



USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER
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MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

Issue No. 1077, 13 September 2013

Articles & Other Documents:

Featured Article: [Nuclear Weapons Labs Earn High Marks in Large Review](#)

1. [Time to Resolve Nuclear Issue Not Unlimited: Iran President](#)
2. [Israel Stockpiled Chemical Weapons Decades Ago – CIA Document](#)
3. [U.S. Sees 'Troubling' Iran Nuclear Moves, Seeks Steps by Tehran](#)
4. [Assad Ready to Give Up Chemical Weapons If US Stops 'Threats'](#)
5. [Syria Crisis: Russia Chemicals Plan Doable, Says US](#)
6. [Russian Official: Iran to Take Full Operational Control of Bushehr N. Power Plant on Sept 24](#)
7. [Elite Syrian Unit Scatters Chemical Arms Stockpile](#)
8. [China Urges Resumed Korean Peninsula Six-Party Talks](#)
9. [North Korean Nuclear Reactor Work 'Could End in Catastrophe'](#)
10. [S. Korea, U.S. Not Sending Gov't Officials to 6-Way Meeting in China](#)
11. [Agni-V Missile to Be Tested on Sunday](#)
12. [South Asian Arms Race Raises Risk of Nuclear War: IISS Think Tank](#)
13. [Putin to Offer Iran 'Arms, Nuclear Deal' at Summit](#)
14. [Development of S-500 Air Defense System on Schedule – Maker](#)
15. [Next Launch of Bulava Ballistic Missile to Take Place this Year](#)
16. [Nuclear Weapons Labs Earn High Marks in Large Review](#)
17. [Funding Cuts Would Undercut US Submarine Readiness, Presence: Navy](#)
18. [Sites for Potential East Coast Missile Defense Plan Selected](#)
19. [Attacking Syria Won't Deter North Korea](#)
20. [Pakistan: Role of Tactical Nukes and 'Full-Spectrum Deterrence' – Op-Ed](#)
21. [The Case for a Robust Missile Defense](#)
22. [Do Chemical Weapons Threaten US Extended Deterrence in Asia?](#)

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Issue No.1077, 13 September 2013

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MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

Press TV – Iran

Time to Resolve Nuclear Issue Not Unlimited: Iran President

Wednesday, September 11, 2013

Iran's President Hassan Rouhani has advised the world powers to seize the opportunity created by the Iranian nation following the country's presidential election as time to resolve the Western dispute over Tehran's nuclear energy program will not be "unlimited."

"We are ready to hold talks at any level to settle the [nuclear energy program] issue, but the world should know that the period of time for resolving the nuclear issue will not be unlimited," Hassan Rouhani said during a televised speech on Tuesday.

"The world should use the opportunity that our nation created in this election; we will also use this opportunity and we hope that we'll be able to solve these problems step by step," Rouhani added.

He reiterated that no one can strip the Iranian nation of its inalienable rights, saying, "One of the rights of the Iranian nation is enrichment [of uranium] on its own soil, of course within the framework of international law and under the supervision of the [International Atomic Energy] Agency (IAEA)."

President Rouhani underscored that Iran's rights must be recognized

"All of Iran's rights under international regulations, the most important of which is the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), must be respected," Rouhani noted.

"We are fully prepared for holding serious talks with the world, the P5+1 (the five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany) and also the IAEA," Rouhani said.

Iran and the P5+1 have held several rounds of talks on a range of issues, with the main focus being on Iran's nuclear energy program.

The two sides wrapped up their latest round of negotiations on April 6 in the Kazakh city of Almaty. An earlier round had been held in Almaty on February 26-27.

The United States, Israel and some of their allies falsely claim that Iran is pursuing non-civilian objectives in its nuclear energy program, with the US and the European Union using the unfounded allegation as a pretext to impose illegal sanctions on Iran.

Tehran strongly rejects the claim against its nuclear energy program, maintaining that as a committed signatory to the NPT and a member of the IAEA, it has the right to use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

Meanwhile, numerous inspections of Iran's nuclear facilities by the IAEA have never found any evidence showing that the Iranian nuclear energy program has been diverted toward non-civilian purposes.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/2013/09/11/323278/time-to-settle-nissue-not-unlimited/>

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

RT (Russia Today) – Russia

Israel Stockpiled Chemical Weapons Decades Ago – CIA Document

September 11, 2013

Israel is believed to have secretly built up its own stockpile of chemical and biological weapons decades ago, reports Foreign Policy, citing a recently unearthed CIA document.

American surveillance satellites uncovered in 1982 "a probable CW [chemical weapon] nerve agent production facility and a storage facility... at the Dimona Sensitive Storage Area in the Negev Desert," states the secret 1983 CIA

Issue No. 1077, 13 September 2013

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intelligence estimate obtained by Foreign Policy (FP). *“Other CW production is believed to exist within a well-developed Israeli chemical industry,”* the document adds.

According to FP, US intelligence agencies are almost certain that Israel possesses a stockpile of nuclear weapons that the Middle Eastern country developed in the 1960s and 1970s as part of its defense against a possible attack from Arab neighbors.

For years, arms control analysts have speculated that Israel built up a range of chemical and biological weapons to complement its alleged nuclear arsenal.

Experts’ attention, in particular, was focused on the Israel Institute for Biological Research (IIBR) at Ness Ziona, located 20 kilometers south of Tel Aviv. The highly-classified research center operated and funded by the Israel Ministry of Defense is alleged to be a military facility manufacturing chemical and biological weapons. The IIBR was allegedly involved in several “accidents.” In one of them, according to the British Foreign Report in 1998, authorities were close to ordering evacuation of homes in the area before scientists discovered there was no threat to the population.

However, to date not much evidence has been published about Israel possessing chemical or nuclear weapons. The newly-discovered CIA memo may be the strongest indication yet, FP writes.

“While we cannot confirm whether the Israelis possess lethal chemical agents,” the CIA document is quoted as saying, *“several indicators lead us to believe that they have available to them at least persistent and non-persistent nerve agents, a mustard agent, and several riot-control agents, marched with suitable delivery systems.”*

The “non-persistent agent” mentioned in the secret document was likely sarin – a nerve gas that was allegedly used in the August 21 chemical weapons attack in a Damascus suburb, FP writes. The US blamed the Syrian government for the attack and threatened to launch a military strike in response.

