear-armed states and alliances in the Euro-Atlantic area and in both South and East Asia remain ripe with the potential for military miscalculation and escalation,” says the letter to Sebastian Kurz, Austria’s Minister for Foreign Affairs.

“In a vestige of the Cold War, too many nuclear weapons in the world remain ready to launch on short notice, greatly increasing the chances of an accident.

“This fact gives leaders faced with an imminent potential threat an insufficient amount of time to communicate with each other and act with prudence.”

There should also be better crisis management in “conflict hotspots” and new security measures, warning that stockpiles were “insufficiently secure, making them possible targets for terrorism”.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/politics/risks-of-nuclear-war-is-rising-because-of-global-tensions-and-insecure-stockpiles-warn-experts-9909379.html>

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Sputnik News.com – Russian Information Agency

Chinese Official Attends Vienna Nuclear Conference under Guise of Academic

It appears that Beijing is more interested in the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons as it seemed before. One of the scholars attending the conference could be a disguised high-profile Chinese official, a source reveals.

09 December 2014

VIENNA, December 9 (Sputnik), Daria Chernyshova — Despite declining to officially attend the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, Beijing did send an official, in an academic capacity, making China the third nuclear power to participate in the conference, along with the United Kingdom and the United States, a conference speaker told Sputnik Tuesday.

"China has sent somebody who is not officially here as a representative of China, but he is a very high level Chinese official who deals with nuclear weapons, and he is here as ‘academic’, but he is certainly here to listen on behalf of the Chinese government," a conference speaker told Sputnik on condition of anonymity.

The source also praised the last minute decision of the United States and the UK to attend the conference, deeming it a positive sign that could potentially lead to global nuclear disarmament.

"I think it was really good that the United States and the United Kingdom at the last minute decided to come. Even if they disagree with everything that is being said here, I hope that by being in the room you might hear something or listen to something that might lead to changing some of your views," the source pointed out.

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That makes Russia and France the only ones of the five officially recognized nuclear powers not attending the third conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, which brings together representatives from almost 160 nations, drawing participants from civil society, international organizations and academia.

"Probably Russia is not here right now because relations between Russia and the West are so difficult at the moment. I think that is unfortunate, I do not understand this," the speaker told Sputnik adding that even if the countries disagree, it is better when they are in the same room.

The Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons is taking place on December 8-9 in Hofburg Palace in the Austrian capital. Its aim is to promote nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation. According to the conference's organization committee, over 16,000 nuclear warheads still exist, many of which are on "high alert".

<http://sputniknews.com/military/20141209/1015651824.html>

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The Express Tribune – Karachi, Pakistan

US Rejects Calls for Treaty Eliminating Nukes

"We think the most practical and realistic approach is to pursue reductions step-by-step," says US representative

By Agence France-Presse (AFP)

December 10, 2014

VIENNA: The US representative at a major conference on nuclear weapons rejected calls Tuesday for a treaty immediately eliminating them, saying Washington prefers a "step-by-step" approach.

"We think the most practical and realistic approach is to pursue reductions step-by-step," Adam Scheinman, special US representative for Nuclear Nonproliferation, told reporters on the sidelines of the conference in Vienna.

"As security conditions permit, we can move to still deeper reductions as President (Barack) Obama has committed to. But the idea of moving automatically to a treaty that would immediately eliminate all nuclear weapons is probably not the most practical option," he said.

The comments came at a conference of some 800 representatives from 160 countries and civil organisations in Vienna looking at the potentially catastrophic consequences of a nuclear explosion.

Organisers hope it will inject momentum into stalled efforts to reduce nuclear stockpiles, with some participants calling for a treaty calling for the immediate scrapping of all the world's atomic weapons.

It was the third gathering of its kind and the first that the United States, together with Britain, has attended. Fellow nuclear-armed nations Russia, China and France however were absent.

Nuclear-armed India and Pakistan also attended, but other no-shows were North Korea, which has conducted three nuclear tests, and Israel, widely believed also to have atomic weapons.

The numbers of nuclear weapons — 90 per cent of them US or Russian — have fallen dramatically since the end of the Cold War thanks to treaties like the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), the Moscow Treaty and New START.

But there remain around 16,300. Some 4,000 of these are "operationally available", and some 1,800 are on "high alert" and ready for use on short notice, according to the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists group.

The follow-through on an "action plan" adopted at a 2010 meeting of signatories to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), in particular 22 disarmament steps, has however "very disappointing," said Kingston Reif from the Arms Control Association.

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Since New START entered into force in 2011, Russia and the US have failed to commence talks to further reduce their nuclear stockpiles, while progress towards an entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) is stalled, Reif said.

Efforts towards further measures, including at a new NPT review conference in May 2015, have also been stymied by tensions between Moscow and Washington over the Ukraine crisis, experts say.

Britain's representative in Vienna, Susan le Jeune d'Allegeershecque, agreed with her US counterpart.

"Some have argued that the way to this goal (of a world without nuclear weapons) is to ban nuclear weapons now, or to fix a timetable for their elimination," she said.

"The UK considers that this approach fails to take account of, and therefore jeopardises, the stability and security which nuclear weapons can help to ensure," she said.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/804511/us-rejects-calls-for-treaty-eliminating-nukes/>

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The Japan Times – Tokyo, Japan

China Arming Stealthy Subs with Long-Range Nuclear Missiles

By Bloomberg

December 9, 2014

HONG KONG – China is preparing to arm its stealthiest submarines with nuclear missiles that could reach the U.S., cloaking its arsenal with the invisibility needed to retaliate in the event of an enemy strike.

Fifty years after China carried out its first nuclear test, patrols by the almost impossible-to-detect JIN class submarines armed with nuclear JL-2 ballistic missiles will give President Xi Jinping greater agility to respond to an attack.

The nuclear-powered subs will probably conduct initial patrols with the missiles by the end of this year, "giving China its first credible sea-based nuclear deterrent," according to an annual report to Congress submitted in November by the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission.

Deploying the vessels will burnish China's prestige as Xi seeks to end what he calls the "Cold War" mentality that resulted in U.S. dominance of Asia-Pacific security. Since coming to power, Xi has increased military spending with a focus on longer-range capacity, including plans to add to the country's tally of a single aircraft carrier.

"For the first time in history, China's nuclear arsenal will be invulnerable to a first strike," said independent strategist Nicolas Giacometti, who has written analysis for The Diplomat and the Center for Strategic and International Studies. "It's the last leap toward China's assured nuclear-retaliation capability."

China's nuclear-defense strategy is engineered to provide retaliation capability in the event of attack from nuclear-armed nations as far away as the U.S. and also from Russia and India, according to Felix Chang, a senior fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute in Philadelphia.

While China doesn't view North Korea as a direct nuclear risk, officials are concerned about what might happen if North Korea threatened South Korea or Japan and the region became unstable, Chang said.

China's nuclear-armed submarines will be "useful as a hedge to any potential nuclear threats, including those from North Korea, even if they are relatively small," he said.

The deployment of the submarines could pressure China to assure foreign militaries that its navy chiefs and political leaders can communicate with and control them. Chinese and U.S. ships and planes are coming into greater proximity in the Pacific as China asserts its claims to territory in the South China Sea and East China Sea, risking near misses or a clash.

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Former U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates said in an interview last January that ex-President Hu Jintao “did not have strong control” of the People’s Liberation Army. The “best example,” Gates said, was China’s roll out of its J-20 stealth fighter jet during a visit he made in January 2010. The event seemed to catch Hu unaware, Gates said.

Since coming to power, Xi has tightened his grip on the military, taking over as head of the Central Military Commission in November 2012, when he became Communist Party chief. Hu waited about two years before becoming chairman of the commission.

“China is going to have to reassure their adversaries that those submarines are under positive control at all times,” said Malcolm Davis, an assistant professor of China-Western relations at Bond University on Australia’s Gold Coast.

“Positive control” refers to the procedures to ensure the CMC’s absolute control of its nuclear assets, such as the authorization codes it would send to submarines, where, after verification by the commander and probably two other officers, missiles would be launched.

“It demands that China set up appropriate command and control infrastructure to ensure that the CMC can keep in touch with the submarines, even when they are at sea and under the water,” Davis said. “The U.S., U.K., France and Russia all maintain such communications capabilities for ensuring positive control” of their submarines at sea.

By assuring potential enemies that weapons will only be fired if ordered by central command, China’s military would increase the deterrent value of its nuclear-armed submarines, he said.

“Those assurances are likely to be made at the highest level military-to-military meetings behind closed doors,” Davis said. Otherwise China is largely expected to keep its nuclear capabilities secret.

“High-confidence assessments of the numbers of Chinese nuclear capable ballistic missiles and nuclear warheads are not possible due to China’s lack of transparency about its nuclear program,” the U.S. report to Congress said. The Pentagon hasn’t provided an estimate of the size of China’s nuclear warhead stockpile since 2006, according to the report.

China’s Defense Ministry did not reply to faxed questions about when regular patrols by nuclear-armed JIN-class submarines would begin, or China’s nuclear strategy.

The modernization of China’s nuclear forces is focused on improving the capacity to deter other nuclear powers, Giacometti said by phone from Brussels.

