



USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER
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MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

Issue No. 1076, 10 September 2013

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Press TV – Iran

Iran Stresses ‘Rigorous’ Nuclear Disarmament

Saturday, September 7, 2013

Iran’s deputy ambassador to the UN has stressed the importance of prioritizing global nuclear disarmament, saying the objective must be pursued rigorously.

Speaking at a UN General Assembly event to observe the International Day against Nuclear Tests, Gholam Hossein Dehqani called for a “balanced and non-discriminatory” approach to nuclear disarmament and the avoidance of any misinterpretation of international legal instruments such as the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in words and deeds.

“It must be acknowledged by all our efforts and initiatives that establishing a world free from the menace of nuclear weapons is achievable only through nuclear disarmament as the legal obligation and political and moral responsibility of all UN members,” said the Iranian envoy.

He added that all initiatives and efforts on nuclear disarmament will be fruitful and effective if the notion of disarmament is regarded by UN members as the ultimate goal of such bids.

“Any attempt to redirect attention from this major goal, by replacing nuclear disarmament with any other subordinate measures or objectives, in our view, does not help create a safer world,” the Iranian diplomat stated.

He described the NPT as a “solid foundation” in support of the peaceful use of nuclear energy and the cornerstone of international efforts to promote nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

He urged countries to pay heed to the noble goals of removing the risk and threat of using nuclear weapons, banning nuclear test explosions, establishing nuclear-weapons-free zones, reducing the number of nuclear warheads, and preventing terrorists from acquiring nuclear weapons or materials.

“However, it goes without saying that as long as a nuclear weapon exists, none of those goals are sustainable,” Dehqani pointed out.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2013/09/07/322533/iran-stresses-rigorous-nuclear-disarmament/>

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FARS News Agency – Iran

Saturday, September 07, 2013

US Deploys Nuclear Force before Syria Gassing Crisis

TEHRAN (FNA) - There is clear evidence that the US has moved and restructured major nuclear commands predicting both the nuclear confrontation with Russia over Syria and a possible mutiny within US forces, media said.

This was done before the Syrian gassing incident, evidence that a “retaliatory” missile attack on Syria was planned before there was anything to retaliate against.

“We have seen two nuclear bomber wings relocated and put directly under White House command. Over 2000 nuclear weapons have been illegally moved, stored now in an old submarine base,” the Islam Times.

One wing of B2 bombers has actually “gone missing”. No one knows where they are.

On Wednesday, a Senate panel voted to give US President Barack Obama the authority to use military force against Syria in response to an alleged use of chemical weapons.

The vote Wednesday was 10-7, with one senator voting present. The full Senate is expected to vote on the measure next week.

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The resolution would permit Obama to order a limited military mission against Syria, as long as it doesn't exceed 90 days and involves no American troops on the ground for combat operations.

The Democratic chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, Sen. Bob Menendez, and the panel's top Republican, Sen. Bob Corker, crafted the resolution.

Obama's request for speedy congressional backing of a military strike in Syria advanced in the Senate on Wednesday, hours after the president left open the possibility he would order retaliation for a deadly chemical weapons attack even if Congress withheld its approval.

The president was in Sweden after a day of diplomacy when the vote occurred. At a news conference earlier, he said, "I always preserve the right and responsibility to act on behalf of America's national security." In a challenge to lawmakers back home, he said Congress' credibility was on the line, not his own, despite saying a year ago that the use of chemical weapons would cross a "red line".

The vote marked the first time lawmakers have voted to authorize military action since the October 2002 votes giving President George W. Bush the authority to invade Iraq.

In recent days, the US, Israel and France have adopted the rhetoric of war against Syria over allegations that the Syrian government was behind a recent chemical attack near Damascus.

The call for military strike intensified after the militants operating inside Syria and the foreign-backed Syrian opposition claimed on August 21 that hundreds had been killed in a government chemical attack on militant strongholds in the Damascus suburbs of Ain Tarma, Zamalka and Jobar. The Syrian government has strongly denied the claim, accusing the militants of the attack.

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13920616001194>

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Tehran Times – Iran

U.S., EU See New Hope for Iran Nuclear Talks

Political Desk

Sunday, 08 September 2013

TEHRAN – The European Union and the U.S. are moving closer to resuming international talks with Iran on its nuclear program, buoyed by recent changes in Tehran's leadership, officials said on Friday, Reuters reported.

"We are ready to come very quickly to talks," said EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton, who has led negotiations with Iran in recent years to settle disputes over Tehran's nuclear program. "We really want to move now quickly to resolve this."

U.S. President Barack Obama said the election of centrist Hassan Rohani as Iran's president in June offers "the opportunity to demonstrate in acts and not just words that ... they do not pursue nuclear weapons."

French President Francois Hollande, who was in St. Petersburg with Obama for the Group of 20 summit, said "we want to believe in the statements of the new president" who has sounded more conciliatory than his predecessor.

Rohani confirmed Thursday that Iran's Foreign Ministry — led by Javad Zarif, a Western-educated diplomat — will direct nuclear talks with world powers.

At a meeting of the EU's 28 foreign ministers in Vilnius, Ashton said she called Zarif and agreed to meet with him later this month on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York.

Iran denies any interest in nuclear weapons, insisting that both uranium enrichment and nuclear reactors are meant for peaceful purposes, such as production of energy and medical and scientific research.

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Also Friday, the EU General Court said it would throw out penalties imposed on eight Iranian banks and businesses for their alleged ties to Iran's nuclear program, because there wasn't sufficient evidence to justify the sanctions imposed by the bloc.

The court said the sanctions will stay in place for at least two months pending any appeal. If an appeal is filed by an EU government, the sanctions would remain binding until a ruling.

But the court upheld sanctions on another Iranian bank because it continued to pay scholarships for the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran. It also upheld sanctions against the Germany-based EIHB, or European-Iranian trade bank, leaving its funds frozen.

Overall though, the United States was disappointed with the ruling.

At the same time, the U.S. is expanding Iran sanctions to target a network allegedly helping the government evade measures aimed at curbing oil exports.

The U.S. says the new sanctions target the network of Seyed Seyyedi, an Iranian businessman and director of Sima General Trading, as well as a network of companies based in the United Arab Emirates that Seyyedi allegedly controls. They also target National Iranian Oil Company representatives in Europe.

The EU is one of Iran's most important trading partners. Since 2010, however, the bloc has imposed asset freezes and travel bans on top of existing UN sanctions, targeting Iranian citizens and companies believed to be linked to the country's nuclear program. The EU then significantly escalated the nuclear-related sanctions by 2012 to include an oil-import embargo.

<http://tehrantimes.com/politics/110559-us-eu-see-new-hope-for-iran-nuclear-talks>

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The London Guardian – U.K.

Assad Tells Charlie Rose No Evidence He Is Responsible for Syria Chemical Attack

Syrian leader gives interview to PBS reporter, who says he suggested 'some kind of retaliation if a strike was made'

By Dominic Rushe in New York

Sunday, 8 September 2013

The Syrian president, Bashar Assad, has said there is no evidence he is responsible for the deadly gas attacks the US government claims left 1,429 people dead, including 426 children.

In an exclusive interview secured by Charlie Rose of PBS, Assad said: "There has been no evidence that I used chemical weapons against my own people."

Assad refused to confirm or deny that he had chemical weapons but said if he did, they were under "centralized control".

The interview will air in its entirety on PBS on Monday night, as president Barack Obama is due to sit down with six television networks for recorded interviews and press his case for a targeted attack on Syria.

Rose said Assad "does accept some of the responsibility" for the attack. He said: "I asked that very question: 'Do you feel any remorse?' He said, 'Of course I do,' but it did not come in a way that was sort of deeply felt inside. It was much more of a calm recitation of anybody who's a leader of a country would feel terrible about what's happened to its citizens."

Rose said Assad "suggested that there would be, among people that are aligned with him, some kind of retaliation if a strike was made". Assad, however, "would not even talk about the nature of the response".

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Rose said: "He had a message to the American people that it had not been a good experience for them to get involved in the Middle East in wars and conflicts ... that the results had not been good."

Later on Sunday, US secretary of state John Kerry was reported to have dismissed Assad's claim there is no evidence he used chemical weapons against his own people, saying "the evidence speaks for itself". The remark was reported by a US reporter attending a photo session in London, as Kerry prepared to meet the Palestinian president, Mahmoud Abbas, to discuss the resumption of Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

Earlier in the day, the White House asserted that "common sense" proved Assad's government was responsible for the chemical attacks in Syria as the US weighs military action. Chief of staff Denis McDonough told NBC's Meet The Press there was "no question in my mind" that Assad had ordered the 21 August attack, outside Damascus.

Obama will set out his case for a strike against Assad in a speech from the White House on Tuesday, amid signs that a majority in the House of Representatives are against intervention.

McDonough told CNN's State of the Union that the evidence available so far showed Assad was to blame. "The material was used in the eastern suburbs of Damascus, that have been controlled by the opposition for some time," he said. "It was delivered by rockets, rockets that we know the Assad regime has and we have no indication that the opposition has."

With video of the consequences of the attack, McDonough said all this added up to "a quite strong common sense test irrespective of the intelligence that suggests the regime carried this out".