The 1983 CIA memo reveals that US intelligence was aware of Israeli alleged chemical weapons-testing activities since the early 1970s – when they learned from intelligence sources about the existence of chemical weapons testing grounds. It is almost certain that these test areas were located in Negev Desert, in southern Israel, FP writes.

Israel stepped up its research and development work on chemical weapons following the end of the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, according to the CIA document. The war began when Egypt and Syria launched a joint surprise attack against Israel as the nation was celebrating Yom Kippur – the most sacred day in the Jewish calendar.

“Israel, finding itself surrounded by frontline Arab states with budding CW capabilities, became increasingly conscious of its vulnerability to chemical attack,” the document says. *“Its sensitivities were galvanized by the capture of large quantities of Soviet CW-related equipment during both the 1967 Arab-Israeli and the 1973 Yom Kippur wars. As a result, Israel undertook a program of chemical warfare preparations in both offensive and protective areas.”*

The report also claims that in January 1976, American intelligence detected “possible tests” of Israeli chemical weapons very likely to have taken place in the Negev Desert. FP cites a former US Air Force intelligence officer, who told the magazine that the National Security Agency intercepted communications indicating that Israeli air force fighter-bombers carried out a simulated low-level chemical weapons delivery missions at a bombing range in the Negev.

<http://rt.com/news/israel-chemical-weapons-sarin-714/>

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

The Daily Star – Lebanon

U.S. Sees 'Troubling' Iran Nuclear Moves, Seeks Steps by Tehran

By Fredrik Dahl, Reuters

Wednesday, September 11, 2013



VIENNA -- The United States said on Wednesday it saw "troubling developments" in Iran's nuclear program and called on the country's new president to take concrete steps soon to ease concerns about Tehran's aims.

Reinforcing the West's message at a meeting of the U.N. nuclear watchdog that time was of the essence in moving to resolve the decade-old nuclear dispute, the European Union told Tehran that any "further procrastination is unacceptable".

Both the United States and the 28-nation EU expressed hope that the election of Hassan Rouhani, a relative moderate who took office as new Iranian president in early August, would lead to a softening of the Islamic state's nuclear defiance.

But they also said Iran had continued to increase its nuclear capacity in recent months and that no progress had been made so far in a long-stalled U.N. investigation into suspected atomic bomb research by Iran, which denies any such activity.

They warned that they may seek diplomatic action against Iran at the next quarterly meeting of the 35-nation board of the U.N.'s International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), in late November, if no progress has been achieved by then.

U.S. Ambassador Joseph Macmanus said Washington was ready to work with the new Iranian government "to reach a diplomatic solution that will fully address the international community's concerns" about Iran's nuclear program.

"We are hopeful that the Rouhani administration will live up to its assurances of transparency and cooperation by taking concrete steps over the next several months," he told the closed-door board meeting, according to a copy of his speech.

But, Macmanus added, "should Iran continue its intransigence and obfuscation, we will work with fellow board members at the November board meeting to hold Iran appropriately accountable."

Iran says it is enriching uranium only for civilian energy and medicine. The West suspects the program is covertly oriented towards developing a nuclear weapons capability.

"TWO TO TANGO"

Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, tasked with leading nuclear negotiations, said on Wednesday Iran's nuclear work ought to be operated transparently and under international safeguards, but world powers could not "wish it away".

Zarif, a U.S.-educated former ambassador to the United Nations, is regarded favorably by Western diplomats.

"Getting to yes is our motto ... but it takes two to tango," he said in a live interview on Iranian broadcaster Press TV.

Iran's last round of talks with the big powers - the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council plus Germany, dubbed the P5+1 - was in April in Kazakhstan, before Rouhani's election, and both sides have said they want to continue soon.

"If the United States and the rest of the P5+1 group are not prepared to get seriously involved in this process then it will be a totally different scenario," Zarif said in English.

Citing the IAEA's latest report on Iran, Macmanus said it had expanded its enrichment capacity by continuing to install advanced and first-generation centrifuges. "These are concerning escalations of an already prohibited activity," he said.

Iran was also making further progress in the construction of the Arak reactor, which can yield plutonium for bombs, including putting the reactor vessel in place and beginning to make fuel.

"All of these are troubling developments," Macmanus added.

Iran has been engaged in on-off negotiations with major world powers for more than a decade, and has been subjected to several rounds of U.N. and Western economic sanctions.



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Separately, Iran and the IAEA have held ten rounds of talks since early 2012 in an attempt by the U.N. agency to resume its investigation into what it calls the "possible military dimensions" to Iran's nuclear program, so far without success.

A new meeting is set for September 27 in Vienna, seen by Western diplomats as a key test of the new Iranian government's intentions. "International concerns will only be allayed by concrete actions, not by words," the EU statement said.

Additional reporting by Yeganeh Torbati in Dubai with editing by Andrew Roche.

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/ArticleRelated.aspx?id=230907>

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

RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

Assad Ready to Give Up Chemical Weapons If US Stops ‘Threats’

12 September 2013

MOSCOW, September 12 (RIA Novosti) – Syrian President Bashar Assad said Thursday that his government would put its chemical weapons under international supervision within a month after it signs the UN Chemical Weapons Convention, but only if the United States stops its “policy of threats.”

“Syria will send an appeal to the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in a few days. [The appeal] will have the technical documents necessary to sign the agreement,” Assad said in an interview with Rossiya-24 television.

“These are standard procedures, and we will follow them,” he added, speaking in Arabic with a Russian translation.

Assad emphasized, however, that Syria would not follow such procedures unilaterally while facing US threats and international support of rebel forces.

“When we see that the US genuinely stands for stability in our region, stops threatening us with military intervention and stops supplying terrorists with weapons, then we will consider it possible to finalize all necessary procedures and they will become legitimate and acceptable for Syria,” he said.

Assad warned that an attack on Syria would destroy the whole Middle East, and he called on other countries in the region, especially Israel, to destroy their stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction.

“I think any war against Syria will turn into a war that would destroy the whole region and the Middle East will enter the stretch of troubles and instability that would last for dozens of years, affecting future generations,” he said.

“If we really want stability in the Middle East, all the countries [in the region] must honor the agreements. And the first country to do so is Israel because it possesses nuclear, chemical and biological weapons – all types of weapons of mass destruction,” Assad stressed.

The Syrian president also praised Russia for its efforts aimed at finding a diplomatic solution for the Syrian crisis.