Until 2006, its only ballistic missile able to deliver a nuclear warhead to the continental U.S. was the liquid-fueled, silo-based DF-5A, he said. These were considered vulnerable because fueling takes a few hours during which the missile must remain in its silo. To protect them, China built mock silos and adopted a policy of secrecy that made a disarming first strike harder to execute.

In 2006, China introduced the land-based mobile DF-31A ballistic missiles, whose 6,959-mile (11,200-km) maximum range could reach the U.S. The missiles are solid-fueled, so can be fired almost immediately if warheads are pre-fitted, Giacometti said.

The U.S. intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities — from satellites to high-altitude drones, such as the Northrop Grumman RQ-4 Global Hawk — can monitor vast areas of territory and detect mobile intercontinental ballistic missile launchers, he said. Any information gleaned could be transmitted to U.S. strike assets, from long-range high-speed missiles to B-2 Spirit Stealth Bombers, to take out the launchers before they fire.

In comparison to the land-based launchers, nuclear-powered ballistic-missile submarines that rarely need to surface are much better at hiding.

Right now, China has three of those — the JIN class — and is likely to add two more by 2020, according to the commission’s report. Each could carry 12 JL-2 missiles, which after a decade of development “appear to have reached initial operational capability,” it said.

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The JL-2's range of about 4,598 miles means China could conduct nuclear strikes against Alaska if it unleashed the missiles from waters near China; against Alaska and Hawaii if launched from waters south of Japan; against Alaska, Hawaii, and western continental U.S. if fired from waters west of Hawaii; and against all 50 U.S. states if launched from waters east of Hawaii, the report said.

"The big scoop would be determining where those submarine patrols will take place," Chang said.

The submarines are expected to initially confine themselves to China's coastal waters and the South China Sea, where they could roam with little chance of detection. For the missiles to reach Hawaii or the continental U.S. the submarines would need to foray into the Western Pacific and beyond, which Davis from Bond University said would be "more challenging because they'd have to run the gauntlet of U.S. anti-submarine capabilities."

China's advances are cause for concern in some parts of the U.S. defense establishment.

"We must continue to modernize our nuclear capabilities," Adm. Harry Harris said Dec. 2 at his nomination hearing to become commander of the U.S. Pacific Command, when asked how the U.S. should respond to China's buildup.

Analysts don't expect China to modify its long-standing "no-first-use" nuclear policy that states its weapons will only be used if China comes under nuclear attack.

Having enhanced its nuclear-deterrence capability, China may begin to communicate more about the planned evolution of its nuclear forces, Giacometti said.

"More openness on China's side might then open up more space for confidence-building measures and lay the ground for future arms control discussions," he said.

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2014/12/09/asia-pacific/china-arming-stealthy-subs-long-range-nuclear-missiles/#.Vli3NixARDy>

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The Korea Herald – Seoul, South Korea

N.K. Shows No Signs of Preparations for Nuclear Test: Think Tank

December 11, 2014

North Korea is showing no signs of preparing to conduct a nuclear test, despite its threat to do so in anger over a U.N. General Assembly resolution on its human rights violations, a U.S. think tank said Wednesday.

The website 38 North made the assessment, saying commercial satellite imagery shows that there has been "low-level activity" at the North's Punggye-ri underground nuclear test site for the past four months.

"It is unlikely that North Korea will conduct a nuclear test in the next two to three months," 38 North said in a report.

The North has so far conducted three nuclear tests at the site in 2006, 2009 and 2013.

Speculation mounted early this year that the North could conduct a nuclear test after the regime threatened to conduct a "new form of nuclear test." But the regime did not go ahead with a test.

Last month, Pyongyang again threatened to test a nuclear device after the Third Committee of the U.N. General Assembly passed a resolution that called for referring the North to the International Criminal Court for human rights violations. (Yonhap)

<http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20141211000393>

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The People's Daily.com – Beijing, China

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S.Korea, ASEAN to Continue Efforts for Denuclearized Peninsula

(Xinhua)

December 12, 2014

BUSAN, South Korea, Dec. 12 -- South Korea and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on Friday agreed to continue efforts to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula, urging the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) to completely implement international obligations.

The agreement came after South Korean President Park Geun-hye and leaders of the 10 ASEAN countries held a special summit in Busan, a port city in southeast South Korea, for two days through Friday.

A joint statement was announced, saying that it would be important to maintain a sustainable peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia. To attain the goal, South Korea and ASEAN will continue efforts for the peninsula's denuclearization.

The statement urged Pyongyang to make a complete implementation of all UN Security Council's resolutions and international obligations and promises made under the Sept. 19 Joint Statement, which was adopted in 2005 to dismantle the DPRK's nuclear weapons program.

It stressed the need for resuming the long-stalled six-party talks that will become the base of complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization on the peninsula.

The six-party talks, which involve, China, the DPRK, the United States, South Korea, Russia and Japan, was initiated in Beijing in August 2003 but has been halted since December 2008.

"Korea and the ASEAN shared views that security in Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia is closely linked," Park said in a joint press conference with Myanmar President Thein Sein after the summit meeting. "(The two sides) agreed to strengthen cooperation in security to create sustainable peace and stability in both regions," said Park.

Tensions remained on the peninsula as the two Koreas exchanged quarrels. Seoul voiced serious regrets on Friday over the DPRK's condemnation of President Park by name. The DPRK's Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of Korea (CPRK) on Thursday censured Park by name, warning that she should "control her tongue."

Park has said in a recent keynote speech in Seoul that the "North's nuclear development is the biggest factor of instability in Northeast Asia and poses a serious threat to world peace."

Meanwhile, South Korea and the ASEAN agreed to raise trade between the two sides to 200 billion U.S. dollars by 2020 through the maximum use of free trade agreement (FTA) already signed eight years ago.

The two sides will maximize the usage of the bilateral FTA, aiming to lift the trade value between the two sides to 200 billion U.S. dollars in 2020 from 135 billion U.S. dollars in 2013.

The ASEAN-South Korea FTA negotiations reached a conclusion in 2006, which more than doubled the bilateral trade from 61 billion U.S. dollars in 2006 to 135 billion U.S. dollars in 2013.

The two sides will deepen cooperation in energy and infrastructure projects, while seeking new cooperation areas going forward.

South Korea will share its experience of fast-growing economy with the Asian countries, and help them eradicate poverty in rural areas through the so-called "Saemaul Movement," which was adopted by the late strongman Park Chung-hee, father of the incumbent president Park Geun-hye, in the 1970s.

The ASEAN, including Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand, Singapore and Vietnam, emerged as a key trade partner of South Korea.

The ASEAN is the No.2 trade partner of South Korea, following China, and the third-largest investment destination of South Korean companies.



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On Wednesday, Park announced an effective conclusion of the FTA negotiations with Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung after holding a bilateral summit meeting at a hotel in Busan.

The FTA negotiations, launched in August 2012, came to a conclusion in 28 months, becoming the fifth FTA deal reached under the Park Geun-hye administration.

Vietnam agreed to liberalize 92.2 percent of all goods imported from South Korea in terms of import value. South Korea's liberalization rate was 94.7 percent.

<http://en.people.cn/n/2014/1212/c90777-8822242.html>

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TASS Russian News Agency – Moscow, Russia

Russian Military to Get Equivalents of US Missile Defense Systems Soon — Corporation

Russia is developing an equivalent of the THAAD and GMD missile defense systems
December 08, 2014

MOSCOW, December 8. /TASS/. Russian military will soon receive equivalents of the United States' missile defense systems THAAD (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense) and GMD (Ground-Based Midcourse Defense), the general designer of the Almaz-Antei concern, Pavel Sozinov, said Monday.

"Russia is working on an equivalent of the THAAD missile defense complex, which is capable of intercepting ballistic intermediate range missiles and, to a certain extent, warheads of inter-continental ballistic missiles. It will undergo testing soon," Sozinov said.

Russia is also creating an equivalent of another US missile defense complex GMD with the ground-based interceptor (GBI) missile," he added.

"A mobile configuration of that system's counterpart is being developed, too. It will have slightly different parameters. At the Defense Ministry's request we are expected to achieve a far greater degree of accuracy. We are pushing ahead with research into the prototypes of these complexes. According to our estimates they will be able to enter duty in the near future," Sozinov said.

The THAAD system is meant to protect the forces of the United States and its allies, and also cities and key facilities from all types of ballistic missiles. It intercepts the warhead in final phase of its path during the last minute of approach to target. Reports of plans for deploying THAAD launchers in South Korea have drawn angry protests from the neighboring countries. The Russian Foreign Ministry has warned that this measure might trigger an arms race in the region.

The GMD intercepts intercontinental missiles in the mid-course phase with ground-based interceptor missiles stationed in Alaska and California.

<http://itar-tass.com/en/russia/765705>

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Sputnik News.com – Russian Information Agency

New Russian Space Anti-Ballistic Missile System On-Track for 2020: Engineer

Chief engineer from the Russian defense corporation Almaz Antey stated that an improved early warning system in space for detecting ballistic missile launches will be in place by 2020.