McDonough said "nobody doubts the intelligence". "The question for Congress this week is what are the consequences for having done so," he said, on Meet The Press, adding that Congress's decision would be watched closely by Iran and Hezbollah. "This is an opportunity to be bold with the Iranians," he said. "To make sure they understand that they do not have greater freedom of action, they do not have greater operating space to pursue a nuclear weapon that would destabilize that entire region, threaten our friends and allies and ultimately threaten us."

The United Nations is currently investigating the 21 August attack. Speaking in Paris this weekend, secretary of state Kerry said he planned to discuss whether to wait for the UN findings with Obama, adding that the president had not decided on the matter.

McDonough said: "Obviously we are interested in what the UN inspectors have to say." But he added that the UN is "not going to be able to tell us, because their mandate will not allow them to tell us, who is responsible for the attack ... We are right now focused on Washington ... the president ultimately is going to make this decision in consultation with Congress on our timeline as best suits our interests."

On ABC's This Week, McDonough said the US was considering a "targeted, consequential, limited attack against Assad forces and Assad capabilities so that he is deterred from carrying out these actions again.

"Here is what it is not. It is not boots on the ground. It is not an extended air campaign. It is not Iraq, Afghanistan or Libya. This is a very concentrated, limited effort that we can carry out and that can underscore and secure our interests."

Michael McCaul, a Texas Republican and chairman of the House homeland security committee, gave voice to Congressional opposition to strikes on Syria when he told Meet The Press: "The problem is I think lobbing a few Tomahawk missiles will not restore our credibility overseas. It's kind of a face-saving measure for the president after he drew the red line.

"Little wars start big wars and we have to remember that. Who are we supporting in this war? We are supporting a rebel faction, a rebel cause, that has now been infiltrated and hijacked by many al-Qaida factions."

McCaul said there was a risk that chemical weapons could end up in the hands of al-Qaida operatives after a US attack. McCaul said, "ironically", that Congress had been debating its next step in Syria on the eve of 9/11.



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McCaul also said that while images of victims of the gas attacks were "horrific" and Assad was "a brutal dictator", "I don't want to see those images broadcast in the United States with American kids."

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/sep/08/bashar-assad-charlie-rose-chemical-weapons>

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Al Arabiya – U.A.E.

U.N. Nuclear Chief Says Iran Needs to Address Concerns

Monday, 9 September 2013

By Al Arabiya with Reuters and Agence France-Presse (AFP)

The U.N. nuclear agency chief told Iran on Monday it was "essential and urgent" for it to engage with inspectors on their concerns about suspected Iranian nuclear bomb research and to provide access to a key military site.

Yukiya Amano was addressing a session of the International Atomic Energy Agency's 35-nation board, the first since the relatively moderate elected Iranian president Hassan Rouhani took office in August, Reuters news agency reported.

Amano, director general of the IAEA said the agency was committed to working constructively with Rouhani's government to "resolve outstanding issues by diplomatic means."

The agency's latest regular report on Iran last month showed, yet again, that Tehran is defiantly expanding its activities despite a string of U.N. Security Council and IAEA board resolutions demanding a suspension reported AFP news agency.

Several rounds of U.N. sanctions, supported not only by the West but also by Russia and China and others, have been imposed on Iran. Additional EU and U.S. restrictions last year began targeting its oil sector and banks.

<http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2013/09/09/U-N-nuclear-chief-says-urgent-for-Iran-to-address-concerns.html>

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Bloomberg News

Russia Seizes on Kerry Comment on Syria Giving Up Weapons

By Henry Meyer, James G. Neuger & Nicole Gaouette

September 9, 2013

Russia seized on a casual comment by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry to urge that Syria turn over its arsenal of chemical weapons to international control to avert an American military strike.

"If the establishment of international control of chemical weapons in the country will help avoid military strikes, we will immediately start working with Damascus," Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said after meeting with his Syrian counterpart in Moscow. Syria's government said it welcomed the idea.

Russia jumped on a hypothetical comment by Kerry, who told reporters in London that Syrian President Bashar al-Assad could avert a threatened U.S. attack by turning over "every single bit of his chemical weapons to the international community in the next week." While Kerry added immediately that Assad "isn't about to do it, and it can't be done, obviously," the idea took on a life of its own.

Tony Blinken, Obama's deputy national security adviser, said the administration is "going to take a hard look" at the Russian proposal, while adding that Assad's track record "doesn't give us a lot of confidence."

Senator Dianne Feinstein, a California Democrat who heads the Senate intelligence committee and backs President Barack Obama's call for a "limited" attack on Syria, said she "would welcome" a move by Russia to encourage Assad to give up the weapons that the U.S. says his regime used to kill more than 1,400 people outside of Damascus on Aug. 21.

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Easy to Hide

Any proposal for Syria to give up its chemical weapons would run into at least two major obstacles, according to two U.S. officials who asked not to be identified discussing sensitive policy matters.

The move would require an extensive verification process because chemical weapons are easy to hide, they said. It's not clear who would send inspectors in on the ground to verify the dismantling of the weapons and how such a process could occur in the middle of a civil war, they said.

Even if the weapons could be collected and destroyed, there's the danger that Assad could begin making more once inspectors leave, they said.

The Free Syrian Army, a rebel group seeking to topple the Assad regime that is supported by the U.S., rejects the Russian proposal as a "big trick" aimed at deceiving the U.S., according to Colonel Qassem Saadeddine, a member of the group's high command.

"We don't accept this maneuver," Qassem said by phone from his post in Syria near the border with Turkey. "The aim of it is to confuse the whole world, including the U.S. and Congress," he said.

'Rhetorical Argument'

Without retracting Kerry's comment, his spokeswoman Jen Psaki told reporters traveling with him that he was making a "rhetorical argument about the impossibility and unlikelihood of Assad turning over chemical weapons he has denied he used."

Assad's government called Russia's proposal a constructive alternative to U.S. intervention.

"I announce that the Syrian Arab Republic welcomes the Russian proposal, taking into account the concern of the Syrian leadership about the lives of our citizens and the security of our country, and taking into account our confidence in the wisdom of the Russian leadership, which is trying to prevent American aggression against our people," Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Muallem said today in Moscow.

'Unbelievably Small'

Kerry's comment came as the top U.S. diplomat continued his push for international backing for what he described today as an "unbelievably small, limited" military strike that he said would be enough to halt Syria's use of chemical weapons and hasten a political settlement to the 2 1/2-year civil war.

As Congress prepared to debate a U.S. intervention, Kerry sought to reassure the public that the Obama administration won't let a Syrian campaign evolve into a years-long commitment with ground troops, like the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

"We're not talking about war, we're not going to war," Kerry said at the press conference in London today after a three-day mission to Europe. He spoke of a "limited, very targeted, very short-term effort."

Such promises haven't helped the administration win support in Congress, where a resolution to authorize military force continues to lose ground.

Senate Resistance

In the latest setback for the White House, Democratic Senator Heidi Heitkamp of North Dakota said today she couldn't support a military strike "at this time." Instead, she backed a proposal by Democratic Senator Joe Manchin of West Virginia that would give Assad 45 days to sign an international chemical weapons ban.

"I believe the current Senate resolution falls short because it calls for military action in Syria without carefully looking at diplomatic or alternative solutions," Heitkamp said in a statement.



Kerry's tour yielded a European Union appeal to work through the United Nations, French determination to side with the U.S., support from several Arab countries and denunciations of Assad from Britain, the American ally in prior Middle Eastern wars which will stay out of this one.

West Texas Intermediate oil fell from a two-year high as Obama struggled to convince Congress of the need for a military strike. WTI for October delivery dropped 88 cents, or 0.8 percent, to \$109.65 a barrel at 12:15 p.m. on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Prices rose to \$110.53 on Sept. 6, the highest close since May 3, 2011.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-09-09/kerry-sees-unbelievably-small-strike-on-syria-s-chemicals.html>

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Ha'aretz Daily News – Israel

U.S. 'Skeptical' over Russia Proposal for Syria to Surrender Chemical Weapons

Syria welcomes Russian proposal to place chemical weapons arsenal under international control; U.S. says inaction in Syria will send wrong message to Iran, North Korea.

By Reuters and The Associated Press
September 9, 2013

U.S. officials said on Monday they will take a "hard look" at a Russian proposal for Syria to surrender its chemical weapons to international control to avoid a military strike.

State Department spokeswoman Marie Harf said Monday the U.S. would consider the proposal floated by the foreign ministers of Russia and Syria with "serious skepticism" because it might be a stalling tactic. She said Syria had consistently refused to destroy its chemical weapons in the past.

The proposal came after Secretary of State John Kerry said in London on Monday that Syrian President Bashar Assad could end the crisis by turning over all his chemical weapons. Harf said Kerry wasn't putting forth a formal proposal.

Meanwhile, U.S. National Security Adviser Susan Rice said on Monday that the United States cannot allow countries like North Korea or Iran think that Washington would not react to a chemical weapons attack in Syria.

"We cannot allow terrorists bent on destruction, or a nuclear North Korea, or an aspiring nuclear Iran, to believe for one minute that we are shying away from our determination to back up our longstanding warnings," Rice said in her first major speech since taking over as President Barack Obama's top security adviser in July.