“Russia plays an extremely important role in this process because we do not trust Americans and we do not have contacts with the US,” he said, adding that Russia is the only country capable of ensuring the success of the Syrian peace settlement.

Assad’s interview comes as Russian and US chemical weapons experts and diplomats prepare to attend a series of bilateral meetings on the Syrian crisis later Thursday and Friday in Switzerland.

The hastily organized talks are meant to discuss Moscow’s plan, proposed Monday, to avert a US attack on Syria by placing Damascus’ chemical weapons under international control.

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<http://en.rian.ru/world/20130912/183388368/Assad-Says-Ready-to-Give-Up-Chemical-Weapons-If-US-Stops-Threats.html>

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

BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) News – U.K.
12 September 2013

Syria Crisis: Russia Chemicals Plan Doable, Says US

Russia's plan to dismantle Syria's chemical arsenal is "doable but difficult", according to US officials.

The Russian and US foreign ministers are due to hold talks in Geneva over the plan, which involves Syria handing its stockpile to foreign observers.

Both sides are taking teams of experts, saying the disarmament process could be long and highly complex.

The US accuses the Syrian regime of killing hundreds in a poison-gas attack in the Damascus suburbs on 21 August.

The regime denies the allegations, but has agreed to abide by Russia's disarmament plan.

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad has appeared on Russian television to confirm that Syria would concede control of its chemical weapons.

But he said it was because of a Russian initiative on the issue and not the threat of American military action.

Russia's foreign minister Sergei Lavrov has now outlined three main phases of the proposal:

- Syria joins the Chemical Weapons Convention, which outlaws the production and use of the weapons
- Syria reveals where its chemical weapons are stored and gives details of its programme
- Experts decide on the specific measures to be taken

Mr Lavrov, completing a visit to Kazakhstan, said: "I am sure that there is a chance for peace in Syria. We cannot let it slip away."

He did not mention the destruction of the weapons, which is thought to be a sticking point in Moscow's negotiations with Damascus.

He is due to discuss the plan with US Secretary of State John Kerry, who will first hold talks with UN-Arab League Syria envoy Lakhdar Brahimi.

Officials travelling with Mr Kerry said they wanted a rapid agreement with the Russians on principles for the process, including a demand for Syria to give a quick, complete and public declaration of its stockpile.

The US postponed plans to launch military strikes on Syria after Russia proposed the disarmament earlier this week.

Russian media have hailed the move as a diplomatic coup.

President Vladimir Putin affirmed this view by writing an opinion piece in the New York Times lambasting US policy, saying strikes would lead to an upsurge in terrorism.

"The potential strike by the United States against Syria, despite strong opposition from many countries and major political and religious leaders, including the Pope, will result in more innocent victims and escalation, potentially spreading the conflict far beyond Syria's borders," he wrote.

However, Western officials and the Syrian opposition remain sceptical over the willingness of President Assad's government to give up its arsenal.

State department officials have been stressing the exploratory nature of the talks with the Russians, saying they want "to see if there's reality here, or not".



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CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL
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UK Foreign Secretary William Hague said the Russian plan "must be treated with great caution".

And experts have pointed out the difficulty of conducting such a process in a war zone.

The rebels have already refused to co-operate.

Gen Salim Idriss of the Free Syrian Army said he categorically rejected the plan, and insisted that the most important thing was to punish the perpetrators of chemical attacks.

If the talks are successful, the US hopes the disarmament process will be agreed in a UN Security Council resolution.

However, Russia has already objected to a draft resolution that would be enforced by Chapter VII of the UN charter, which would in effect sanction the use of force if Syria failed in its obligations.

Russia regards as unacceptable any resolution backed by military force, or a resolution that blames the Syrian government for chemical attacks.

More than 100,000 people have died since the uprising against President Assad began in 2011.

Russia, supported by China, has blocked three draft resolutions condemning the Assad government.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-24063711>

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

FARS News Agency – Iran
Friday, September 13, 2013

Russian Official: Iran to Take Full Operational Control of Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant on Sept 24

TEHRAN (FNA) - A senior Russian official underlined that full control of the first phase of the Bushehr nuclear power plant in Southern Iran will be handed over to Iranian technicians later this month.

"Iranian technicians will assume responsibility for the first operational unit of the facility on September 24," Russian President's Foreign Policy Advisor Yuri Viktorovich Ushakov told reporters on Thursday.

He noted that Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Iranian counterpart Hassan Rouhani will discuss the use of peaceful nuclear energy by Iran on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in the Kyrgyz capital city of Bishkek on Friday.

In relevant remarks last month, Director of Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant Hossein Derakhshandeh announced that the Iranian experts will take the operational control of the Bushehr nuclear power plant from Russia in the next two months.

He underlined that the Bushehr atomic power plant has entered the operational phase for safe and sustainable generation of electricity.

Head of the Russian State Nuclear Energy Corporation Sergey Kiriyyenko said last month that his company is ready to transfer the full operational control of Iran's Bushehr nuclear power plant to the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI).

"The state company (Rosatom) will soon sign the documents to transfer the full operational control of the Bushehr nuclear power plant to Iran," Kiriyyenko said.

The Russian official underlined that Bushehr nuclear power plant is currently operating at 100-percent capacity and the process of preparing it for transfer to the project originator (Iran) is concluding.

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Rosatom's construction arm, Atomstroyeksport, took over construction of Bushehr nuclear power plant after a German company pulled out of the project after the victory of the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran.

The Islamic Republic signed the Bushehr contract with Russia in 1995 and the nuclear power plant reached its full capacity by August 2012.

The Bushehr nuclear power plant is located about 18 kilometers South of the provincial capital.

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13920622000452>

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

The Wall Street Journal
September 13, 2013

Elite Syrian Unit Scatters Chemical Arms Stockpile

Assad Regime Has Moved Weapons to as Many as 50 Sites

By ADAM ENTOUS, JULIAN E. BARNES and NOUR MALAS

Page – A1

A secretive Syrian military unit at the center of the Assad regime's chemical weapons program has been moving stocks of poison gases and munitions to as many as 50 sites to make them harder for the U.S. to track, according to American and Middle Eastern officials.

The movements of chemical weapons by Syria's elite Unit 450 could complicate any U.S. bombing campaign in Syria over its alleged chemical attacks, officials said. It also raises questions about implementation of a Russian proposal that calls for the regime to surrender control of its stockpile, they said.