08 December 2014

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MOSCOW, December 8 (Sputnik) – An improved early warning system in space for detecting ballistic missile launches will be in place by 2020, a chief engineer from the Russian defense corporation Almaz Antey said Monday.

“In the development of the space echelon, everything necessary has been accepted and the technical solutions have been tested, and we expect that the low-Earth orbit space echelon early warning ballistic missile system in its improved form will by 2020, or even earlier, provide the necessary characteristics of a constant warning of ballistic missile launches,” Pavel Sozinov said during a conference.

The possibilities to detect moving targets have significantly improved in recent years, Sozinov stated, speaking of the creation of an identification system over the territory of Russia at medium and high altitudes. When it comes to detecting enemy targets at low and very low altitudes, “the possibilities at this perimeter are, of course, very limited,” the chief engineer said.

Sozinov also noted that the Russian defense industry has made significant progress in the creation of fuel for interceptor missiles and thermal barrier coatings that can withstand heat up to 3,500 degrees Celsius.

The creation of a unified space-based ballistic missile warning system in Russia was announced by Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu in October. The system is set to replace Soviet-made ballistic missile early warning systems and will comprise next-generation space vehicles and modernized space centers that would ensure control over satellites and allow automatic information processing.

<http://sputniknews.com/military/20141208/1015611148.html>

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TASS Russian News Agency – Moscow, Russia

Uranium Traffickers Seized in Moldova with Dirty Bomb Material — Police

Interpol and Europol have confiscated around 200 grams of uranium-238 in a special operation, chief of Moldova's general police inspectorate Ion Bodrug told reporters on Tuesday
December 09, 2014

CHISINAU, December 9. /TASS/. International traffickers of uranium capable of use in making "dirty bombs" have been detained at homes in Chisinau, capital of the Moldovan republic, authorities say.

International police agency Interpol and European law enforcement agency Europol have confiscated around 200 grams of uranium-238 in a special operation, chief of the republic's general police inspectorate Ion Bodrug told reporters on Tuesday.

“We found depleted uranium with uranium-235 elements. Such materials are not dangerous from a radiation viewpoint but they can be used for making dirty bombs,” Bodrug said, noting that seven suspects, including specialists in radioactive substances, had been arrested and that four more were being sought.

Police said the cargo was destined for Europe in an operation which could have earned the gang some 1.6 million euro. During home searches, one kilogram of mercury was discovered as well as “many documents showing that those arrested were aware of what they were dealing with,” Bodrug noted.

This is not the first such detention in the same region. In 2010 and 2011, traffickers seeking to sell several kilograms of uranium-238 were arrested locally.

<http://itar-tass.com/en/world/765979>

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RT (Russia Today) – Moscow, Russia

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Preemptive Nuclear Strike Omitted from Russia's New Military Doctrine - Reports

December 10, 2014

The new draft of the Russian military doctrine doesn't provide for the possibility of a preemptive nuclear strike, news agencies report quoting unnamed sources in the Defense Ministry.

"The renewed draft of the military doctrine would not have a reservation for preventive nuclear strikes on potential enemy. Article 198 of the document is very precise on the conditions under which Russia can use the nuclear weapons," a person involved in the preparation of the new doctrine told the Interfax on Wednesday.

"It would become possible if the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Russian Federation are under threat."

RIA Novosti confirmed the report on the same day, quoting a high-placed source in Russia's Security Council. The source said that the military had repeatedly suggested including the possibility of a pre-emptive nuclear strike on potential aggressor nations or blocs, but the current draft features no such option.

The Russian military doctrine, approved in 2010, also lacks the provision for a preemptive nuclear strike. It states: *"The Russian Federation reserves the right to use nuclear weapons in reply to strikes with nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction on its territory or on the territory of its allies. A strike is also possible in case of an aggression with use of conventional weapons that put the very existence of the Russian Federation into question."*

The doctrine gives the right of final decision on nuclear strike to the president.

This September, President Vladimir Putin charged senior military and state officials with the task of developing an updated military doctrine that would match the changing global politics and modern military challenges. The deadline is the end of the year. Officials involved in the project earlier told the press that the new doctrine would take into consideration the new dangers and threats, in particular those manifested in the so-called Arab Spring, the civil war in Syria and the ongoing crisis in Ukraine.

Last year, Russia's official in charge of defense industry, Deputy PM **Dmitry Rogozin**, told reporters that Russia will use nuclear weapons if it comes under an attack, adding that this possibility serves as the main deterrent to potential provocateurs and aggressors.

"We have never diminished the importance of nuclear weapons – the weapon of reprisal – as the great balancer of chances," Rogozin said.

The comment came in reply to reports about the United States' Conventional Prompt Global Strike (PGS) strategy. Back then, Rogozin promised Russian lawmakers that the Fund of Perspective Researches (FPI) will develop a plan of military response to the PGS strategy, but refused to disclose any details or deadlines.

<http://rt.com/politics/213111-russia-nuclear-preemptive-strike/>

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Longview News-Journal.com - Longview, TX

U.S. Officials Detail Iran's Concessions in Nuke Talks

Associated Press (AP)

Friday, December 5, 2014

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Obama administration is telling members of Congress it has won significant concessions from Iran for extending nuclear talks, including promises by the Islamic republic to allow snap inspections of its facilities and to neutralize much of its remaining uranium stockpile.



Those terms are included in a document that U.S. officials say represents the terms for a seven-month extension in nuclear negotiations between world powers and Iran, agreed to when the last deadline of Nov. 24 passed without an accord. A copy was obtained by The Associated Press.

The authenticity of the document was confirmed by three U.S. officials and congressional aides familiar with closed-doors discussions in recent days that have included top U.S. nuclear negotiator Wendy Sherman and Jake Sullivan, formerly Vice President Joe Biden's national security adviser. The officials have been presenting the Iranian concessions to lawmakers in the hopes of convincing them to support the extension and hold off on new economic sanctions that could derail the diplomatic effort.

There is no proof Tehran has agreed to or will follow through on the steps outlined, and negotiators representing world powers and Iran offered few specifics on their progress when they agreed to extend negotiations until July. No signed agreement emerged from that understanding, but administration officials say Iran accepted important limits on its nuclear program in the discussions last month.

The U.S. says Iran will further limit its development of new technology for enriching uranium that could be used for energy generation, as Tehran says is its objective, or for use in a nuclear warhead, which Washington and its international partners fear may be Iran's ultimate intent. It also seems to patch up what critics of last year's interim nuclear agreement described as loopholes on Iran's research and development of advanced centrifuges.

For one centrifuge model Iran has been working on, the U.S. says Tehran won't be able to pursue the industrial-scale operation needed for any "breakout" effort toward producing enough material for a nuclear weapon. For other models in the pipeline, Iran won't be permitted to feed the centrifuges with uranium gas or begin testing on a cascade level, which are needed steps in their development.

Iran also has agreed to turn 35 kilograms of higher-enriched uranium oxide stocks into fuel, making it unusable in the event Iran tries to secretly reach nuclear weapons capacity. That amounts for almost half of Iran's remaining stockpile of material that could in theory be converted into a form that is close to weapons-grade uranium.

In addition, the administration says Iran will grant international inspectors expanded access to its centrifuge production facilities, allowing the U.N. nuclear agency to double the amount of visits it makes to sites and to undertake unannounced or "snap" inspections.

The monitoring aims to deter Iran from producing centrifuges for any covert facility.

Lastly, Iran will refrain from any other forms of enrichment, including through the use of laser technology.

http://www.news-journal.com/news/nation/u-s-officials-detail-iran-s-concessions-in-nuke-talks/article_c6283310-55e9-5400-8e63-06726db55644.html

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Tasnim News Agency – Tehran, Iran

No Halt to Iran's Enrichment R&D: Source

December 06, 2014

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – A source close to Iran's team of nuclear negotiators rejected reports that the country might refrain from testing new models of centrifuge machines used to enrich uranium, stressing that research and development activities in the enrichment field are firmly in place in Iran.

"The process of research and development in (uranium) enrichment (activities) is underway routinely and normally in the Atomic Energy Organization (of Iran)," the source said on Saturday, dismissing as "untrue" the reports on a halt to the testing of new centrifuges.

Back on Thursday, Reuters cited US experts with knowledge of the nuclear talks between Tehran and six world powers as saying that Iran will refrain from testing new centrifuges under an extended nuclear agreement with the Group 5+1 (Russia, China, the US, Britain, France and Germany).

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In November and after a week of intensive negotiations in Vienna, diplomats from Iran and the six nations decided to extend talks on Tehran's peaceful nuclear program for more seven months in the hope of clinching a final deal that would end a decade of impasse over Tehran's peaceful nuclear energy program.

Elsewhere, the Iranian source noted that inspection of the country's nuclear facilities is exclusively within the purview of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

"The frequency and type of inspections of our country's nuclear activities is a subject that, like the past, is coordinated between Iran and the Agency, and the other parties have no role in that issue," the source explained, adding that inspections are being carried out by the UN watchdog in a normal manner as in the past.

The source also made it clear that Iran will continue turning uranium oxide into nuclear fuel plates as scheduled, saying the rate of conversion will decline in the coming months.