In her speech at the New America Foundation think tank, Rice said the United States intends to renew its push for the UN-sponsored Geneva peace process in Syria following any limited military strikes that are currently being considered by the U.S. Congress.

Russia's proposal comes as Obama, who blames President Bashar Assad for killing hundreds of his own people in a chemical attack last month, is pressing for a limited strike against the Syrian government. Assad's regime has denied launching the attack, insisting along with its ally Russia that the attack was launched by the rebels to drag the U.S. into war.

"The Syrian Arab Republic welcomes the Russian initiative, which is motivated by the Russian leadership's concern for the life of our citizens and the security of our country," Moallem told reporters in Moscow, according to the Interfax news agency.

Also on Monday, the White House said on Monday fourteen more countries have signed on to a statement condemning Syria for the Aug. 21 chemical weapons attack, and calling for a strong international response to hold the Syrian government accountable.



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The additional countries brought the total number backing the statement to 25; the new countries include the United Arab Emirates and Qatar, the White House said.

<http://www.haaretz.com/news/middle-east/1.546075>

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The Seattle Times
September 9, 2013

Syria Positive about Giving Up Chemical Weapons

Syria on Monday quickly welcomed a call from Russia, its close ally, to place Syrian chemical arsenals under international control, then destroy them to avert a U.S. strike, but did not offer a time frame or any other specifics.

By VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV, Associated Press (AP)

MOSCOW — Syria on Monday quickly welcomed a call from Russia, its close ally, to place Syrian chemical arsenals under international control, then destroy them to avert a U.S. strike, but did not offer a time frame or any other specifics.

The statement by Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Moallem appeared to mark the first official acknowledgement by Damascus that it possesses chemical weapons and reflected what appeared to be an attempt by Syrian President Bashar Assad to avoid the U.S. military attack.

But it remained to be seen whether the statement represented a genuine goodwill gesture by Syria or simply an attempt to buy time.

"Syria welcomes the Russian proposal out of concern for the lives of the Syrian people, the security of our country and because it believes in the wisdom of the Russian leadership that seeks to avert American aggression against our people," al-Moallem said during a visit to Moscow, where he held talks with his Russian counterpart, Sergey Lavrov.

However, al-Moallem, would not give any further details in his brief statement and didn't take any questions from reporters.

Moallem's statement came a few hours after U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said Assad could resolve the crisis surrounding the alleged use of chemical weapons by his forces by surrendering control of "every single bit" of his arsenal to the international community by the end of the week.

Also Monday, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged Syria to immediately agree to transfer chemical weapons and chemical precursors to a safe place within the country for international destruction.

Ban said he will also propose to the Security Council that it unite and demand an immediate chemical weapons transfer should U.N. inspectors conclude that such weapons were used in an attack Aug. 21 in a suburb of Damascus.

Al-Moallem and Lavrov didn't make any immediate reference to Kerry's statement when they spoke to the media after their talks, but a few hours later Lavrov went before cameras to say that Moscow would urge Syria to quickly place its chemical weapons under international control and then dismantle it.

Lavrov, who held talks with al-Moallem in Moscow earlier in the day, said he expected a quick positive answer from Damascus.

"If the establishment of international control over chemical weapons in that country would allow avoiding strikes, we will immediately start working with Damascus," Lavrov said.

"We are calling on the Syrian leadership to not only agree on placing chemical weapons storage sites under international control, but also on its subsequent destruction and fully joining the treaty on prohibition of chemical weapons," he said.

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The surprise series of statements from top U.S., Russian and Syrian diplomats followed media reports alleging that Russian President Vladimir Putin, who discussed Syria with President Barack Obama during the Group of 20 summit in St. Petersburg last week, had sought to negotiate a deal that would have Assad hand over control of chemical weapons.

Putin himself said Friday at a news conference marking the summit's end that he and Obama discussed some new ideas regarding a peaceful settlement of the crisis and instructed Kerry and Lavrov to work out details.

Speaking Monday, Lavrov denied that Russia was trying to sponsor any deal "behind the back of the Syrian people."

The Russian move comes as Obama, who has blamed Assad for killing hundreds of his own people in a chemical attack outside Damascus last month, is pressing for a limited military strike against the Syrian government. The Syrian regime has denied launching the attack, insisting along with Russia that the attack was launched by the rebels to drag the U.S. into the civil war.

Lavrov and al-Moallem said after their talks that U.N. chemical weapons experts should complete their probe and present their findings to the U.N. Security Council.

Al-Moallem said his government was ready to host the U.N. team, and insisted that Syria is ready to use all channels to persuade the Americans that it wasn't behind the attack. He added that Syria was ready for "full cooperation with Russia to remove any pretext for aggression."

Neither minister, however, offered any evidence to back their claim of rebel involvement in the chemical attack.

Lavrov said Russia will continue to promote a peaceful settlement and may try to convene a gathering of all Syrian opposition figures to join in negotiations. He added that a U.S. attack on Syria would deal a fatal blow to peace efforts.

Lavrov wouldn't say how Russia could respond to a possible U.S. attack on Syria, saying: "We wouldn't like to proceed from a negative scenario and would primarily take efforts to prevent a military intervention."

Putin said Moscow would keep providing assistance to Syria in case of U.S. attack, but he and other Russian officials have made clear that Russia has no intention of engaging in hostilities.

AP correspondents Zeina Karam in Beirut and Edith Lederer at the U.N. contributed to this report.

http://seattletimes.com/html/nationworld/2021785734_aeurussiasyria.html

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FARS News Agency – Iran

Tuesday, September 10, 2013

Senior MP: Iran's Military Power Deterring US from Striking Syria

TEHRAN (FNA) - A senior Iranian legislator underlined Iran's huge military advancements and superiority in the region, and said the country's military power has acted as a deterrence to a US attack on Syria.

"Certainly, the Islamic Republic's military equipment are as good as the foreign states' weapons and sometimes outpaces them and this progress will definitely increase security in our country and the region," member of the parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Commission Hojjatollah Souri said on Tuesday.

He said that the power of the Iranian Armed Forces dissuades any enemy from making an aggression against the country.

Noting that Iran's military power has also lessened the regional tensions, Souri said, "One of the elements which has made the US dubious about its decision for attacking Syria is Iran's military assistance to the resistance line."

In relevant remarks last week, another senior Iranian lawmaker said that the US and its allies who beat the drums of war against Syria for a long time were pushed to delay action due to the Iranian officials' strong opposition and warnings.

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"We have studied the most important cause of the delay in the US attack on Syria and understood that the revolutionary and effective positions taken by the Islamic Republic of Iran's officials have caused the delay," member of the parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Commission Mohammad Javad Karimi Qoddousi told FNA on Saturday after a recent visit to Syria and Lebanon alongside other senior members of the Commission.

"All the Syrian officials we met in Syria and Lebanon stated the same fact, describing it as the deterrence to the (US) attack on Syria," he added.

Karimi Qoddousi said when the Iranian officials consider Syria as the Islamic Republic's redline, it means that Hezbollah, Syria and Iran and the resistance front are all involved and will show strong reaction to any attack on that country.

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13920619001297>

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Times of India – India

Hassan Rouhani Talks Tough on Iran Nuclear Rights

Agence France-Presse (AFP)

September 10, 2013

TEHRAN: Iran's new President Hassan Rouhani said on Tuesday that Tehran will not give up "one iota" of its nuclear rights, echoing his hardline predecessor, after the UN nuclear watchdog urged improved cooperation.

The comments come ahead of meeting later this month between his Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton on restarting negotiations on the Islamic republic's controversial nuclear ambitions.

"Our government will not give up one iota of its absolute rights" on the nuclear issue, said Rouhani, a reputed moderate, repeating a mantra frequently used by his predecessor Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Soon after his election as president in June, Rouhani said he wanted "serious" talks with world powers to resolve Western suspicions that Iran's nuclear drive is cover to build a bomb despite repeated denials by Tehran.

The two sides have failed to achieve a breakthrough in years of talks, with Iran — during Ahmadinejad's two-term presidency — refusing to make any concessions on sensitive activities in the nuclear programme, notably enrichment.

That has led to several rounds of international sanctions being slapped on the Islamic republic, crucially targeting its financial and oil sectors, choking the economy and stoking a raging inflation.

The last round of talks between Iran and the so-called P5+1 of world powers ended in Almaty in April with an impasse.

In parallel diplomatic efforts, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is urging Iran to provide necessary cooperation to remove suspicions it seeks a nuclear weapons capability.

A new round of talks between Iran and the Vienna-based UN watchdog is set for September 27.

"Given the nature and extent of credible information available to the agency about possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear programme, it remains essential and urgent for Iran to engage with us on the substance of these concerns," IAEA chief Yukiya Amano said yesterday.

Himself a former nuclear negotiator, Rowhani today did not elaborate on efforts to resolve such concerns over Iran's nuclear programme, on which all final decisions — like other key issues in the Islamic republic — rest with the country's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

But he warned that pressure would not make Iran abandon its rights. "The West must understand that it will not obtain any result by threats and pressure," he stressed.