U.S. and Israeli intelligence agencies still believe they know where most of the Syrian regime's chemical weapons are located, but with less confidence than six months ago, U.S. officials said.

Secretary of State John Kerry met Thursday in Geneva with his Russian counterpart to discuss a road map for ending the weapons program. The challenges are immense, Mr. Kerry said.

The U.S. alleges a chemical-weapons attack by the Syrian government on Aug. 21 killed more than 1,400 people, including at least 400 children. Syrian President Bashar al-Assad on Thursday again denied any involvement in a chemical attack, but he said his government was prepared to sign an agreement banning the use of chemical weapons. Syrian officials couldn't immediately be reached for comment on the weapons.

Unit 450—a branch of the Syrian Scientific Studies and Research Center that manages the regime's overall chemicals weapons program—has been moving the stocks around for months, officials and lawmakers briefed on the intelligence said.

Movements occurred as recently as last week, the officials said, after Mr. Obama said he was preparing to launch strikes.

The unit is in charge of mixing and deploying chemical munitions, and it provides security at chemical sites, according to U.S. and European intelligence agencies. It is composed of officers from Mr. Assad's Alawite sect. One diplomat briefed on the unit said it was Alawite from "janitor to commander."

U.S. military officials have looked into the possibility of gaining influence over members of Unit 450 through inducements or threats. "In a perfect world, you would actually like to co-opt that unit. Who cares who pays them as long as they sit on the chemical weapons," said a senior U.S. military official.

Although the option remains on the table, government experts say the unit is so close knit that they doubt any member could break ranks without being exposed and killed.



The U.S. estimates the regime has 1,000 metric tons of chemical and biological agents. "That is what we know about. There might be more," said one senior U.S. official.

The regime traditionally kept most of its chemical and biological weapons at a few large sites in western Syria, U.S. officials said. But beginning about a year ago, the Syrians started dispersing the arsenal to nearly two dozen major sites.

Unit 450 also started using dozens of smaller sites. The U.S. now believes Mr. Assad's chemical arsenal has been scattered to as many as 50 locations in the west, north and south, as well as new sites in the east, officials said.

The U.S. is using satellites to track vehicles employed by Unit 450 to disperse the chemical-weapons stocks. But the imagery doesn't always show what is being put on the trucks. "We know a lot less than we did six months ago about where the chemical weapons are," one official said.

The movements, activities and base locations of Unit 450 are so sensitive that the U.S. won't share information with even trusted allies in the opposition for fear the unit would be overrun by rebels, said current and former U.S. officials.

The U.S. wants any military strikes in Syria to send a message to the heads of Unit 450 that there is a steep price for following orders to use chemical weapons, U.S. officials said.

At the same time, the U.S. doesn't want any strike to destabilize the unit so much that it loses control of its chemical weapons, giving rebels a chance to seize the arsenal.

"Attacking Unit 450, assuming we have any idea where they actually are, would be a pretty tricky affair because...if you attack them you may reduce the security of their weapons, which is something we certainly don't want," said Jeffrey White, a veteran of the Defense Intelligence Agency and a defense fellow at The Washington Institute.

Within Syria, little is known about Unit 450 or the Syrian Scientific Studies and Research Center. One of the buildings is in a sprawling complex on the outskirts of Damascus.

Even high-ranking defectors from the Syrian military that form the core of the rebel insurgency—including those who served in units trained to handle chemical attacks—said they hadn't heard of Unit 450.

The Pentagon has prepared multiple target lists for possible strikes, some of which include commanders of Unit 450.

But a senior U.S. official said no decision has been made to target them, reflecting the challenge of sending a message to Unit 450 without destabilizing it.

In some respects, officials said, the hands-on role that Unit 450 plays in safeguarding the regime's chemical weapons secrets makes it too valuable for the U.S. to eliminate, even though the U.S. believes the unit is directly responsible for the alleged chemical weapons abuses.

The Syrian Scientific Studies and Research Center answers only to Mr. Assad and the most senior members of his clan, according to U.S. and European officials. Attack orders are forwarded to a commanding officer within Unit 450.

If the Russians clinch a deal for Mr. Assad to give up his chemical weapons, any prospective United Nations-led force to protect inspectors and secure storage sites would likely need to work closely with Unit 450 and the research center, current and former administration officials said.

Gen. Martin Dempsey, the chairman of the U.S. military's Joint Chiefs of Staff, has said that President Barack Obama directed him to plan for "a militarily significant strike" that would deter the Assad regime's further use of chemical weapons and degrade the regime's military capability to employ chemical weapons in the future.

But officials said the U.S. doesn't plan to bomb chemical weapons sites directly because of concerns any attack would disperse poison agents and put civilians at risk.

In addition to satellites, the U.S. also relies on Israeli spies for on-the-ground intelligence about the unit, according to U.S. and Israeli officials.



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Though small in size, Unit 450 controls a vast infrastructure that makes it easier for the U.S. and Israel to track its movements. Chemical weapons storage depots are guarded by the unit within larger compounds to provide multiple layers of security, U.S. officials said.

Whenever chemical munitions are deployed in the field, Unit 450 has to pre-deploy heavy equipment to chemical mixing areas, which the U.S. and Israel can track.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324755104579071330713553794.html>

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

Xinhua News – China

China Urges Resumed Korean Peninsula Six-Party Talks

September 12, 2013

BEIJING, Sept. 12 (Xinhua) -- A senior Chinese diplomat on Wednesday called on all parties involved to make greater efforts for the resumption of six-party talks on the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue, the Chinese Foreign Ministry's spokesman said here on Thursday.

Hong Lei told a routine press briefing that Wu Dawei, China's special representative for Korean Peninsula affairs, held talks with Glyn Davies, visiting U.S. special representative for policy on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) on Wednesday.

The two diplomats had an in-depth exchange of views on the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue and resumption of the six-party talks, Hong said.

Wu urged greater efforts for denuclearization of the peninsula, maintaining peace and stability in the area as well as resolving related issues through dialogue and consultation so as to create conditions for the resumption of the six-party talks, according to the spokesman.

Wu noted that his talks with Davies were held close to the 10th anniversary of the first round of the six-party talks and the eighth anniversary of the Sept. 19, 2005 joint statement, Hong said, adding that the two sides agreed to continue to maintain close communication on related issues.

The six-party talks, which gather China, Russia, the United States, the DPRK, the Republic of Korea and Japan, have been stalled since late 2008.