"Conversion of the (uranium) oxide into fuel plates takes place according to the plans previously devised by our country's Atomic Energy Organization (AEOI), and its amount will even drop in the coming months compared to the previous months."

<http://www.tasnimnews.com/English/Home/Single/580473>

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Xinhua News – Beijing, China

Iran Denies Concessions on Snap Inspection of Nuclear Establishments

(Xinhua)

December 07, 2014

TEHRAN, Dec. 6 (Xinhua) -- A senior Iranian nuclear official dismissed on Saturday the recent reports that Iran has agreed to allow snap inspection of the country's nuclear facilities, Press TV reported.

"The IAEA's inspections of Iran's peaceful nuclear program will be carried out on a monthly basis, just like before," Behrouz Kamalvandi, spokesman of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, was quoted as saying.

"The extent and type of inspections of Iran's nuclear activities, during the seven-month period of nuclear talks extension, will continue on its regular basis," Kamalvandi said.

Recent western media reports that Iran has made "significant concessions" in recent nuclear talks "including promises by the Islamic republic to allow snap inspections of its facilities and to neutralize much of its remaining uranium stockpile."

In the meantime, a source close to Iran's team of nuclear negotiators denied on Saturday some reports saying that the country might refrain from testing new models of centrifuge machines used to enrich uranium, stressing that research and development activities in the enrichment field are firmly in place in Iran, according to Tasnim news agency.

"The process of research and development in (uranium) enrichment is underway routinely and normally in the Atomic Energy Organization (of Iran)," the source was quoted as saying.

On Thursday, western media also reported that Iran would refrain from testing new centrifuges under an extended nuclear deadline agreement with the P5+1 group (China, the United States, France, Britain, Russia plus Germany) reached in November.

Iran's top nuclear negotiator, Abbas Araqchi, said on Thursday that the ground was prepared for a final deal with world powers over Tehran's nuclear issue.

Earlier on Nov. 24, foreign ministers from the Islamic republic and the P5+1 group agreed to extend the deadline for another seven months, after they failed to meet the initial Nov. 24 deadline for a comprehensive deal over Iran's nuclear program.

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Under the agreement, an interim deal reached on Nov. 24, 2013 will also be extended to June 30, 2015, with a fresh round of talks resuming in December.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2014-12/07/c_127282957.htm

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Al Arabiya News— Dubai, U.A.E.

Biden: ‘We Will Not Let Iran Acquire a Nuclear Weapon’

By Staff writer, *Al Arabiya News*

Sunday, 7 December 2014

U.S. Vice President Joe Biden sought to nullify all doubts on the United States’ commitment to Israeli security dismissing what he called the “malarkey” circulating about the nuclear deal with Iran.

“There’s absolutely no daylight, none, between us and the Israelis on the question of Israel’s security,” Biden said while speaking at the pro-Israel Saban Forum in Washington, Agence France-Presse reported.

“There’s been a lot of malarkey about our position on Iran. So let me state it absolutely clearly,” he said.

“We will not let Iran acquire a nuclear weapon, period, period. End of discussion. It will not happen on our watch.”

The global powers known as the P5+1 who are leading the efforts to stop Iran developing a nuclear weapon have extended their talks until June 30, after they failed to meet a November deadline for a deal.

“A diplomatic solution that puts significant and verifiable constraints on Iran’s nuclear program represents the best and most sustainable chance to ensure that America, Israel, the entire Middle East will never be menaced by a nuclear-armed Iran,” Biden insisted.

Israeli officials have been outspoken in their criticism of U.S.-led efforts to reach a deal to limit Iran’s suspect nuclear program, warning the administration of President Barack Obama is being fooled by the new, more moderate face of the Iranian leadership.

Additionally, tensions in relations escalated following failed efforts to try to reach an Israeli-Palestinian peace deal, amid private mud-slinging by both American and Israeli officials.

But Biden urged that such spats should not be allowed to overshadow relations.

“As friends we have an obligation to speak honestly with one another. To talk about, not avoid the tactical disagreements we have.”

“Let’s not make more of what are normal disagreements between friends than warrants,” Biden said.

And he insisted that “every aspect of” the Iran policy had been “discussed in detail” with Israel.

And he urged “please let’s keep whatever disagreements we have in perspective, because... they don’t go to the essence of who we are as Americans and who Israelis are.”

<http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2014/12/07/Biden-dismisses-malarkey-over-Iran-nuclear-talks.html>

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FARS News Agency – Tehran, Iran

Tuesday, December 09, 2014

Iran: Purchase of New Equipment for Arak Heavy Water Reactor Not against Geneva Deal

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TEHRAN (FNA) - Iran on Tuesday dismissed western media reports on violating the Geneva agreement inked with the world powers by purchasing new equipment for its heavy water reactor in the Central city of Arak.

"Buying equipment for Arak heavy water reactor is not against the Geneva agreement and what has been stated in the agreement includes not installing equipment, but it does not refer to their purchase," Spokesman of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Behrouz Kamalvandi told FNA on Tuesday.

Meantime, Kamalvandi underlined that he is not aware of any new purchases for Arak heavy water reactor, and said, "Even if there had been a purchase, that would not have been a wrong thing to do (as mentioned above)."

His remarks came after the online Foreign Policy magazine claimed in a report that the US had privately told a UN panel of experts monitoring sanctions that Iranian agents sought to obtain parts for the Arak heavy water nuclear complex but the report was downplayed by Washington.

"It's not breaking news that we are concerned about Iran's procurement activities," State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said.

She insisted instead that "Iran has kept all of their commitments" made as part of an interim deal reached in Geneva in November 2013.

The 10th and last round of negotiations between Iran and the six world powers was held in Vienna from November 18 to 24.

In July, Tehran and the six countries agreed to extend negotiations until November 24 after they failed to reach an agreement on a number of key issues.

After the last round of the Vienna talks, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and EU coordinator Catherine Ashton announced that the deadline for negotiations had been extended until July 10, and the world powers had taken up to release \$700 million of Iran's frozen assets on a monthly basis.

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930918000386>

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FARS News Agency – Tehran, Iran
Tuesday, December 09, 2014

AEOI Chief: Iran Not to Inject UF6 Gas into IR8 Centrifuges until End of N. Talks

TEHRAN (FNA) - Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Ali Akbar Salehi underlined Tehran's commitment to the contents of the Geneva agreement, and said the country will not inject UF6 gas into its newly-developed IR8 centrifuges any sooner than the end of its nuclear talks with the world powers.

"At present, we have the second generation of centrifuges and 1,000 of them have been installed and just a pilot 164-centrifuge cascade is in operation," Salehi told reporters in Tehran on Tuesday.

The pilot cascade of centrifuges that Salehi pointed to had been installed and started operation before the Geneva interim deal between Iran and the six world powers was struck.

Yet, he reminded that Iran has also developed IR4, IR6 and IR8 generations of more efficient centrifuges, and said, "But we haven't injected gas into IR8 centrifuges and we have voluntarily decided not to inject gas into these centrifuges; of course the mechanical tests are being carried out."

"And we do not intend to inject active UF6 gas into these centrifuges as long as the negotiations are underway," Salehi underlined.

Asked about the proposals made to Iran by the opposite parties in the talks for producing nuclear fuel outside the country, he said, "Had we wanted to produce fuel in another country, we would have done that already; but the

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point is that we have decided to carry out the entire process of fuel production cycle on the Islamic Republic's soil and do it in Iran."

Elsewhere, Salehi referred to the nuclear talks between Iran and the Group 5+1 (the US, Russia, China, Britain and France plus Germany), and said, "There is still a good chance for reaching the comprehensive nuclear agreement."

Salehi's remarks came after some western media reports claimed that Iran has injected gas into its new generation of centrifuge machines and violated the terms of the Geneva interim deal.

Meantime, some other western media reports had earlier this month claimed that Iran had stopped its R&D tests.

Iran has repeatedly stressed that it is committed to the contents of its agreement with the sextet. The interim agreement allows continued nuclear research and development, but demands that no new or more centrifuge machines be installed or come into operation at Iran's nuclear enrichment facilities.

In relevant remarks on Saturday, a source close to the Iranian team of nuclear negotiators rejected allegations about Iran's hold on testing new centrifuge machines, stressing that the country continues its Research and Development activities in the field, although that does not mean injecting gas into new centrifuge machines.

In comments made to FNA about the western media reports that Iran had stopped tests on the new generation of centrifuge machines, the source said, "This is not true at all and the trend of R&D on enrichment is moving along its natural track at the AEOL."

The source also said that producing fuel plates from uranium oxide is being carried out based on the AEOL's plans, but meantime mentioned that the amount of fuel production from uranium oxide will decrease in the coming months.

Salehi himself had also stressed in remarks on April 10 that Tehran would continue its nuclear research and development activities based on the November Geneva deal inked with the world powers.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran will not abandon its rights in accordance with the NPT, and will by no means breach its terms and conditions," he said.

"Iran will also in accordance with the Geneva agreement continue its activities in all nuclear research and development fields," Salehi added.

Also on April 9, Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei stressed Iran's determination to continue talks with the world powers, but meantime, underlined that the country won't halt its nuclear research and development programs.