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Rouhani added that after the Zarif-Ashton meeting in New York, nuclear negotiations would "continue in another place with the 5+1 group," which groups the United States, Russia, China, France, Britain and Germany.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/middle-east/Hassan-Rouhani-talks-tough-on-Iran-nuclear-rights/articleshow/22462025.cms>

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The Toronto Star – Toronto, Canada

Is it even Possible to Dismantle Syria's Chemical Weapons?

By Reuters,

Tuesday, September 10, 2013

WASHINGTON- Any deal with Syria to hand over its chemical weapons in the middle of a chaotic civil war would be difficult for inspectors to enforce and destroying them would likely take years, U.S. officials and experts caution.

Syria's strongest backer, Russia, proposed on Monday that Damascus save itself from a U.S. military strike over its alleged use of chemical weapons by putting its stockpiles under international control.

The proposal was welcomed by Syria and seized upon by the secretary-general of the United Nations. U.S. President Barack Obama said the offer was a potential breakthrough but had to be handled with skepticism.

Syria has never signed a global treaty banning the storage of chemical weapons and is believed to have large stocks of sarin, mustard gas and VX nerve agents. The actual use of chemical weapons is banned by a 1925 treaty to which Damascus is a signatory.

Accounting for Syria's chemical arms cache—believed to be spread over dozens of locations—would be difficult, as would be shielding arms inspectors from violence.

"This is a nice idea but tough to achieve," said one U.S. official speaking on condition of anonymity.

"You're in the middle of a brutal civil war where the Syrian regime is massacring its own people. Does anyone think they're going to suddenly stop the killing to allow inspectors to secure and destroy all the chemical weapons?" the official said.

Amy Smithson, an expert on nuclear, biological and chemical weapons at the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies in Washington, said a lack of hard data on Syria's chemical weapons inventory would complicate verification.

She pointed to years of cat-and-mouse manoeuvring between UN weapons inspectors and then-president Saddam Hussein in neighboring Iraq as an example of what could happen in Syria.

"The Iraqis lied through their teeth. They did everything they could to hide these ultra-secret weapons programs," Smithson said.

"Libya also did not come completely clean when it forfeited their weapons of mass destruction program."

Syria's Scientific Studies and Research Center, oversees chemical weapons facilities in Dumayr, Khan Abou, Shamat, and Firaqlus, according to the U.S. Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Brigadier General Mustafa al-Sheikh, a Syrian army defector, told Reuters this summer that most of the chemical weapons have been transported to Alawite areas in Latakia and near the coast. Some chemical munitions remain in bases around Damascus, he said.

The United States has been watching Syria move around its chemical weapons since last year. General Martin Dempsey, chairman of the U.S. military's Joint Chiefs of Staff, told Congress last week he thinks Syrian President Bashar Assad's forces are doing that to keep them secure.

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But the Syrian government's motives are unclear and U.S. officials privately acknowledge those movements complicate identification of chemical weapons sites.

"While Assad controls the chemical stockpiles, they've been moved over time," a second U.S. official said, also speaking on condition he not be named.

"Security and relocation of those weapons with a very fluid situation on the ground with the opposition forces (fighting) could pose challenges."

Experts say it would take months to locate and secure Syria's chemical weapons and years to destroy them—and there is always the possibility some are left over.

"You're always going to have the problem of the bomb in the basement," said Joseph Cirincione of the Ploughshares Fund group, which opposes the spread of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons.

"It's possible that the regime would hold some back that you wouldn't know about ... But there's ways of getting at that," he added, pointing to past efforts to cross-check stockpiles against production records.

For Obama, who is waging an uphill battle to win domestic support for military action, a UN deal could prevent a potentially devastating defeat in Congress.

But even as he described Russia's proposal as potentially positive in a NBC television interview, Obama said: "I think you have to take it with a grain of salt initially."

http://www.thestar.com/news/world/2013/09/10/is_it_even_possible_to_dismantle_syrias_chemical_weapons.html

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

United Press International (UPI)

Park Seeks Putin's Help in Resolving Nuclear Crisis with North Korea

September 7, 2013

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia, Sept. 7 (UPI) -- South Korean Prime Minister Park Geun-hye says she has asked Russian President Vladimir Putin to help resolve the standoff over North Korea's nuclear program.

Park and Putin spoke together after the end of a two-day summit of the world's top 20 economic and emerging countries hosted by Russia, Yonhap news agency reported Saturday.

The prime minister said trade between Seoul and Moscow had increased 110 percent since the countries established relations in 1990. The gains could have been even more, Park said, if they had not been sidetracked by North Korea's nuclear weapons program.

She also pushed for Russian participation in joint projects such as railway service between the southern South Korean city of Busan, through Russia and into Europe. Such a route would have to pass through North Korea.

Park later told a group of South Koreans living in Russia that Russia's support was critical to bringing a lasting peace between Seoul and Pyongyang.

Putin called South Korea one of Russia's key partners in Asia. Trade between the countries had grown to \$25 billion annually, increasing 3 percent in the first half of 2013.

http://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2013/09/07/Park-seeks-Putins-help-in-resolving-nuclear-crisis-with-North-Korea/UPI-78081378567192/

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Yonhap News Agency – South Korea

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N. Korea Will Achieve Nothing with Nukes, Missiles: Defense Chief

September 9, 2013

By Kim Eun-jung

SEOUL, Sept. 9 (Yonhap) -- South Korean Defense Minister Kim Kwan-jin on Monday warned against North Korea's pursuit of missiles and nuclear weapons, saying the communist country will not achieve anything with provocations.

"North Korea's nuclear and missile weapons have threatened not only the Korean Peninsula but also the Asia-Pacific region and world peace," Kim said during a speech at an international defense forum held in Seoul. "We will maintain strong deterrence to break the vicious cycle of 'provocations and reward' to bring changes in North Korea."

Kim said he will work to restore relations with Pyongyang based on the principle of trust-building and cooperate with the international community for peace and stability in the region.

Last week, Seoul's defense ministry reported to parliament that Pyongyang has made considerable progress in developing a fairly robust nuclear program in the past three years and is capable of making atomic weapons anytime.

Amid inter-Korean talks to resume cross-border projects, Pyongyang expressed its willingness to rejoin the six-party talks but has shown no signs of accepting conditions set by Seoul and Washington to give up its nuclear capabilities. Instead, it has insisted on being recognized as a nuclear power.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2013/09/09/3/0301000000AEN20130909003100315F.html>

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The Chosun Ilbo – South Korea

September 9, 2013

Seoul, Washington in Plan to Deter N.Korean Nuke Attack

Seoul and Washington are about to complete a plan aimed at deterring the nuclear threat from North Korea, a government source here said Sunday.

They will sign off on the plan at the Security Consultative Meeting in Seoul on Oct. 2.

The source said South Korea and the U.S. have conducted joint research on a "tailored deterrence strategy" over the last 10 months and already practiced it during last month's joint military simulation exercise.

It envisions political, diplomatic and military responses in three stages from before any such attack to after.

In addition to the "nuclear umbrella" the U.S. provides, the strategy encompasses a missile defense and even precision strikes on North Korean nuclear facilities if the North is about to launch a nuclear-tipped missile.

The precision strikes would use South Korean ballistic missiles with a range of 300-800 km and cruise missiles with a range of more than 500-1500 km, and U.S. Tomahawk cruise missiles and B-2 Stealth bombers.

A military source said, "The nuclear umbrella was abstract so far and we didn't know anything about a concrete action plan. But now Seoul and Washington have for the first time jointly worked out a nuclear deterrence strategy which functions as an operational plan."

The two countries originally decided to complete the tailored strategy by 2014 but brought it forward after the North's third nuclear test in February this year.

http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2013/09/09/2013090900719.html

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The Miami Herald

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Tuesday, September 10, 2013

US Warns of North Korean Chemical Weapons Threat

By CHRISTOPHER BODEEN, Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — The United States is trying to enlist Beijing's support for military action against Syria by arguing that it would help deter North Korea from using chemical weapons and threatening security in China's neighborhood, a U.S. official said Tuesday.

China expressed support, meanwhile, for a Russian plan to avoid military intervention in the Middle Eastern country by getting the Syrian government to agree to put its chemical weapons under international supervision and eventually destroy them.

"As long as it eases the tension and helps maintain Syrian and regional peace and stability, and helps politically settle the issue, the global community should consider it positively," Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei told reporters in Beijing.

U.S. Under Secretary of Defense for Policy James Miller, who was in Beijing to meet with Chinese officials, said earlier Thursday that a retaliatory strike against the Syrian government would uphold the international norm that chemical weapons must not be used.

Miller said he emphasized to his Chinese counterpart that lowering the threshold for chemical weapons use could put U.S. troops at risk and threaten China's security and that of the entire globe.

"I emphasized the massive chemical weapons arsenal that North Korea has and that we didn't want to live in a world in which North Korea felt that the threshold for chemical weapons usage had been lowered," Miller told reporters at a briefing following his talks Monday with Wang Guanzhong, the Chinese army's deputy chief of staff.

It was strongly in China's interest that there be a "strong response to Assad's clear and massive use of chemical weapons," Miller said he told Wang.