Hong said the Chinese side noticed reports that the DPRK may have restarted a reactor at its Yongbyon nuclear complex.

The spokesman stressed that it is China's consistent position to achieve denuclearization on the peninsula and safeguard peace and stability of the peninsula and Northeast Asia.

It is also in line with all parties' common interests, he added.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2013-09/12/c_132715574.htm

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

The London Daily Telegraph – U.K.

North Korean Nuclear Reactor Work 'Could End in Catastrophe'

Evidence that North Korea is restarting a reactor capable of producing plutonium for nuclear weapons sparked international anger yesterday, amid warnings that putting it back into operation could end in disaster.

By Julian Ryall, Tokyo

12 September 2013

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Analysis of satellite images has shown white smoke emerging from the five-megawatt graphite-moderated reactor in recent weeks, according to the US-Korea Institute at Johns Hopkins University.

The steam indicates that the electrical system in the steam turbine building is being prepared to come online, a precursor to the plant going back into full operation.

“If it turns out that these reports are true, this would be a very serious matter,” said Glyn Davies, the US envoy for North Korea policy.

He said the move would be “a misstep on the part of North Korea because of course it would violate seriously the United Nations Security Council resolutions. It flies in the face of North Korea’s own commitments.”

If the plant does return to operational status, it would enable North Korea to produce an extra 13.2lbs of plutonium a year for its nuclear weapons programme, experts said.

There are also safety concerns about the plant, which uses outdated technology and is not subject to monitoring by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

“It is obvious that some work is being conducted, and for a long time at that,” a Russian diplomatic source told the Interfax news agency. “According to some signs, steps were indeed taken to relaunch it.”

He warned: “The reactor is in a nightmarish state, it is a design dating back to the 1950s. For the Korean Peninsula, this could entail terrible consequences, if not a man-made catastrophe.”

The reports caused North Korea’s only major ally China to re-iterate its call for the “de-nuclearisation” of the peninsula.

“To achieve denuclearization and to maintain peace and stability is what China has been advocating,” said Hong Lei, Chinese foreign ministry spokesman.

Yukiya Amano, director general of the IAEA, said that his organisation does not have a “clear understanding” of the situation at Yongbyon as North Korea has not permitted inspectors to visit the site.

Pyongyang threatened to restart the reactor in April, as regional tensions escalated after the North fired a long-range missile, carried out its third underground nuclear test and threatened the United States. It has since toned down its inflammatory rhetoric.

Analysts believe that North Korea has between four and 10 nuclear devices, built with plutonium from Yongbyon before it was briefly shutdown in 2007 as part of an international agreement to disable the facilities in return for aid to the North.

Analysts have also warned that President Barack Obama’s policy of patience towards North Korea on its nuclear weapons is not paying off.

“So far, strategic patience has not succeeded in bringing about change in North Korea,” the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies said in its annual review of world affairs.

“Pyongyang is instead moving further away from the denuclearisation pledge and closer to projecting nuclear power over long ranges,” it said.

Intelligence sources in the United States and South Korea recently warned that Pyongyang’s scientists have made great strides in efforts to miniaturise nuclear warheads to the point they can be attached to a missile. Instead of being some years off, Washington now believes that North Korea’s scientists may be as little as 12 months away from perfecting the technology.

That emphasis on the drive to build nuclear weapons over the safety of the plant means that Yongbyon is a danger to the region, believes Aidan Foster-Carter, an expert on Korean affairs at Leeds University.



"This is a very poor country with a lot of facilities that are decrepit because they have had no money spent on them," he told The Daily Telegraph. "This makes it all the more urgent to find a way out of the political deadlock."

If the plant does return to operational status, it would enable North Korea to produce an extra 13.2lbs of plutonium a year for its nuclear weapons programme, experts said.

But there are additional concerns about the plant, which uses outdated technology and is not subject to monitoring by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

"It is obvious that some work is being conducted, and for a long time at that," a Russian diplomatic source told the Interfax news agency. "According to some signs, steps were indeed taken to relaunch it.

"The reactor is in a nightmarish state, it is a design dating back to the 1950s. For the Korean Peninsula, this could entail terrible consequences, if not a man-made catastrophe."

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<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/northkorea/10304233/North-Korean-nuclear-reactor-work-could-end-in-catastrophe.html>

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

The Korea Herald – South Korea
September 13, 2013

S. Korea, U.S. Not Sending Gov't Officials to 6-Way Meeting in China

Effectively spurning one of China's initiatives aimed at reviving multilateral talks with North Korea, South Korea and the United States have decided not to send government officials to a six-nation meeting to be held later this month, diplomatic sources here said Thursday.



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"Given North Korea's attitude and the current mood, we are not in a stage yet for a gathering of government officials from the parties involved in the six-way talks," a source said.

China has offered an informal meeting of government officials and scholars from the other five nations in the now-suspended negotiations on North Korea's nuclear program. The other parties are South Korea, the U.S., Japan and Russia.

North Korea is expected to dispatch its nuclear envoy, Ri Yong-ho, to the session slated for Wednesday. China will reportedly send Wu Dawei, its top point man on Korea.

South Korea will be represented by a group of academics privy to North Korea, including Yonsei University professor Moon Jung-in, Korea University professor Yoo Ho-yeol and Sungkyunkwan University professor Lee Hee-ok, according to the source.

A working-level official at the South Korean Embassy in Beijing may attend it as an observer, said the source.

A group of prominent American scholars is also expected to join the meeting, including Evans Revere, former principal deputy assistant secretary of state, and Bob Carlin, a visiting scholar at Stanford University.

In an email to Yonhap News Agency, Revere confirmed that he is taking part in the forum.

But the State Department reiterated it has not made a final decision yet.

China, North Korea's communist ally, is stepping up efforts to resume the six-way talks, last held in December 2008.

The U.S. has called for North Korea to take actions to prove its seriousness on dialogue, apparently in reference to some initial measures for denuclearization, including a return of international inspectors to its main nuclear facilities in Yongbyon.

U.S. officials apparently lost confidence further in the unpredictable North amid reports that it appears to have put its disabled nuclear reactor back into operation.