"(Iran's) Agreement with the negotiations was aimed at breaking the hostile atmosphere created by the arrogance front against Iran and these negotiations should continue, but everyone should know that the Islamic Republic of Iran's activities in the field of nuclear research and development will not stop at all and none of the nuclear achievements can be closed while relations between the IAEA and Iran should stay conventional and should not grow extraordinary," Ayatollah Khamenei said, addressing directors and experts of the AEOL in a meeting held in Tehran to mark the National Day of the Nuclear Technology.

"Negotiations don't mean that the Islamic Republic of Iran will withdraw from its scientific nuclear move and the Iranian negotiators should insist on continued nuclear research and development (in their talks with the world powers)," he added.

"None of Iran's nuclear achievements can be shut down and no one has the right to make a deal over them and no one will do so," the Leader said, calling on the AEOL experts and officials to continue their progress seriously and powerfully.

Elsewhere, he rejected the western claims that their differences with Iran and sanctions against the country were just rooted in Tehran's nuclear activities, and said if no nuclear issue existed, they would raise other excuses as

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now, during the course of the negotiations, the Americans raise human rights issues as an excuse and if the human rights issue is settled, they will seek other excuses."

He underscored the necessity for continued talks with the world powers, but just over the nuclear issue, and said Iran knows that the West is just seeking excuses for its animosity towards the Islamic Republic, but it continues the talks in a bid to show the world its goodwill and also disclosed the reality of the West's unreal allegations against Iran's nuclear activities.

Yet, the Leader stressed that "our negotiators shouldn't accept any bullying words from the other side".

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13930918000760>

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Tasnim News Agency – Tehran, Iran

Iran to Achieve Its Objectives in Nuclear Talks: President Rouhani

December 11, 2014

TEHRAN (Tasnim) – Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said Tehran will reach its objectives in the nuclear talks with world powers despite difficulties.

"Our path in the (nuclear) talks is difficult because one cannot trust the enemies of the nation," the president said Wednesday, adding, however, that "in this path, which is full of twists and turns, we will accomplish our objectives with intensified efforts".

"We will move within the framework of the Establishment's principles and will not abandon this path," Rouhani stressed.

He also said that Western countries have come to the negotiation table out of desperation.

Iran and the Group 5+1 (Russia, China, the US, Britain, France and Germany) have held several rounds of talks to hammer out a final deal to end a decade of impasse over Tehran's civilian nuclear work.

They wrapped up seven days of intensive nuclear talks in Vienna on November 24 without securing a long-awaited comprehensive deal.

They decided to extend talks on Tehran's civilian nuclear program for seven more months.

On November 24, 2013, Iran and the G5+1 (alternatively known as the P5+1 or E3+3) signed an interim nuclear deal in the Swiss city of Geneva.

Based on the Geneva deal (the Joint Plan of Action), which came into effect in January, the six nations agreed to provide Iran with some sanctions relief in exchange for Tehran agreeing to limit certain aspects of its nuclear activities during a limited period.

The agreement expired in July, when the parties decided to extend negotiations until November 24 in the hope of clinching a final deal.

<http://www.tasnimnews.com/English/Home/Single/585215>

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Press TV – Tehran, Iran

Final Nuclear Deal Possible if Iran Bans Removed: IAEA Envoy

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Iran's envoy to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) says a "lasting" solution to Tehran's nuclear issue can be found if all the sanctions imposed on the Islamic Republic are removed.



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Speaking on the sidelines of a Thursday meeting of the IAEA Board of Governors, Reza Najafi said Tehran and the P5+1 states will fail to reach a “lasting” nuclear deal if UN Security Council sanctions as well as those unilaterally or multilaterally imposed against Tehran over its peaceful nuclear program remain in place.

Najafi also emphasized Iran’s commitment to the interim deal it signed with the six states – Russia, China, France, Britain, the US and Germany – in the Swiss city of Geneva last November, describing the accord as a “good opportunity” to end the “unnecessary crisis” over Tehran’s civilian nuclear work.

He hailed the progress in the ongoing nuclear discussions between Tehran and its negotiating partners and said, “Any comprehensive and long-term solution must enable Iran to implement its inherent and indivisible rights within the framework of the NPT (Non-Proliferation Treaty).”

“A final deal will be possible only if all [negotiating] sides respect mutual rights and responsibilities and enter the final stage of the [nuclear] negotiations with goodwill,” added the Iranian official.

Iran and the six powers are working to reach a final deal aimed at putting an end to the 12-year-old dispute over Tehran’s nuclear issue.

On November 24, Iran and the P5+1 group missed a second deadline to strike a final nuclear deal. They agreed to give themselves seven more months until June 30, 2015, so that they could resolve their differences and clinch a historic permanent accord.

Sources close to the Iranian negotiating team say the main stumbling block in the way of resolving the dispute over Iran’s nuclear energy program remains to be the removal of all the bans imposed on the country, and not the number of Iran’s centrifuges or the level of uranium enrichment.

Tehran wants the sanctions entirely lifted while Washington, under pressure from the pro-Israeli lobby, insists that at least the UN-imposed sanctions should remain in place.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2014/12/11/389797/ndeal-possible-if-iran-bans-lifted/>

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Reuters.com – U.S. Edition

U.N. Nuclear Watchdog Dismisses Iranian Offer of Site Access

Thursday, December 11, 2014

VIENNA (Reuters) - The U.N. atomic watchdog dismissed on Thursday an Iranian offer of access to a region where explosives experiments of possible use in nuclear weapons development may have taken place, saying this did not address its concerns.

Iran told a board meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency last month it would let IAEA inspectors visit the western Marivan area to prove that suspicions it had carried out atomic bomb research were wrong and baseless.

However, the IAEA's main priority for its long-stalled investigation into Iran's nuclear program has been to go to another location, the Parchin military base southeast of Tehran, where the Vienna-based agency says other nuclear-related explosives tests may have been conducted, perhaps a decade ago.

Then Islamic Republic has so far refused access to Parchin, saying it is a conventional military facility.

The IAEA has raised with Iran the U.N. agency's "specific concerns related to the issue of large-scale high-explosive experiments over the past three years", IAEA Communications Director Serge Gas said in an email.

However, the IAEA has "explained clearly to Iran – on more than one occasion – that an offer of a visit of Marivan does not help address specific concerns related to the issue of large-scale high explosive experiments," he said, without elaborating.

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Western officials say Iran must step up cooperation with the IAEA's inquiry into allegations that it has worked on designing a nuclear bomb to help foster a wider diplomatic deal which Tehran and six world powers are aiming to reach by mid-2015.

At last month's IAEA board meeting, Iran's envoy said suspicions of illicit nuclear related activity were based on "wrong and fabricated" information provided by a few member states, an apparent reference to Israel and the United States.

To prove them wrong, Ambassador Reza Najafi said Iran would be ready to give the IAEA "one managed access" to Marivan, a region mentioned in an IAEA report in 2011 on suspected activities that could be relevant for developing nuclear bombs.

Najafi repeated the offer on Thursday. "We want to show that the claims are baseless," he told reporters. "We are waiting to provide such access."

The 2011 report cited information from one member state - not identified - as indicating that major high-explosives tests were conducted in Marivan a decade ago.

Reporting by Fredrik Dahl; Editing by Mark Heinrich

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/11/us-iran-nuclear-iaea-access-idUSKBN0JP1RM20141211>

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Arutz Sheva – Beit El, West Bank

Iran Talks with World Powers to Resume Next Week

Iran will resume negotiations with world powers in Geneva next week, says deputy foreign minister Abbas Araqchi.

By Ben Ariel

12 December 2014

Iran will resume negotiations with world powers in Geneva next week aimed at reaching a deal over Tehran's controversial nuclear program, its deputy foreign minister said Thursday, according to *AFP*.

Top-level talks will begin on Wednesday, December 17, with meetings at the deputy minister level taking place two days earlier, state news agency *IRNA* quoted Abbas Araqchi as saying.

Despite making progress, the two sides failed to clinch a definitive deal by a November deadline and agreed to extend the talks for another seven months.

A final agreement is aimed at ensuring Tehran will never develop nuclear weapons under the guise of its civilian activities, and would lift international sanctions that have crippled Iran's economy.

Iran denies that it is seeking the bomb and insists its nuclear activities are for solely peaceful purposes.

In their second extension this year, Iran and the five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany, known as the P5+1, will seek to strike an outline deal by March and to nail down a full technical accord by July.

Diplomats say both sides remain far apart on two crucial points -- uranium enrichment and sanctions relief.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani recently hailed the extension of talks as a victory for his country, saying, "Our nation has emerged victorious and will be victorious. We have neither compromised over Iran's nuclear rights, nor will ever do so, and there is no doubt that the Iranian nuclear technology will remain functioning."

Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, also welcomed the extended nuclear talks with world powers, saying that if talks ultimately fail, "the sky won't fall to the ground".

http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/188561#.VIsQC_4cTxh

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The State.com – Columbia, SC

India's Weapons Plans Raise Specter of Nuclear Arms Race in Asia

By Tom Hussain, McClatchy Foreign Staff

December 8, 2014

ISLAMABAD — India has embarked on a series of crucial weapons-systems tests that will result in the first deployment by air, sea and land of nuclear weapons by rival powers in Asia, in 2016.