China has joined with Russia in blocking action against Syria at the United Nations Security Council and strongly opposes strikes on Syria by the U.S. or its allies in response to an Aug. 21 chemical attack near Damascus that the U.S. says killed more than 1,400 people. Beijing has called for political talks to end the violence that has killed an estimated 100,000 people and displaced 2 million more.

Hong said China was hosting a visit starting Tuesday by Syrian opposition leaders for talks with Chinese officials. He said they were from the National Coalition for Dialogue, apparently one of a number of smaller opposition groups whose sizes, memberships and alliances are in constant flux.

China has hosted delegations from both the opposition and government since the start of the Syrian conflict nearly two years ago, telling both that it hoped for negotiations leading to a process of national reconciliation.

While China remains North Korea's most important ally, it has repeatedly expressed concerns about the regime's threat to regional stability and has sought to coax Pyongyang back to six-nation nuclear disarmament talks — so far unsuccessfully. Beijing joined the international community in tightening sanctions against the North over a banned missile launch and nuclear test that again raised the specter of armed conflict on the Korean Peninsula just across the Yellow Sea from China.

U.S. Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel warned recently that North Korea possesses a massive stockpile of chemical weapons that threatens South Korea and the 28,000 U.S. troops stationed there.

Beijing remains firmly opposed to any intervention in Syria under a U.N. mandate, believing that its failure to oppose the no-fly zone in Libya led to foreign backing of the rebels and the ultimate downfall of the Gadhafi regime there.



China used its military to suppress the 1989 pro-democracy protests centered on Beijing's Tiananmen Square, and is wary that any precedents for intervention could ultimately be invoked against its communist government as it wrestles with unrest in Tibet and Xinjiang.

<http://www.miamiherald.com/2013/09/10/3617243/us-warns-of-north-korean-chemical.html>

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The Hindu – India

Agni-V gets ready for Second Test

DRDO missile experts are on Wheeler Island conducting phase checks ahead of September 15 exercise

By Y. Mallikarjun

September 9, 2013

Agni-V, India's longest-range, nuclear-weapons-capable surface-to-surface ballistic missile, will be tested from Wheeler Island in Odisha around September 15.

According to a top official at the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), preparations were under way for the second developmental trial of the 5,000-km-range missile. The maiden flight test carried out on April 19 last was a stupendous success and injected India into a group of select nations that possessed the technology for developing Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs).

The September 15 exercise would be a repeat test to demonstrate the capabilities of the missile, said the official. Another three or four tests will be conducted before the system is inducted into the Armed Forces around 2015.

According to another official, DRDO missile technologists had moved to Wheeler Island and begun to conduct phase checks for the missile. Two ships have sailed into the Indian Ocean and will be positioned near a predesignated target point.

High accuracy

The strategic three-stage, solid-fuelled missile is equipped with advanced technologies — besides a ring laser gyro-based inertial navigation system (RINS) and a redundant micro-navigation system (MINS). It will also be carrying a multiple telemetry system. The RINS and MINS would enable the missile to cover a long distance with a high degree of accuracy, the official said.

The 17-metre-long missile has been designed to carry a payload of 1,000 kg over a distance of more than 5,000 km.

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/agniv-gets-ready-for-second-test/article5107739.ece>

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RT (Russia Today) – Russia

Borei Super-Subs Trials may be Postponed after Bulava 'Failure'

September 07, 2013

Russia may put on hold trials of two nuclear-powered Borei-class submarines due to an unsuccessful launch of a Bulava ballistic missile, report news agencies. The rocket experienced a malfunction in one of its systems in the second minute of its flight.

"During state trials of the Aleksandr Nevsky nuclear-powered submarine in the White Sea the day before, a Bulava submarine-launched ballistic missile was fired toward the Kura test site in Kamchatka. The rocket was cleanly out of the launch canister, but experienced a failure of its on-board system in the second minute of the flight," a Russian defense ministry spokesman told journalists on Saturday, as Interfax quoted.



Russian Defense Minister, Sergey Shoigu, gave an order to "halt state trials of the Borei-class Aleksandr Nevsky and the Vladimir Monomakh submarines and to hold five additional launches of the SLBM to confirm its set technical parameters," the agency added.

A state commission headed by the Russian Navy Commander, Admiral Viktor Chirkov, will investigate the reason behind the failed launch, but has already said that there is "no alternative" to the troubled missile, which simply "has to be knocked into shape".

Test launches of the Bulava have been experiencing significant problems. Of the first 13 test launches, more than half failed. However, the Russian military insists there's no alternative to the Bulava.

The Bulava is Russia's newest submarine-launched three-stage solid propellant Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM), with several separating warheads capable of altering their trajectories in-flight and hitting targets up to 9,000 km away. Equipped with 10 warheads, it is even capable of withstanding nuclear attack.

Russia's first and flagship Borei submarine, the Yury Dolgoruky, was put into service in January this year.

Yury Dolgoruky's sister boats, Aleksandr Nevsky and Vladimir Monomakh, have been in construction since 2004 and 2006 respectively.

The Aleksandr Nevsky submarine is expected to be handed over to the Navy on November 15, while the Vladimir Monomakh is set to join the fleet in mid-December. The commissioning of the submarines depends on the success of the Bulava test launch.

A Borei-class submarine is a state-of-the-art 170-meter long vessel which is capable of carrying 16 Bulava SLBMs.

It has a crew of 107, including 55 officers, can dive to a depth of 450 meters and has a submerged speed of about 29 knots (54 km/h). The sub can spend up to three months submerged without having to resurface and, thanks to the latest achievements in noise reduction, it is almost silent compared to previous generations of submarines. It is planned that by 2018, the Russian Navy will have eight Borei vessels, which will form the core of the country's strategic submarine fleet.

<http://rt.com/news/submarine-trials-bulava-failure-542/>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

US Evidence on Syrian Chemical Attack Inconclusive – Lavrov

9 September 2013

MOSCOW, September 2 (RIA Novosti) – The evidence the US has provided to Russia about use of chemical weapons by government forces in Syria is inconclusive, Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Monday.

US officials released a report Friday that presented what President Barack Obama called a "powerful case" that the Syrian government was behind an attack that killed hundreds of civilians in a Damascus suburb late last month. Syria claims militant rebel groups were responsible.

"We absolutely were not convinced by that [evidence] that our American partners, as well as the British and the French, showed us," Lavrov said. "There are no facts, there's only talk about what we know for certain. When we ask for more detailed evidence, they say, 'You know, it's all secret, so we can't show you.' That means that there are no such facts."

The information the US provided lacked any concrete details, such as names or geographical coordinates that would prove its case, Lavrov said in a speech opening the new academic year at Moscow's State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO). He did not specify if Friday's report by the US was the evidence to which he was referring.

When Russia asked for additional details from Western officials, he added, the request was denied.



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Lavrov also criticized France and the UK for their “unreasonable” demands that the scope of a UN investigation into the attacks not be restricted to the location of the original incident.

“Great Britain and France said that sending inspectors to investigate this one concrete incident wouldn’t do. Let’s demand that [President Bashar] Assad agree to let in any number of inspectors with any equipment at any place and time, so that there’s not a single corner where the inspectors wouldn’t be able to go,” Lavrov said.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon authorized a UN inspections team to investigate the first alleged attack, which took place on August 21 near Damascus.

The Syrian government then requested the team to also investigate three more purported chemical attacks it said were carried out by rebel groups, Syria’s ambassador to the UN told journalists last week.

The United States is considering carrying out armed intervention in Syria in response to the Assad regime’s alleged use of chemical weapons.

US Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said August 25 President Obama had asked the US military to “prepare for all contingencies,” in response to the incidents US media reported. The United States Navy is building up its forces the eastern Mediterranean, including deploying destroyers armed with cruise missiles, US media said.

France is also considering use of armed force in Syria, but the UK ruled it out last Thursday after a surprise defeat for Prime Minister David Cameron in a parliamentary vote on the issue.

<http://en.rian.ru/world/20130902/183114075/US-Evidence-on-Syrian-Chemical-Attack-Inconclusive---Lavrov.html>

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CRIENGLISH.com – China

U.S. to Start Work on Missile Defense System in Romania in October

Xinhua

September 10, 2013

Romania's Defence Minister Mircea Dusa announced Monday that the Americans would begin work on the Deveselu military base in early October.

The minister made the announcement in his visit Monday to the air base at Deveselu in southern Romania, where the Romanian servicemen work to make some arrangements the Defence Ministry must ensure.

According to a bilateral agreement signed in 2011, the U.S. system of defense missile interceptors will be placed at Deveselu, as a component of the Adaptive Phased Approach to the U.S. Defense System against the Ballistic Missiles in Europe by 2015.

Dusa said that there were some more things that must be made by the Romanians at Deveselu, "I am referring to making the area more secure, namely to enclose the area with the NATO type fence, and, of course, the road that should make possible patrolling in this area."

"We had to finalize this work next year, according to schedule," he added.

The minister added that the Romanian side too must make a sewage treatment plant and the drinking water supply system.

"Procedures are underway for a tender for other work that must be done next year, namely the electric lighting of the entire area, the supervision system," said Dusa, adding that "We have made a priority of ensuring the funds for this year and for the next year in order to make what devolves on the Romanian side."