The North also abruptly withdrew an invitation for Amb. Robert King, special envoy for North Korean human rights issues, to visit Pyongyang in early September. King was going there to try to negotiate the release of a jailed Korean-American man, Kenneth Bae. (Yonhap News)

<http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20130913000223>

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

Times of India – India

Agni-V Missile to Be Tested on Sunday

By Rajat Pandit, Tamil News Network (TNN)
September 11, 2013

NEW DELHI: The final countdown has begun for the second test of India's most ambitious strategic missile. The over 5,000-km Agni-V missile, which will be able to hit even the northernmost part of China, will be test-fired from the Wheeler Island off the Odisha coast on Sunday.

Top defence officials say the impending Agni-V launch - the first test was conducted on April 19, 2012 - is critical "because it will pave the way for a canister-launch version" of the ballistic missile designed to carry a 1.5-tonne nuclear warhead. Such a system - with the 50-tonne missile stored in a hermetically-sealed canister mounted on a launcher truck - will allow the armed forces to swiftly transport and launch the missile from anywhere they want.

The canister-launch missile system for operational flexibility will be ready for testing by early next-year. Once that is done, only three to four tests more would be required for Agni-V's serial production to begin. Full-scale induction should

Issue No. 1077, 13 September 2013

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be possible by 2015-16," said an official. DRDO scientists, led by defence minister's scientific advisor Avinash Chander, had earlier wanted to test the three-stage Agni-V in June but the early arrival of monsoon put paid those plans.

They are on Wheeler Island now to fine-tune the test on Sunday. "The missile will be tested for the entire range, with the splash or impact point being towards west Australia after its parabolic trajectory halfway across Indian Ocean. International maritime and air advisories have been issued for the test. Indian warships, with tracking and monitoring systems, have also been positioned on the high seas," he said. Once the 17.5-metre tall Agni-V becomes fully operational, India will fully break into the super-exclusive ICBM (intercontinental ballistic missile) club of the US, Russia, China, France and the UK that wield such missiles.

An ICBM is a missile that typically has a range over 5,500-km. Though DRDO scientists are confident of developing a missile with a higher strike range, the government has assessed that the solid-fuelled Agni-V is enough to meet existing threat perceptions "because only credible strategic deterrence" is required against Beijing.

China, of course, has a formidable missile arsenal. Its road-mobile DF-31A missile, for instance, can hit targets 11,200-km away, bringing all major Indian cities under its strike envelope. China also has the JL-2 submarine-launched missile with a 7,400-km range. The two-stage Agni-IV, with a 3,500-km strike, in turn, will be ready for induction by 2014-2015. The missile is similar to Agni-V in terms of accuracy and kill efficiencies.

The armed forces have already inducted the Pakistan-specific Agni-I (700-km) and Agni-II (over 2,000-km) as well as the 3,000-km Agni-III. As reported by TOI earlier, defence scientists are also working on maneuvering warheads or re-entry vehicles" to defeat enemy ballistic missile defence systems as well as MIRVs (multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles) for the Agni missiles. An MIRV payload implies a single missile carrying several nuclear warheads, each programmed to hit different targets.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/delhi/Agni-V-missile-to-be-tested-on-Sunday/articleshow/22493413.cms>

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

Sify News – India

South Asian Arms Race Raises Risk of Nuclear War: IISS Think Tank

** Pakistan's tactical arms particular worry - annual report*

** India, Pakistan must learn from Cold War, improve comms*

** Both have brushed off Western worries over arsenals*

By Myra MacDonald, Reuters

Thursday, September 12, 2013

LONDON (Reuters) - An arms race in South Asia and Pakistan's development of tactical "battlefield" nuclear weapons are increasing the risk of any conflict there becoming a nuclear war, the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) said on Thursday.

Noting that Pakistan looks set to overtake Britain as the owner of the world's fifth-largest nuclear weapons stockpile, it urged India and Pakistan to improve their communications to avoid any fatal misunderstandings during a crisis.

The think tank cited Pakistan's development of short-range tactical nuclear weapons - which in theory could be used to stop any conventional Indian armored advance into Pakistani territory - as a particular cause of concern.

"The continuing expansion of Pakistan's and India's nuclear capabilities ... create ever greater concern about an intensifying nuclear arms race in South Asia," the IISS said in its annual strategic survey.

"Pakistan's prospective introduction of tactical nuclear weapons increases the chance that a nuclear exchange will occur if a conflict breaks out, perhaps sparked by an act of terrorism," it added.

Both India and Pakistan have brushed off Western concerns about their nuclear arsenals in the past, saying their only purpose is deterrence.



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India signed a nuclear deal with the United States in 2005 effectively recognizing it as a nuclear weapons state.

RADIATION RISK

Tactical nuclear arms - which can be used at close range on a battlefield - can increase the chance of an escalation, particularly if generals feel forced to use them to avoid them falling into the hands of advancing enemy troops.

India has said it will never start a nuclear conflict but has threatened a massive retaliation if Pakistan fires first.

Deployed against an invading army, tactical nuclear weapons would cause serious radiation damage to any country that used them - a major reason why NATO countries eventually abandoned them as a counter to any Soviet advance during the Cold War.

"In such a scenario, parts of Pakistan's densely populated agricultural heartland could become a nuclear wasteland," the IISS said in an essay which gave unusual prominence to the South Asian arms race in the annual report.

Urging improved communications, the IISS noted that India and Pakistan had not engaged in significant nuclear risk-reduction talks since 2007.

And in contrast to relative strength of communications between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War, no serving head of the Indian army had met his Pakistani counterpart since 1949.

India and Pakistan both publicly said they had tested nuclear weapons in 1998.

The two countries came close to war in 2001-2002 after an attack on the Indian parliament which India blamed on militants based in Pakistan.

Relations have been relatively stable since then - a ceasefire agreed in 2003 on the Line of Control in disputed Kashmir has mostly held, even after the 2008 attack on Mumbai by Pakistan-based militants which killed 166 people.

Tensions, however, have been rising again amid uncertainty in the region ahead of the withdrawal of most foreign troops from Afghanistan in 2014.

India's foreign minister is due to hold talks with his Pakistani counterpart in Bishkek on Friday ahead of a possible meeting between their prime ministers on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly later this month.

Editing by Andrew Heavens.

<http://www.sify.com/news/south-asian-arms-race-raises-risk-of-nuclear-war-iiss-think-tank-news-international-njmvuoigeag.html>

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

The Daily Star – Lebanon

Putin to Offer Iran 'Arms, Nuclear Deal' at Summit

By Anna Malpas, Agence France-Presse (AFP)

September 11, 2013

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin meets Iran's new president for the first time this week, reportedly armed with an offer to supply missile systems and build a second nuclear power reactor that is likely to gladden Tehran and trouble the United States.