The creation of what military planners call a nuclear theater in South Asia would pit India against neighboring foes China and Pakistan, nations with which India has fought a total of seven wars since 1947. The region comprises a population of 2.8 billion, nearly 39 percent of the world's people, according to 2014 estimates by the U.S. Census Bureau.

India fought a 1962 war with China and has had six conflicts with Pakistan since attaining independence in 1947, mostly territorial disputes left unresolved by departing British colonial rulers.

The strategic game change in South Asia comes as India perfects its ability to hit targets anywhere in China with nuclear-tipped intercontinental ballistic missiles and establishes an ability to launch nuclear missiles from submarines.

The completion of India's air-, land- and sea-based nuclear weapon triumvirate would place it on rough strategic par with China, its major rival for power in South Asia and Pakistan's key ally.

"The reality of an arms race in South Asia is quite evident. For most Indian decision-makers, it is the China factor that remains the most important issue. (New) Delhi also fears a China-Pakistan axis, and so it feels the needs to be prepared for a 'two-front' war," said Harsh V. Pant, an Asia security expert and professor of international relations at King's College London, a British university.

China possesses about 250 nuclear weapons and Pakistan has up to 120, compared with India's 110, according to a report published Nov. 23 by the Council on Foreign Relations, a U.S. research organization. Only the United States and Russia possess more.

The series of strategic events in South Asia started last Tuesday with the Indian military's first successful test of the 2,500-mile-range Agni-IV, the first Indian ballistic missile capable of delivering nuclear or conventional warheads deep into Chinese territory. It's scheduled to be deployed by India's strategic forces command in late 2015.

Later in December, India's strategic weapons trailblazer, the Defense Research and Development Organization, is scheduled to test the road-mobile delivery platform of its first true intercontinental ballistic missile, the Agni-V. With a range of up to 3,400 miles, it would extend India's strategic reach to the rest of China when pressed into service in 2016.

The achievement of that key objective of India's land-based strategic weapons program would be accompanied in 2016 by the Indian navy's deployment of its first nuclear weapons-carrying submarine.

Soon to begin sea trials, the Arihant is the first of three home-built Indian subs that would each carry either four or 12 missiles with a 2,200-mile or 440-mile range, respectively, strongly suggesting a choice of mission between targets in China or Pakistan.

The likely deployment of India's first nuclear-armed submarine prompted China to dispatch its submarines on a tour of the Indian Ocean for the first time this year. Provocatively, the two conventionally armed submarines called at a Chinese-operated port in Sri Lanka, off the southern tip of India.

"With China spreading its wings in the Indian Ocean . . . nuclear submarines are considered critical by India to attain a credible second-strike posture vis-à-vis China. The real story here is the growing China-India distrust and how that has impacted the defense acquisitions in South Asia," Pant said.

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The strategic stakes in the Indian Ocean would be raised further if China were to agree to sell Pakistan the technology to build Chinese-designed nuclear-armed submarines.

China has added three of five Jin-class nuclear-armed submarines to its arsenal since 2010, each carrying a dozen ballistic missiles with a range of 2,900 miles, according to the U.S. Office of Naval Intelligence. It hasn't yet conducted any operational patrols with the subs, according to the Council on Foreign Relations report.

Pakistani defense analysts said Pakistan was pursuing a deal for three nuclear submarines. The first would be built in China, and the other two at a Pakistani naval dockyard in Karachi.

However, there's been no official comment from Pakistan or China since news of the proposed deal first surfaced in the Pakistani media in 2013.

Since 2011, India and Pakistan have proved their ability to strike targets up to 1,300 miles away, the equivalent of anywhere on each other's territory. China's Cold War-origin program has included missiles with a range equivalent to India's Agni-V since 1980.

Pakistan's strategic weapons program is exclusively India-focused, and that goal has restrained it from testing ballistic missiles of a range equal to India's advanced Agni models.

Instead, it's focused on developing the variety of its nuclear forces, which notably include short-range missiles capable of delivering so-called tactical nuclear warheads to deter an Indian military occupation of Pakistani territory.

In terms of fissile-material production, Pakistan's nuclear weapons program is the world's fastest growing and could number 200 devices by 2020, the Council on Foreign Relations report said.

One concern analysts raise is that the expansion of strategic forces in South Asia – specifically India's development of a submarine-based platform and Pakistan's deployment of tactical nuclear warheads on short-range missiles – will lead both nations to end their practice of storing nuclear weapons away from their launchers. Such "decoupling" increases the time required to activate and launch nuclear-tipped weapons, providing a significant barrier to escalation.

"The short flight times of ballistic missiles between India and Pakistan exacerbate these tensions by sharply reducing decision-making timelines for government officials during a crisis," the Council on Foreign Relations report said.

http://www.thestate.com/2014/12/08/3861766_indias-weapons-plans-raise-specter.html?rh=1

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Bloomberg News.com – New York, NY

Putin Ready to Lease Nuclear Submarines to India, Minister Says

By Natalie Obiko Pearson and Anurag Kotoky

December 12, 2014

Russia said it's ready to lease India more nuclear-powered submarines a day after President Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister Narendra Modi pledged to deepen defense ties.

"If India decides to have more contracts to lease nuclear submarines, we are ready to supply," Russian trade minister Denis Manturov said in an interview in New Delhi today.

The vessels would bolster India's ability to patrol its waters as it seeks to thwart China's efforts to extend influence in the Indian Ocean. Russia, whose economy is being pushed toward a recession by sanctions over Ukraine, aims to boost defense sales and deepen its ties to friendlier nations in Asia.



“Russia will remain our most important defense partner,” Modi said yesterday after welcoming Putin to the capital. They discussed a “broad range of new defense projects,” including plans to make one of Russia’s most advanced helicopters in India, he said.

India inducted its first nuclear attack submarine from Russia for \$1 billion in 2012 under a 10-year contract, which can carry out longer missions and respond faster to threats. It’s fleet of 14 diesel-power submarines are more than a decade old, with half of them commissioned in the 1980s.

“Nuclear-powered submarines have assumed far greater significance and changed the complexion of maritime warfare,” then-Defence Minister A.K. Antony said the induction ceremony.

China Fleet

India is seeking to build up its naval defenses amid growing maritime tensions with China. It sent a nuclear submarine to the Indian Ocean in December for a two-month anti-piracy patrol. The waters are home to shipping lanes carrying about 80 percent of the world’s seaborne oil.

China has at least 52 submarines in its fleet, including three nuclear-missile vessels and three operating on nuclear power, the U.S. Congressional Research Service said in July, citing Jane’s Fighting Ships 2013-2014 and previous editions.

India has also yet to build a single submarine of the 24 it’d planned starting in 1999, Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar told parliament today. Mishaps are also common: an explosion in August 2013 on a diesel-powered submarine, just months after the vessel returned from a \$133 million refit at a Russian shipyard, was the worst-ever disaster for India’s submarine program.

Putin this week pledged to supply oil, weapons and nuclear power reactors to India. Modi, in turn, reassured the Russian leader that India opposes sanctions and asked Putin to build factories in the country to supply spare parts and components for Russian military equipment.

Russia will have to quadruple its current investments of \$3.7 billion in India for the two countries to meet their bilateral trade target of \$30 billion by 2025, Manturov said. Reaching that target will mean India breaking into Russia’s top five trading partners, up from the current rank of 21, he said.

The two nations said they recognized “the virtually unlimited opportunities for enhancing” their defense cooperation, including joint manufacturing and technology sharing, according to a joint statement yesterday. India allows foreign direct investment in the defense sector of up to 49 percent.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-12-12/putin-ready-to-lease-nuclear-submarines-to-india-minister-says.html>

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Lexington Institute.org – Arlington, VA
OPINION/Early Warning Blob

DoD’s Sophie’s Choice Moment: Choosing between Strategic and Conventional Forces

By Daniel Gouré, Ph.D.
December 5, 2014

How does a parent choose which one of her two children to sacrifice in order that the other will live? This is the choice that confronts Sophie in William Styron’s eponymous novel. If this seems like a dilemma fit only for novels and not real life, not true. It is a choice that confronts the Department of Defense and, more broadly, the United States today. Simply put, under projected defense budgets the Pentagon will not be able to maintain both adequate strategic forces and conventional capabilities. One will have to be sacrificed to preserve the other.

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According to the Congressional Budget Office, the estimated cost to maintain the current nuclear TRIAD and supporting military infrastructure will be about \$21 billion a year through 2023. For the same period, the cost of maintaining all conventional forces will be approximately \$500 billion a year. According to the kind of math that even I can do, this means that the price for deterrence of strategic attacks on the U.S. homeland or that of our allies is less than 4 percent of total projected defense spending.

Unfortunately, the reality is that \$21 billion a year is woefully inadequate to maintain the current force. At this level of funding, weapons systems are aging severely, the infrastructure is decaying, skills are atrophying and the industrial and scientific/technical base needed to maintain the force is vanishing. How many scandals and crises do elements of the strategic force need to experience before it becomes clear that we have not adequately resourced one of the two pillars of our national security? You would think that losing both its Chief of Staff and Service Secretary to a major nuclear weapons safety incident would ensure that the Air Force paid attention to this part of its responsibilities. Now we have another scandal in the missile force followed by new promises of attention and resources.