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Romania and the United States signed the ballistic missile defense agreement in Washington, D.C. on Sept. 12, 2011, allowing the United States to construct, maintain and operate a facility encompassing the land-based SM-3 ballistic missile defense system at the Deveselu Air Base.

The system will provide a defensive capability to protect Europe and the United States against ballistic missiles launched from the Middle East, the U.S. State Department said when inking the deal.

<http://english.cri.cn/6966/2013/09/10/2702s786877.htm>

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The Chosun Ilbo – South Korea

September 10, 2013

U.S. Developing 'Rapid-Strike' Arms

The U.S. is developing a state-of-the-art weapon that can hit targets anywhere in the world within an hour and might be used to neutralize nuclear weapons in North Korea and Iran, a report says.

James Acton of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace published the report on the development of "conventional prompt global strike" weapons early this month.

The weapon is a new-concept missile with an intercontinental ballistic missile booster capable of flying 20 times faster than the speed of sound and striking any target around the world within an hour. Development began in 2000.

According to the report, development is still underway. A test launch of an advanced hypersonic weapon was successful in 2011, and a second test in May this year with a hypersonic aircraft was also successful.

The report presents an operational scenario for the use of the weapon against North Korean and Iranian nuclear weapons. If the launch of nuclear weapons by either of these countries seems imminent, the superweapon could carry out a preemptive strike without the targets realizing until they are hit.

The report also posits strikes to preempt terrorists attacks and attacks on satellites.

The weapon will be capable of hitting fixed targets like radar facilities, and mobile and hidden targets, the report added.

It could be effective against North Korean missiles hidden in a bunker, which otherwise are hard to strike with conventional, or non-nuclear weapons, as well as the reclusive country's mobile missiles, which takes 30-90 minutes to fuel.

U.S. Congress is generally in favor of the superweapon, although no concrete plan for procurement and deployment has been approved, Acton said.

But some experts warn that Russia or China could respond with nuclear weapons when they mistake an incoming CPGS for a nuclear weapon, since the shape and trajectory are similar.

http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2013/09/10/2013091000953.html

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U.S. Department of Defense

September 10, 2013

Missile Defense Test Succeeds Against Medium-range Targets

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Sept. 10, 2013 – A complex missile defense flight test today resulted in the intercept of two medium-range ballistic missile targets, Defense Department officials said.

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The flight test was planned more than a year ago, officials added, and is not in any way connected to events in the Middle East.

It involved the Missile Defense Agency, Ballistic Missile Defense System Operational Test Agency, Joint Functional Component Command for Integrated Missile Defense, and U.S. Pacific Command, in conjunction with soldiers from the Army's Alpha Battery, 2nd Air Defense Artillery Regiment, sailors aboard the Navy's guided missile destroyer USS Decatur, and Air Force airmen from the 613th Air and Operations Center.

The test was conducted near the U.S. Army Kwajalein Atoll/Reagan Test Site and surrounding areas in the western Pacific. Officials said the test stressed the ability of the Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense and Terminal High Altitude Area Defense weapon systems to function in a layered defense architecture and defeat a raid of two near-simultaneous ballistic missile targets.

The two medium-range ballistic missile targets were launched on operationally realistic trajectories toward a defended area near Kwajalein, officials said. Along with overhead space assets providing launch alerts, an Army-Navy/Transportable Radar Surveillance and Control radar in forward-based mode detected the targets and relayed track information to the Command, Control, Battle Management, and Communications system for further transmission to defending Ballistic Missile Defense System assets.

The USS Decatur with its Aegis Weapon System detected and tracked the first target with its onboard AN/SPY-1 radar. The Aegis ballistic missile defense weapon system developed a fire control solution, launched a Standard Missile-3 Block IA missile, and successfully intercepted the target.

In a demonstration of Ballistic Missile Defense System layered defense capabilities, a second AN/TPY-2 radar in terminal mode located with the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense weapon system acquired and tracked the target missiles. THAAD developed a fire control solution, launched a THAAD interceptor missile, and successfully intercepted the second medium-range ballistic missile target, officials said.

THAAD was operated by soldiers from the Alpha Battery, 2nd Air Defense Artillery Regiment. As a planned demonstration of THAAD's layered defense capabilities, a second THAAD interceptor was launched at the target destroyed by Aegis as a contingency in the event that the SM-3 did not achieve an intercept.

Initial indications are that all components performed as designed, Pentagon officials said. Missile Defense Agency officials will extensively assess and evaluate system performance based upon telemetry and other data obtained during the test, they added.

U.S. Ballistic Missile Defense System programs have completed 62 successful hit-to-kill intercepts in 78 flight test attempts since 2001, officials said.

<http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=120744>

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Eurasia Review – Spain
OPINION/Op-Ed

US Missile Defense: Closing the Gap – OpEd

By Richard Weitz
September 7, 2013

In March 2013, US Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, citing the progress of North Korea's nuclear program, announced that the United States would be bolstering its missile defenses. Fourteen new ground-based interceptor missiles, known as GBIs, would be deployed to Alaska, augmenting the thirty already in silos there and in California. The Pentagon would develop a new two-stage GBI, as well as a more advanced version of the "kill vehicle," which interceptors carry to smash into adversary warheads ("hit-to-kill"). The Obama administration would be deploying a second advanced mobile radar

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system, the Army Navy/Transportable Radar Surveillance 2, in Japan. And Hagel even indicated that the administration would restructure its plans for US missile defenses in Europe, canceling the SM-3 IIB interceptor, the cornerstone of the fourth and final phase of its European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA), which had been announced in 2009 as a means of deploying more-advanced interceptors in Eastern and Central Europe specifically designed to defend the US homeland from intercontinental ballistic missiles launched from Europe, Eurasia, or the Middle East.

Hagel's announcement came in the middle of a steady buildup of the size and capability of ballistic missiles among states antagonistic to the US and its allies. More than thirty countries already have acquired, or are acquiring, short- and medium-range missiles able to deliver conventional payloads at great speed and distance. Some are trying to develop longer-range missiles that can carry warheads armed with various weapons of mass destruction (nuclear, chemical, and biological), seeing these as cheaper, easier to maintain, and often more effective strike weapons than manned aircraft. The most immediate missile threats to the West come from Iran and North Korea. US government experts believe that either or both of these countries might have an intercontinental-range ballistic missile (ICBM) capable of hitting a target in North America within the next few years.

Under both the Bush and Obama administrations, the United States has employed a variety of tools to address this possibility—multilateral diplomacy and bilateral negotiations, economic sanctions and inducements, warnings against developing these capabilities, and threats of retaliation for their use. It has reinforced these measures by constructing missile defense architectures around the world, including short-range missile defense systems such as surface-to-air batteries, theater defenses such as Aegis-equipped naval vessels and ground-based systems capable of targeting midrange missiles, and the ground-based midcourse interceptors based in Alaska and California.

The main difference between Obama's policies and those of Bush is that the current administration has deemphasized near-term efforts to develop and apply new ballistic missile defense technologies, such as space- or airborne-based lasers and two-stage GBIs that could conduct an early intercept of an Iranian ICBM, and instead has sought to build on proven existing technologies such as the Patriot Air and Missile Defense System, designed for countering attacking missiles in their terminal (or final attack) phase, and the family of combination Aegis SM-3 midcourse interceptors currently used by the US Navy.

Of the six main ballistic missile defense programs inherited from its predecessor, the Obama administration has expanded some and restructured or cut others. It cancelled the Kinetic Energy Interceptor program because of high costs and the Airborne Laser program in February because of technological challenges as well as cost. (Yet while the US is no longer developing these directed-energy weapons, which use lasers to heat the metal skin of a long-range ballistic missile until it ruptures and disintegrates, it has built systems that can use lasers against unmanned aerial vehicles and cruise missiles, while researching how direct energy could assist with discriminating between warheads and decoys, a difficult discrimination problem.)

Another weapon the United States lacks at the moment is an operational early interceptor, designed to attack an enemy missile in its boost or ascent phase, when the rocket has ceased burning but the missile is still gaining altitude and when it is most vulnerable to attack. Previous attempts to build such weapons interceptors failed because of their immature technologies (lasers and rapidly accelerating interceptors that can compute an interception solution even before the missile goes ballistic), impractical operational concepts (the interceptors would have to be located on land near the enemy launch site), and exorbitant costs. Some defense strategists have suggested the development of a high-speed, two-stage, hit-to-kill interceptor missile, launched from a high-altitude, long-endurance unmanned aerial vehicles, but for now the main protection of the US homeland from missile attack comes from the GBI and Aegis SM-3 systems.

Thus the new moves Hagel announced may provide the incremental enhancements needed to match a potential adversary's missile capabilities, notably those of North Korea, but the margin for error is still small—adversaries may make unexpectedly rapid progress or the defenses may suffer unanticipated technological setbacks. To reduce the risks of an offense-defense gap arising, America's best option for the next few years would be to continue improving its two midcourse defense systems—ground-based interceptors on US territory and mobile, sea-based ones—and make greater

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use of enhanced variants of the sea-based interceptor, the SM-3, as a hedge against the continued development and reliability problems with the GBIs in Alaska and California. This structure, supplemented by the construction of an advanced missile defense radar in the northeast United States, would create a layered defense to better protect the US homeland, especially in light of the cancellation of the final phase of EPAA. The US should also continue to pursue as well as fund new technologies (such as direct-energy weapons) that can broaden its defensive capabilities.