President Hassan Rowhani is set to meet Putin on the sidelines of a summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation held in Kyrgyzstan on Friday, in the newly-elected centrist cleric's first meeting with a major world leader.

The Kommersant business daily reported Wednesday that Putin will offer to supply Iran S-300 air defence missile systems as well as build a second reactor at the Bushehr nuclear plant.

Issue No. 1077, 13 September 2013

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The S-300 offer would be a particularly contentious development given it would essentially revive a contract for similar missile systems that Russia cancelled in 2010 after heavy Israeli and US pressure.

Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov told Kommersant that Putin and Rowhani were expected to discuss "working together in the nuclear energy sphere" and "questions of military technical cooperation" at the summit in Bishkek.

Putin's meeting with the leader of Moscow's long-standing regional ally comes shortly after he hosted Western powers for a G20 summit focused on Syria in Saint Petersburg this month.

Putin will make significant concessions to Iran by offering to supply Tehran with five sophisticated S-300 ground-to-air missile systems, Kommersant reported, quoting a source close to the Kremlin.

The source also said that Russia would offer to build a second reactor for the Bushehr nuclear plant, Iran's only functioning nuclear power station whose construction was completed by Russia, as a political gesture.

Putin took the decisions last Thursday, the source said.

Russia in 2007 signed a contract to deliver five of the advanced S-300 ground-to-air weapons systems -- which can take out aircraft or guided missiles -- to Iran at a cost of \$800 million.

In 2010 then-president Dmitry Medvedev cancelled the contract after coming under strong US and Israeli pressure not to go ahead with the sale of the weapons system, drawing vehement protests from Tehran.

Kommersant cited a source as saying that Russia's offer would depend on Iran's withdrawing a \$4 billion lawsuit that it has lodged at an international court in Geneva against Russia's arms export agency.

Putin would offer to supply Tehran with a modified export version of the S-300 systems called S-300VM Antey-2500, the source said.

Russia could increase supplies of arms to Iran if the United States decides on military intervention in Syria, the head of the lower house's committee on international relations, Alexei Pushkov, told parliament on Wednesday.

"If the 'party of war' prevails in the United States... then I consider it absolutely justified to suggest considering more serious measures by Russia, including broadening of supplies of defensive weapons to Iran," Pushkov was quoted as saying by Interfax.

Iran is Syrian President Bashar al-Assad's main regional ally and has warned Western powers against intervention in the conflict.

Russia has consistently opposed international military intervention against Assad and is negotiating with Damascus on a plan for it to hand over chemical weapons in order to avoid US strikes.

An arms industry source told the Interfax news agency on Wednesday that supplies of Antey-2500 S-300s to Iran "could not be ruled out in the future, but so far no pre-contractual work is being carried out by Russian exporters."

Kommersant also cited the source close to the Kremlin as saying that that Russia was ready to build a second reactor for Bushehr power station in a deal that was not "particularly profitable from an economic point of view, but is rather political."

Moscow has cooperated with Iran on nuclear power generation despite international opposition to a programme that Western powers and Israel believe is being used as a smokescreen for building a nuclear bomb, while Iran insists it is peaceful.

Russia had urged the West to soften sanctions against Iran after the election of Rowhani, a centrist cleric, in June, expressing hopes for a major breakthrough in the nuclear standoff. Rowhani has pledged greater transparency in talks.

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2013/Sep-11/230856-russia-to-renew-offer-to-supply-s-300s-to-iran-report.ashx#axzz2eclN9w52>

Issue No. 1077, 13 September 2013

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

RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

Development of S-500 Air Defense System on Schedule – Maker

11 September 2013

MOSCOW, September 11 (RIA Novosti) – The development of Russia's formidable S-500 air defense system will be completed in 2015, and the system could be put in service with the Russian military as early as in 2017, the manufacturer, Almaz-Antey, said Wednesday.

“We must finish the S-500 development in 2015. There have been no changes in schedule,” Almaz-Antey general director Vitaly Neskoroedov told RIA Novosti, commenting on reports that the development could be delayed.

“The testing will take two or three years, so the first deliveries could take place in 2017-2018,” Neskoroedov said.

The S-500, a long-range air defense missile system, is expected to become the backbone of a unified aerospace defense system being formed in Russia.

The system will have an extended range of up to 600 kilometers (370 miles) and simultaneously engage up to 10 targets.

The Russian military has demanded that the system must be capable of intercepting ballistic missiles and hypersonic cruise missiles, and plans to order at least 10 battalions of S-500s for the future Russian Aerospace Defense Forces.

The S-500 could become a trump card in Russia's response to the US-backed European missile shield, which Moscow believes may threaten Russia's nuclear deterrent.

http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20130911/183358448/Development-of-S-500-Air-Defense-System-on-Schedule--Maker.html

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

ITAR-TASS News Agency – Russia

13 September 2013

Next Launch of Bulava Ballistic Missile to Take Place this Year

MOSCOW, September 13 (Itar-Tass) - The next launch of the Bulava ballistic missile will take place later this year, Ivan Kharchenko, the first vice-chairman of the military industrial commission under the Russian government, told journalists on Friday.

“It will certainly take place this year,” Kharchenko said when asked if Bulava was going to be test fired again in 2013.

Meanwhile, investigation into causes of a recent abortive launch of the Bulava missile will take about two weeks, Ivan he said. “I think this [investigation] will take a couple of weeks,” he said, adding that there is no standard procedure for this type of incident and that the commission has not reported anything yet.

Kharchenko reminded that the Defense Minister has decided to conduct five launches of the Bulava missile to test out its technical capabilities. “I'm not sure whether all give will be conducted this year, but at least they'll start for sure,” he said. Most likely the next launch will be done by one of three Borei-class submarines currently deployed.

<http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c154/876016.html>

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

Albuquerque Journal – Albuquerque, NM

Issue No. 1077, 13 September 2013

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Nuclear Weapons Labs Earn High Marks in Large Review

By John Fleck, Journal Staff Writer
September 11, 2013

U.S. nuclear weapons labs have made significant progress in meeting the technical challenges of maintaining the nation's nuclear stockpile in a post-Cold War world, according to a sweeping new independent review released Tuesday. But shortcomings in the federal government's management and oversight of the work continue to pose significant challenges, the review found.