The current efforts by U.S. Strategic Command and the Air Force to fix glaring deficiencies in the land-based leg of the TRIAD are, with all due respect, akin to putting a band-aid on a sucking chest wound. Every leg of the TRIAD will require not just modernization but replacement over the next two to three decades. The replacement of the Ohio-class SSBNs, scheduled to begin in 2021, will cost, at a minimum, around \$70 billion just for the submarines. The Air Force is hoping to develop a new long-range bomber at \$550 million a copy for between 80 and 100 platforms. The intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) force can last possibly until 2030, after which a new missile will be required.

Weapons and warheads need to be modernized or refurbished. These include the centerpiece of U.S. theater nuclear capabilities, the B61 gravity bomb. There are reports that the air-launched cruise missile will have to be replaced by a new long-range cruise missile by the middle of the next decade.

Right now, all of these strategic force programs are in direct competition with the Services' array of programs for conventional weapons and platforms. At present, the Ohio replacement program directly competes with all other ships for money in the Navy's shipbuilding and conversion budget. Each of the Services is desperately trying to sequence their major acquisition programs in a way to reduce the friction between conventional and strategic portions. They had some hopes of accomplishing this goal until the Budget Control Act and sequestration hit.

The reality is that given current defense budget projections, particularly if sequestration takes effect but possibly even if it is staved off, will make it impossible for DoD to both maintain a safe, secure and credible nuclear deterrent and organize, train and equip an adequate conventional force. The department will have to choose between its two children. You can already see signs of the two cherubs being weighed on the scales and questions being raised about the need to certify as nuclear capable the new long-range bomber and the feasibility of eliminating one leg (usually the ICBMs) of the TRIAD.

We stopped seriously investing in our strategic forces, including the personnel, when the Cold War ended. Perhaps even more serious, we stopped thinking about topics related to them such as the nature of deterrence, the credibility of nuclear threats and guarantees in a changing world, the implications of operating in a world with more and not fewer, nuclear powers, escalation control and the relationship between conventional, strategic, space and cyber deterrence and operations. The adequacy of our intelligence on strategic issues also has declined. We know virtually nothing about North Korean or Iranian thoughts on any of these subjects. The costs involved in recovering lost analytic and intelligence skills and capabilities will be measured more in time than in money. But they will still be significant.

In this context, the greatest threat to the future of the U.S. strategic deterrent is not Russia or China, nor even arms controllers still intent on pursuing the chimera of global zero. The greatest threat is the armed services themselves. And why not? Who wouldn't want weapons platforms and systems you can actually employ rather than those whose only responsibility is to pose such a threat that their use is never required?

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<http://www.lexingtoninstitute.org/dods-sophies-choice-moment-choosing-between-strategic-and-conventional-forces/>

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Roll Call.com – Washington, D.C.

OPINION/Commentary

Ashton Carter, North Korea and Missile Defense

By Travis Korson

December 10, 2014

Ashton Carter, the nominee to serve as the next secretary of Defense, recently generated headlines for his past suggestions on how to deal with North Korean missile threats.

Carter, along with Clinton-era Defense Secretary William Perry called for a surgical strike on North Korea in a 2006 op-ed to mitigate their missile threat. The merits of a pre-emptive strike versus other means of countering the North Korean missile proliferation are issues that are debated to this day. However, the rationale behind their recommendation — that North Korea is a threat to Americans at home and overseas that should be taken seriously — is not.

Airborne threats to the American homeland and our troops overseas continue to grow in the Asia-Pacific region. Intelligence estimates indicate that the North Korean government may already have nuclear-capable ballistic missiles with a range of up to 6,200 miles, enough to hit Alaska, Hawaii and parts of the western continental United States.

While Carter, in previous policy statements, called for strikes to counter the North Korean missile program, he overlooks a much less controversial way to mitigate airborne threats from the Hermit Kingdom — missile defense. Instead of risking American lives at home and abroad and sparking armed combat, the United States military can employ systems such as Ground-based Midcourse Defense (GMD), the Army Navy/Transportable Radar Surveillance (TPY-2) radar, Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD), and the Patriot Missile, among others, to diminish these growing threats.

One of the most effective ways to mute North Korean nuclear ICBM saber rattling is through employing GMD, the only protection against long-range ballistic missile attacks on the American homeland.

As North Korea continues to develop missiles with greater range and accuracy, it is crucial we expand our ability to protect against these threats. Necessary steps include: adding an additional 14 interceptors at the two West Coast sites and funding improvements to the current kill vehicle while simultaneously researching the next-generation common kill vehicle.

Congress should see that the \$700 million the Missile Defense Agency wants to commit to improving the current kill vehicle over the next five years is appropriated and the additional interceptors are constructed.

American territories in the Asia-Pacific region, such as Guam which is home to both a strategic U.S. Navy and Air Force base, are also increasingly under threat from North Korean missiles. Last year, when it appeared a North Korean missile with a range of reaching Guam would be test launched, a THAAD launcher, paired with an AN/TPY-2 radar, was rushed to territory to counter the imminent threat.

Unfortunately, the military does not currently have an adequate number of these systems in its arsenal to protect against all of the missile threats that currently exist. Only 12 of the 18 TPY-2 radars military planners deemed necessary to adequately protect the homeland have been funded and military commanders are currently

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requesting a seventh THAAD battery to successfully counter the increase of short- and medium-range ballistic missile threats. Congress should fully fund combatant commanders' requests for both systems.

Travis Korson is the Manager of Public Information at the Center for Security Policy in Washington, D.C..

http://www.rollcall.com/news/ashton_carter_north_korea_and_missile_defense_commentary-238564-1.html

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Investor's Business Daily (IBD).com – Los Angeles, CA
OPINION/Editorial

Congress Mandates Report On Russian Treaty Violations

December 11, 2014

National Security: It won't generate the buzz that torture allegations do, but a provision in the defense spending bill requires the White House to explain why Russia developed a cruise missile in breach of a 1987 treaty.

President Ronald Reagan coined the phrase "trust but verify" regarding dealing with the Russians for good reason.

American security was to be guaranteed through the strength of our will and the genius of our technology, not through pieces of parchment, handshakes, clinking glasses at conferences, or reset buttons.

Enter President Obama and the age of flexibility, back-stabbing our allies on things like missile defense and letting Russia pretty much do whatever Vladimir Putin wanted, such as moving to reassemble the old Soviet Union, Reagan's evil empire, as Russia rearmed.

As we noted in June 2013, shortly after Obama's re-election, Russia was testing and about to deploy the R500 cruise missile with a range that violated the 1987 Intermediate Nuclear Force (INF) treaty's prohibition against the U.S. — and was developing, testing or possessing ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges of 500 to 5,500 kilometers, or 300 to 3,400 miles.

The R500 weapon system, known also as the Iskander-K variant, has a range of more than 1,000 kilometers and uses the same road-mobile carrier vehicle and control system as the Iskander-M, but is armed with a turbojet-powered cruise missile.

Now Congress wants the Obama administration to explain the violation and how it was allowed to happen, inserting a provision in the House-Senate defense authorization bill last week requiring the Obama administration to produce a report on the violation within 90 days of the bill becoming law.

The report is to include an assessment of the violation and its impact on U.S. and NATO security and any actions taken or planned by the Obama administration to deal with the violation.

The report, according to the bill, should include "an assessment of whether Russian noncompliance threatens the viability of the INF treaty, whether such noncompliance constitutes a material breach of the treaty, and whether it is in the interests of the United States to remain a party of the INF treaty if such noncompliance continues."

In July, a State Department that was dragging its feet in producing an annual report on Russian arms treaty compliance conceded that "the Russian Federation is in violation of its obligations under the INF treaty not to possess, produce or flight-test a ground launched cruise missile (GLCM) with a range capability of 500 kilometers to 5,500 kilometers or to possess or produce launchers of such missiles."

Gen. Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, wrote a letter in October to the Senate Armed Services Committee describing the INF violation as "a serious challenge to the security of the United States and our allies."

Indeed it is, and as Dempsey also noted in the letter, "These actions, particularly when placed in the context of Russian regional aggression, must be met with a strategic response."



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So far the only thing it has been met with is a "strongly worded" note from Obama to Putin, sent in July. In the letter to Putin, as reported by the New York Times, written with all the outrage he could muster, Obama expressed his desire for a high-level dialogue with Moscow with the aim of preserving the 1987 treaty and discussing steps the Kremlin might take to come back into compliance.

As we previously asked, what would Reagan do today?

He would resume missile defense plans in Eastern Europe. He would supply Ukraine with all the defensive weaponry and communications gear it's been begging us for.

And he would legalize oil and natural gas exports to eliminate Europe's dependence on Russia for energy supplies.

His strategy and response would be, "We win. They lose."

<http://news.investors.com/ibd-editorials/121014-730001-russia-violates-1987-missile-treaty.htm>

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The National Interest.org – Washington, D.C.

OPINION/Feature

The U.S. Air Force's 5 Most Lethal Weapons of War

America's air force from the F-22 to ICBM's is unmatched. Here is five reasons why.