The GBIs deployed in Alaska and California are three-stage, solid-fueled boosters with an exoatmospheric kill vehicle (EKV), which separates from its booster and uses the kinetic energy from colliding with the re-entry vehicle or warhead to destroy it. Once released from the booster, the EKV uses guidance transmitted to it and from its own onboard sensors to collide with the target above the Earth's atmosphere.

The Bush administration had intended to deploy GBIs in Poland to attempt an early intercept of Iranian ICBMs launched toward the United States. The Obama administration canceled this move in 2009, when intelligence concluded that Iran was making less than expected progress in developing ICBMs, but the Defense Department's Missile Defense Agency has recently resumed flight-testing a two-stage GBI that could be deployed closer to potential missile threats from Northeast Asia or the Middle East.

The other US midcourse interceptor is the Navy's ship-based Aegis SM-3 combination, which builds on the Navy's Standard Missile, the Aegis radar system, and the Pentagon's command, communication, and control systems. The Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense System (BMD) can defeat short- to intermediate-range, midcourse-phase ballistic missile threats, either unitary or separating, as well as short-range ballistic missiles in the terminal phase. The SM-3 consists of a kill vehicle attached to a three-stage booster. It intercepts missiles, warheads, and other targets above the atmosphere in their midcourse phase of flight using a "hit-to-kill" collision in which the target is destroyed through the kinetic energy released when the EKV collides with it. The Obama administration has expanded the Aegis SM-3 system to make it the main BMD effort, especially for intercepting long-range ballistic missiles in their midcourse phase. Unlike ground-based midcourse defense weapons (GMD), the ship-based Aegis BMD system can be maneuvered and reconfigured more easily to respond to changes in the threat environment.

Missile Defense Agency and Navy plans call for deploying increasingly capable versions of the SM-3 on US warships in coming years. The next version is scheduled for deployment in 2015. It has an improved two-color infrared seeker to better identify the target (despite adversary debris and other countermeasures), an advanced signal processor to take advantage of recent upgrades to the Aegis system's capabilities, and an enhanced control system that employs short, precise propulsion bursts to adjust course as it approaches the target. It has a greater maximum velocity, a longer flight time, and is capable of attacking targets at a greater distance.

The United States and Japan have cooperated in developing certain technologies for the third SM-3 variant, with Japan funding a significant share of the effort and leading the development of the second- and third-stage rocket motors and nose cone. Its initial flight test is scheduled for 2015, with a transition for full production around 2018. In addition to the expected deployment on US and Japanese warships, the United States plans to place some of the new SM-3s in Poland and perhaps elsewhere.

The United States currently has two terminal-phase, land-based interceptors, the PAC-3 and the THAAD. The Patriot Advanced Capability-3 missile interceptor battery, which is used by the US Army and many US partners, builds on the proven Patriot air and missile defense infrastructure, such as the PAC-2 that the United States used during the Gulf War against Iraqi SCUDs. Whereas the PAC-2 employs blast fragmentation warheads to destroy nearby missiles and warheads, the PAC-3 relies on the more sophisticated "hit-to-kill" technology, which destroys the target through the kinetic energy generated by a midair collision.

The PAC-3 can work with the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system now under development, which can intercept short- and medium-range missiles in their terminal phase using a hit-to-kill approach. It is presently the only interceptor in the US arsenal with the operational flexibility to intercept missiles both inside and outside of Earth's atmosphere. A THAAD battery consists of four main components: a truck-mounted launcher, eight interceptors, a radar, and a fire control system, which serves as the communication and data-management backbone linking the THAAD



components together as well as to the rest of the ballistic missile defense system. The first THAAD battery was activated in 2008, the second a year later. The Missile Defense Agency hopes the third and fourth batteries will be fielded in the next two years.

A serious gap in current missile defense planning would occur if the threat of an attack against the US homeland developed more rapidly than the US technology advances needed to defend against it. The best strategy to deal with these gaps would be to focus more on improving and multiplying existing capabilities in the near term while preparing to develop significantly more capable systems over the long term. In particular, an increased reliance on Aegis and newer SM-3s would yield considerable advantages in the protection of the US homeland as well. This option would cost significantly less than developing a new system, can be made available more rapidly, uses proven technology, and does not depend on making improbable revolutionary breakthroughs.

Relying only on the US-based GBIs would be risky. This system has had a modest fifty-percent success rate in its interception tests, having destroyed incoming missiles in only seven of fourteen tests. The last time the GBIs in Alaska and California destroyed a target was in 2008. The latest version of the EVK (the “kill vehicle”) failed its first two tests in January and December 2010. The Pentagon believes it has identified the reason for the failure—a fault in the guidance system—but demonstration tests are still needed to verify that the problem has been resolved. In addition to the low success rate, another concern is that most tests have not employed decoy missiles, which would likely be present in genuine attacks (either as deliberate penetration aides or simply as pieces of the rocket or other debris). In a September 2012 report, the National Research Council said that the ground-based midcourse defense system has fundamental weaknesses, including a vulnerability to counter-measures, meaning that “it will not be able to work against any but the most primitive attacks” without further upgrades and testing.

Besides technical impediments, lack of funding remains a major constraint on the development of US ballistic missile defense (BMD) capabilities. The decisions announced by Defense Secretary Hagel in March 2013 will not add new any money to US BMD programs, but will instead redirect what has already been allocated. The Missile Defense Agency is now struggling to meet the military’s demands for more assets, even as the agency tries to develop new technologies to stay ahead of advances being made by likely adversaries. The number of potential hostile missiles continues to increase, as do their capabilities.

As the Obama administration emphasizes a shift toward a sea-based missile defense platform, and as China continues to develop its own anti-ship missile capabilities, the Navy also faces an ever-increasing strain. The current US Navy fleet consists of some two dozen Aegis-equipped cruisers and destroyers. These vessels have many important missions in addition to their vital defense role. The expected demand for Aegis ships will rise to more than forty in coming years, which will require the Navy to increase its baseline surface combatant inventory to more than eighty-eight vessels or reduce support for other missions. The need to increase the number of air and missile defense ships will be met by modernizing existing destroyers and cruisers, as well as restarting the production of Arleigh Burke class DDG 51 Flight IIA destroyers with BMD capabilities. Naval BMD capabilities will also be reinforced by the FY2016 construction of Flight III Arleigh Burke class destroyers. These ships will potentially have new hybrid electric drive systems, electromagnetic rail guns, and solid-state air defense lasers. But until these BMD vessel capabilities are expanded, current BMD ships may experience longer deployments and shorter inter-deployment periods.

The Missile Defense Agency must also improve the United States’ space-based missile-tracking capacity to defend against long-range ICBMs. And allies require BMD interceptors, thus driving up the demand for additional ordnance. The Aegis air and missile defense systems (the AN/SPY-1 and the MK99) can be found on more than one hundred warships, mostly on US Navy cruisers and destroyers, but also on seventeen allied foreign vessels. Greater efforts will be needed to integrate US and foreign missile defense capabilities in coming years.

Filling the gaps in US ballistic missile defense capabilities will inevitably force painful trade-offs between national homeland and regional defenses. The timely identification of threats is essential for their neutralization. This requires persistent intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities at both the global and regional level. Even so, these measures can have only a limited impact. Fundamentally, numbers matter, a fact of life to bear in mind as the United



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States and its allies continue to develop a flexible missile defense architecture with mobile assets that can be deployed in other theaters in an emergency, while also providing a homeland defense network that can be augmented and upgraded as the threat evolves.

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This article appeared at World Affairs and is reprinted with permission.

<http://www.eurasiareview.com/07092013-us-missile-defense-closing-the-gap-oped/>

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Foreign Policy in Focus

OPINION/Article

Prompt Global Strike Too Prompt for Its Own Good?

As with nuclear weapons on high alert, non-nuclear missiles can rush the enemy into a bad decision.

By Russ Wellen

September 9, 2013

Conventional Prompt Global Strike (CPGS), still under development, is a weapons system designed to provide the military with the option to strike fast, even on the other side of the world. It affords the speed of nuclear intercontinental ballistic missiles, but without nowhere near the destructive power of a nuclear warhead.

I know, it's odd that intercontinental missiles have never been developed without warheads, or that they weren't developed first. Even though it's not nuclear, CPGS comes with its own set of problems. Foremost among them: that a state targeted might experience difficulty determining if the incoming is a CPGS or a nuclear warhead – with the retaliation decisions the latter would entail. At Global Security Newswire, Elaine Grossman outlines its other problems.

“Non-ballistic CPGS weapons, which are highly maneuverable, could possibly lead an observing state [that is, one that's not targeted – RW] to wrongly conclude that an incoming weapon was heading for its territory,” states a Carnegie Endowment analysis, explaining how so-called “conventional prompt global strike” arms might pose what it terms “destination ambiguity.”

Besides that

A foreign nation with advanced early-warning intelligence capabilities — such as Russia fields today and China may have in the future — also might be uncertain whether a U.S. maneuverable, fast-strike weapon is on the verge of taking out its own atomic weapons, according to James Acton's report, “Silver Bullet? Asking the Right Questions About Conventional Prompt Global Strike.”

“A state could mistakenly believe that its nuclear forces were under attack when its conventional forces were really the target,” a situation that the author calls “target ambiguity.”

... “A state that feared its critical weapon systems — particularly nuclear weapons — were vulnerable to a preemptive CPGS strike could feel pressure to use or threaten to use those weapons first, [creating] crisis instability,” according to the report.

“Destination ambiguity,” “target ambiguity” ... talk about putting the “big” in ambiguity. Acton's suggestion?

... “there needs to be a comparison of whether non-prompt alternatives might be more cost effective.”

Presumably, he means human cost, as well. Ideally, as with nuclear weapons, in the words of George Gershwin, “Let's call the whole thing off.” Failing that, as with launch-ready, high-alert nuclear weapons that encourage a quick decision about whether to respond: “Let's slow the whole thing down.”

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Russ Wellen edits the Foreign Policy in Focus blog Focal Points for the Institute of Policy Studies. A student of the metaphysics of nuclear weapons, he has written about disarmament for a variety of publications such as AlterNet, Asia Times Online, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, the Journal of Psychohistory, and Truthout.

<http://fpif.org/prompt-global-strike-prompt-good/>

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SPACE.com

OPINION/Space Insider Columnist

Mysterious Actions of Chinese Satellites Have Experts Guessing

By Leonard David, SPACE.com's Space Insider Columnist

September 09, 2013

A set of three mysterious satellites has experts guessing about the Chinese space program's intentions. No one really knows what the Chinese are up to, and everything is speculation.

That appears to be the consensus of space experts tracking a set of Chinese spacecraft. Some have speculated that the Chinese are testing possible anti-satellite technology, while others have described the satellites as prosaic probes meant to sharpen the country's overall space skills.

Under debate are the orbital antics of several newcomers to space — the Chinese satellites Shiyang-7, Chuangxin-3 and Shijian-15 — which all launched into orbit together on July 20. Experts are also discussing the actions of China's elder spacecraft Shijian-7, which launched more than eight years ago.

One of the trio of new Chinese satellites, Shiyang-7 (SY-7, Experiment 7), has since made a sudden maneuver. That satellite had already finished a series of orbital alterations that put it close to one of the companion satellites with which it was launched, the Chuangxin-3 (CX-3).

"Suddenly, however, it made a surprise rendezvous with a completely different satellite, Shijian 7 (SJ-7, Practice 7), launched in 2005," noted Marcia Smith, a space policy analyst and founder and editor of SpacePolicyOnline.com.

'Arming' the heavens?

Soon after the July launch, it was known that one of the three satellites carried "a prototype manipulator arm to capture other satellites," a tool that might be "a predecessor of an arm destined to be aboard China's large space station, set for launch in 2020 or soon thereafter," wrote Bob Christy on zarya.info. (SpacePolicyOnline.com also reported the news.)

Christy could not confirm at the time which of the three satellites carried that arm.

When the three satellites were hurled skyward in July, the Chinese language press specifically discussed "space debris observation," "mechanical arm operations" and the testing of "space maintenance technologies," said Gregory Kulacki, a senior analyst and China project manager within the U.S.-based Union of Concerned Scientists' Global Security Program.

"This suggests one possible project for the mission is the experimental collection of space debris," Kulacki told SPACE.com.

The recent July 20 launch also resembles the lofting of the Changxin 2 and the Shiyang 3 satellites in November 2008, Kulacki said. Changxin 2 was an Earth observation microsatellite, while Shiyang 3 was an experimental spacecraft designed for space weather experiments, he said.

From benign to malign

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The mystery surrounding the recent launches fits the Chinese pattern, said Dean Cheng, a research fellow on Chinese political and security affairs at the Heritage Foundation in Washington, D.C.

"Not sure why these are a surprise, other than that the Chinese don't tell us what they're going to do, so *anything* they do comes without a convenient press briefing," he said.

Close proximity maneuvers, like that between the two Chinese satellites, are consistent with a range of possibilities, from the benign (docking, refueling and repairs) to the malign (anti-satellite), Cheng told SPACE.com.

"But it is perhaps useful here to recall that the People's Republic of China remains intent upon establishing space dominance as part of their thinking about 'fighting and winning local wars under informationized conditions,'" Cheng said. And, even as the Chinese call for greater military-to-military contact with the United States, it's true "that they remain opaque, and that they pretty much refuse to engage the U.S. on military space issues."

That is, while China expands its space capabilities, the country is likely just as interested in military capabilities for their expanding array of space systems as it is in peaceful functions, Cheng said.

"Since space systems are largely dual use, it should not be surprising that there would be interest in the ability to maneuver satellites in close proximity ... but neither should there be blithe assumptions that this is necessarily for solely peaceful ends," Cheng said.

Choice to make

An anti-satellite (ASAT) capability allows a country to render a satellite non-operational, Smith wrote.

"China conducted an ASAT test in 2007 when it launched a satellite interceptor against one of its own satellites. The test was successful in that it destroyed the satellite, but the resulting cloud of more than 3,000 pieces of space debris in a heavily used part of Earth orbit resulted in international condemnation, and spurred efforts to develop an internationally accepted code of conduct to ensure space sustainability," Smith said onSpacePolicyOnline.com.

But both China and the United States are experimenting with close-proximity maneuvers in space, said Michael Krepon, co-founder of the Washington, D.C.-based Stimson Center and director of its South Asia and Space Security programs. Both nations have demonstrated ASAT capabilities, Krepon told SPACE.com.

Information derived from actual or purported tests for ballistic missile defense, he said, can also be applied for ASAT purposes.

"Beijing and Washington have a choice to make, the same choice that Moscow and Washington faced during the Cold War," Krepon said.

"Major powers can ramp up a competition to damage satellites, or they can arrive at tacit agreements to dampen this competition," he said. "The United States and the Soviet Union chose wisely. China has yet to choose."

Leonard David has been reporting on the space industry for more than five decades. He is former director of research for the National Commission on Space and is co-author of Buzz Aldrin's new book "Mission to Mars – My Vision for Space Exploration" published by National Geographic.

<http://www.space.com/22707-china-satellite-activities-perplex-experts.html>

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Evansville Courier & Press – Evansville, IN

OPINION/Columnist

SCHRAM: Pakistan's Nukes are Dangerous Wild Card

By Martin Schram

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Leaks from on-the-lam National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden have now exposed America's biggest nuclear nightmare.

The United States knows far too little about the uncertain security of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal, The Washington Post reports.

But as the capital cognoscenti ponder the implications of The Post's scoop, a second nightmare about Pakistan's nuclear weapons has gone unmentioned. Namely, the prospect that an accidental nuclear war could be triggered between India and Pakistan, because the bucolic borderland of Kashmir remains as hostile as ever. It could happen, as a concerned former Pakistani general detailed years ago.

The newspaper report, based on documents Snowden provided, outlined U.S. concerns about counterterrorism "intelligence gaps" inside Pakistan. U.S. intelligence fears that Islamist militants may have penetrated Pakistani intelligence and military and may be able to "launch an insider attack or smuggle out nuclear material."

U.S. intelligence remains largely in the dark about the locations of Pakistan's nuclear labs, production and storage facilities. The Post quoted a familiar expert -- Pakistan's retired Brig. Gen. Feroz Khan, a former director of arms control and disarmament now living in the United States -- on just what U.S. intelligence knows and doesn't know.

"Nobody knows how they truly do it," Khan was quoted. "Vehicles move in a stealthy manner and move with security. But it's not clear whether the cores are moved to the warheads or the warheads are moved to the core locations."

That took me back to my first talk with the same Gen. Khan, in 2002, while I was researching a book about poorly secured "loose nukes" and the possibility of accidental nuclear war. Back then, India and Pakistan seemed on the verge of war over Kashmir. Khan was concerned that in a war between nuclear neighbors India and Pakistan, even a careful general could inadvertently start a nuclear war.

"Once the conventional war breaks out, the fog of war sets in," Khan told me then. "And during war, you have deceptions. You have misperceptions."

He outlined several scenarios leading to unintentional nuclear war. Among them: India launches a missile that Pakistan knows is "nuclear-capable" -- yet it carries a non-nuclear warhead. But a Pakistani general, told it's an incoming nuclear missile, launches his nukes. The country first hit with a nuclear strike retaliates tenfold,

Here's a frightening coincidence: India and Pakistan are still at it over Kashmir. In 2013, several sporadic sniping incidents led to deaths on both sides.

George Perkovich, vice president for studies at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, noted in an interview that The Post's bad-news scoop has produced one good-news benefit.

"While it is of course bad news that we don't know where Pakistan's nuclear stuff is, it also turns out to be good news when it comes to concerns of accidental nuclear war," Perkovich said. "The good news is that since we don't know where Pakistan's nuclear stuff is, that means India can't know precisely what to target either."

Martin Schram writes a nationally syndicated newspaper column that focuses on the intersection of the news media, public policy and politics. His column is distributed by Scripps Howard News Service to more than 400 newspapers.

<http://www.courierpress.com/news/2013/sep/10/pakistans-nukes-are-dangerous-wild-card/>

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