Dave Majumdar

December 11, 2014

The U.S. Air Force is by far the most capable air arm on the planet. In addition to proper training and rigorous doctrine, the Air Force needs modern weapons to keep ahead of potential competitors. Over the past decade, America's lead in the air has started to erode as Russia has slowly been recovering from the collapse of the Soviet Union and China has begun to remerge as a superpower. Nonetheless, these following five systems are the backbone of the U.S. Air Force and should continue to hold the advantage for some time to come if ever the unthinkable occurred:

Boeing LGM-30G "Minuteman III" Intercontinental Ballistic Missile

Though strategic nuclear deterrence has become less prominent since the end of the Cold War, the mission remains the single most important one for the Air Force. The backbone of America's nuclear deterrence remains the 1960s-vintage LGM-30G Minuteman III. Some 450 of these missiles form the land-based component of the so-called nuclear triad.

Over the years, the long-serving missile has been modified and upgraded with better guidance systems and new rocket motors. Though originally designed to be fitted with three multiple independent reentry vehicles each carrying a nuclear warhead, the current version of the missile carries only one 300-kiloton weapon. The United States plans to continue to upgrade that missile, but eventually will have to develop a new ICBM to replace the Minuteman. It's not a question of if, it's a question of when.

The readiness of the nuclear-missile force has come into question repeatedly over the past several years. A number of officers have been caught cheating in tests—and a number of senior officers have been dismissed as a result. All of that has cast a shadow over the entire force.

Northrop Grumman B-2 Spirit

The Air Force's tiny fleet of twenty Northrop Grumman B-2 Spirit stealth bombers is the only long-range penetrating strike asset in the service's arsenal. No other aircraft in the Air Force inventory has the range to take off from the continental United States and strike at targets on the other side of the globe inside highly contested airspace. The B-2 has an unrefueled range of around 6000 nautical miles, but that can be extended to around 10,000 with aerial refueling.

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Nor does any other warplane in the Air Force inventory have the ability to penetrate the kinds of dense air defenses against which the B-2 was designed to operate. The B-2 was designed to fly deep into the heart of the Soviet Union to deliver a payload of thermonuclear bombs in the event of a third world war. While the B-2 has never had occasion to fly that doomsday mission, those same capabilities allow the bomber to strike with near impunity against almost any target around the globe. Further, while fighters like the F-22 or F-35 are very stealthy against high-frequency fire control radars, a large flying-wing aircraft like the B-2 is also difficult to track using low frequency radars operating in the UHF and VHF bands.

The problem for the Air Force is that there were only twenty-one B-2s ordered before the first Bush administration terminated the program. Of those twenty-one jets, one has already been lost. Not only is the fleet tiny and in high demand, the bomber has sensitive coatings and is ridiculously expensive to maintain. To make matters worse, potential adversaries like Russia and China are learning to counter the B-2.

The Air Force has a follow-on bomber project called the Long Range Strike-Bomber in the works which is set to become operational in the mid-2020s. The service hopes to acquire between eighty and 100 of the new stealth bombers for a cost of \$550 million per jet, which is less than the B-2's near \$2 billion price tag.

Lockheed Martin F-22 Raptor

High flying and fast, the Lockheed Martin F-22 Raptor stealth fighter is arguably the best air superiority fighter in existence. In many ways, gaining and maintaining air superiority is the core mission for the service. Only with absolute control of the air and space can ground and sea surface elements maneuver unchallenged.

The F-22 is extremely stealthy and is fitted with advanced avionics. Further, it can cruise at supersonic speeds greater than Mach 1.8 at altitudes up to 60,000 ft for extended periods. When operating at lower speeds and altitudes, it has the ability to vector thrust from its engines—which gives it tremendous maneuverability. In short, the Raptor's combination of sheer speed, altitude, stealth and powerful sensors makes it a lethal killer.

The problem for the Air Force is that there are only 186 Raptors in its inventory—less than half of what it needs. Of those 186, only 120 are “combat coded”—which is Air Force speak for ready for war. There are only six operational Raptor squadrons, one operational training squadron and a handful of test and training assets at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada and Edwards Air Force Base in California. Those squadrons are also smaller than the typical Air Force fighter units. Raptor squadrons only have twenty-one jets and two attrition reserve planes. By contrast, a typical fighter squadron normally has twenty-four jets and two spares.

The Air Force is starting to investigate follow-ons to the Raptor with the F-X program.

Boeing F-15E Strike Eagle

The F-15E Strike Eagle is the long-range heavy hitter of the Air Force's fighter fleet. The Air Force has 213 of these dual-role fighters, which replaced the long-serving General Dynamic F-111 strike aircraft.

Unlike the air superiority-focused F-15C/D from which it was derived, the Strike Eagle is primarily a strike aircraft. It has far greater range and payload capacity than any other fighter in the Air Force inventory. But even with the added air-to-ground role, the F-15E remains a respectable fighter—especially in beyond-visual-range engagements.

The F-15E, like many aircraft in the Air Force's ageing inventory, will continue to serve well into the 2030s. The service is upgrading the jets with new Raytheon APG-82 active electronically scanned array radars and other modern hardware, but a number of pilots complained that foreign versions of the jet are far better equipped. Meanwhile, while the upgrades will keep the Strike Eagle relevant into the 2030s, the Air Force has no plans to replace the venerable jets.

Originally, the Air Force had hoped to replace the Strike Eagle with a version of the F-22 Raptor, but those plans died when then defense secretary Robert Gates cancelled that program. One senior Air Force official suggested that the service should extend the production of the future LRS-B stealth bomber to fill the gap—but said that was his personal opinion, rather than service policy.

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Boeing KC-135

While often overlooked, what makes the U.S. Air Force unique amongst the world's air forces is its ability to hit targets around the globe. The KC-135 aerial refueling tanker is what enables American air power to conduct its missions. That's not just for the Air Force; the Navy and Marine Corps' aviation assets are also dependent on the air arm's "big wing" tankers to carry out their missions.

The Eisenhower-era KC-135 is old, and it needs to be replaced urgently. The Air Force has made several abortive attempts to recapitalize part of the fleet over the past two decades. The current Boeing KC-46 tanker effort will replace a part of the massive KC-135 fleet. However, even with the addition of 179 KC-46 tankers by 2028, the bulk of the fleet will remain KC-135s. The Air Force hopes to conduct follow-on competitions to replace the remainder of the fleet eventually.

Dave Majumdar has been covering defense since 2004. He currently writes for the U.S. Naval Institute, Aviation Week and The Daily Beast, among others. Majumdar previously covered national security issues at Flight International, Defense News and C4ISR Journal. Majumdar studied Strategic Studies at the University of Calgary and is a student of naval history.

<http://nationalinterest.org/feature/the-us-air-forces-5-most-lethal-weapons-war-11836>

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Lnlnthetruestory.blogspot.com

OPINION/Blog

Thursday, December 11, 2014

Panel Calls for NNSA Move Back Under DOE

Governance Panel Calls for NNSA Move Back Under DOE

Weapons Complex Monitor

December 10, 2014

The Congressional Advisory Panel on the Governance of the Nuclear Security Enterprise is recommending not only a major overhaul for the National Nuclear Security Administration, but a recasting of how weapons complex contractors are compensated. The panel delivered its report, "A New Foundation for the Nuclear Enterprise," to Congress yesterday, revealing broad recommendations aimed at fixing what it called a "dysfunctional system" spoiled by "decades of neglect." The report isn't expected to be released publicly until later this week, but NS&D Monitor obtained a copy of the 186-page document. While it is often scathing in its critique of the failings of the agency's current governance structure, the panel recommended that the Department of Energy reabsorb the semi-autonomous agency rather than call for a shift toward more autonomy or a move to the Department of Defense. "The nuclear enterprise would be most effective in performing its missions if it were led by a knowledgeable, engaged Cabinet Secretary and if ownership of the mission were Departmentwide," the panel said.

More autonomy for the agency would "only further isolate" the agency from senior level leadership. As part of its recommendations, the panel called for a change to DOE's name, to the Department of Energy and Nuclear Security, and at least a six-year tenure for the director of the Office of Nuclear Security, which is what the panel proposes calling the agency in its new spot in DOE. "It is recommended that Congress place the responsibility and accountability for the mission squarely on the shoulders of a qualified Secretary, supported by a strong enterprise Director with unquestioned authority to execute nuclear enterprise missions consistent with the Secretary's policy direction," the panel said.

The panel also said that award fees paid to management and operating contractors across the weapons complex have "diverted substantial energy and resources from mission execution" and it recommended award fees be replaced by "market-based" fixed fees that "fairly compensate" M&O contractors as well as award-term extensions to motivate strong performance. "The panel found that an unintended consequence of the award fee structure is that it contributes significantly to detailed, transactional oversight. It has contributed to the growth of



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a government bureaucracy responsible to track fee. This, in turn, has induced the M&O organizations to grow a corresponding bureaucracy to provide the assessments that justify their award fees," the panel said.

<http://l1n1thetruestory.blogspot.com/2014/12/panel-calls-for-nnsa-move-back-under-doe.html?showComment=1418352372656>

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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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