"We are very pleased in a positive sense with the progress of the science and the quality of the young people they have hired," said Charles Shank, a senior fellow at the Howard Hughes Medical Institute and chair of the committee that wrote the National Academy of Sciences report. But the new report by Shank and his colleagues cites unreliable funding and a culture of mistrust between the labs and their federal managers as significant impediments to success in carrying out the labs' nuclear weapons missions.

Two of the three nuclear weapons laboratories, Los Alamos and Sandia, are located in New Mexico. With total combined budgets approaching \$5 billion per year and some 20,000 employees, the labs make federal research one of the largest industries in New Mexico.

Since the early 1990s, the labs have been charged with maintaining and in some cases upgrading U.S. nuclear weapons without the opportunity to directly test their work by setting off underground nuclear blasts, as was done during the Cold War.

That poses significant technical challenges, which the labs have so far met with science and engineering work that "is currently healthy and vibrant," the review panel concluded.

Especially significant, the panel found, is the labs' work toward dealing with its aging workforce. With experts who have Cold War nuclear weapons design and test experience declining in numbers, the labs have made "significant progress" in hiring and training a new generation of replacements, the panel found. "The committee was very impressed by the enthusiasm, morale, and capability of the new recruits," the final report said.

But the committee's report also found a recurring theme – the management approach of Congress and the National Nuclear Security Administration poses impediments to the labs' future ability to get the job done.

NNSA spokeswoman Keri Fulton said the agency welcomes the report. "In particular," Fulton said in a statement, "we recognize that facilitating the quality and productivity of science and engineering by the laboratories while ensuring an appropriate degree of safety and security is an ongoing challenge."

Fluctuating budgets, with Congress imposing frequent changes, have made it hard to plan and execute the sort of long-term scientific work needed to maintain the stockpile, the panel found. "You spend a lot of time starting up and shutting down," Shank said.

That message is particularly timely, as Congress once again approaches the Oct. 1 beginning of a new fiscal year without having passed a budget. The last time Congress passed a laboratory funding budget on time was 1999, according to Library of Congress records.

"Congress ought to hear this," Shank said, "but I'm not hopeful."

Shank also took aim at the management relationship between NNSA and its laboratories, which in an earlier report he and the other panel members had described as "dysfunctional."

The report said layer after layer of environmental and safety oversight over the labs' experimental work, while well-intentioned, has the practical effect of slowing vital work. Oversight needs to balance inherent risks of work with radioactive materials in weapons experiments with benefits the experiments provide.

Issue No. 1077, 13 September 2013

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Sandia spokesman Jim Danneskiold said, "Our job at Sandia is to make sure that we have the very best people and the science and engineering tools necessary to carry out our role in maintaining and certifying the nation's nuclear deterrent. We look forward to working with NNSA to identify how we can improve the nuclear security enterprise, based on the panel's thoughtful recommendations."

<http://www.abqjournal.com/260854/news/nuclear-weapons-labs-earn-high-marks-in-large-review.html>

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

The Oregon Herald

Funding Cuts Would Undercut US Submarine Readiness, Presence: Navy

Thursday September 12, 2013

By Andrea Shalal-Esa, Reuters

WASHINGTON - Top U.S. Navy officials warned Congress that any further delays or cuts in funding would undercut the readiness of the declining U.S. submarine fleet, which is already slated to drop by nearly 30 percent to 52 from 73 ships before rebounding in the 2030s.

The drop in the size of the fleet would result in a 40 percent reduction in the deployment of the Navy's attack and guided missile submarines over the next 15 years, at a time when missile threats were growing, the officials told the House of Representatives Armed Services Committee's seapower subcommittee on Thursday.

Rear Admiral Richard Breckenridge, director of undersea warfare, and Rear Admiral David Johnson, program executive officer for submarines, said they were taking steps to respond by building new submarines faster, increasing deployment times, and extending the service lives of existing ships.

They said those measures could increase the deployment of Navy submarines, but would not give the Navy more assets to surge with if needed for a conflict. At the same time, the undersea domain is becoming increasingly important given underwater pipelines, telecommunications cables, increased shipping, oil drilling, and the shrinking Arctic ice cap.

"We face significant challenges to maintaining our undersea dominance, but we understand the challenges and are executing a realistic and economically feasible plan to address them," the admirals told lawmakers, according to the text of their prepared testimony.

The Navy and other military services are struggling to implement \$500 billion in mandatory, across-the-board budget cuts that are due to take effect over the next decade - on top of \$487 billion in cuts that had already been planned.

The Navy faces billions of dollars in costs to develop a new ballistic missile submarine in coming years at a time when it must also replace aging surface warships and fund purchases of new warplanes for its carriers.

General Dynamics Corp and Huntington Ingalls Industries Inc, which build the Navy's new Virginia-class submarines, have cut costs sharply in recent years, but executives warn that delaying orders or slowing the pace of production will send costs higher again.

Breckenridge and Johnson said the mandatory budget cuts were adding to pressures already facing the Navy after big reductions in the 1990s that led to the loss of nearly 12 attack submarines and cut the Navy's strike capability by half.

They said the Navy expected to sign a new multiyear agreement for more Virginia-class submarines in the first quarter of fiscal 2014, which begins on October 1, lauding faster production and the improved readiness of new vessels.

The new Block IV construction contract for the submarines will further reduce the lifetime cost of operating the new submarines, and scale back the required maintenance periods to three from four now, they said.

They said it was crucial to continue work on a replacement for the current Ohio-class of ballistic missile submarines that carry nuclear weapons, whose deployment has already been delayed until 2031, 20 years later than expected.

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The Navy has already delayed the Ohio-class replacement program by two years, accepting some moderate risk, but the officials told lawmakers no further delays were acceptable.

"Further delays would produce a gap in at-sea strategic requirements, as there is no additional margin to further extend the life of the Ohio SSBNs nor is it possible to accelerate the already aggressive lead ship construction schedule," they said, vowing to continue driving down the cost of the new program.

Editing by Mohammad Zargham.

<http://www.oregonherald.com/news/show-story.cfm?id=385248&US%20National-News=Funding-cuts-would-undercut-U.S.-submarine-readiness,-presence:-Navy.htm>

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

Navy Times.com

Sites for Potential East Coast Missile Defense Plan Selected

September 12, 2013

By Paul McLeary, staff writer

WASHINGTON — The Missile Defense Agency is looking at five potential locations to house a controversial third domestic ground-based interceptor site, which would guard the continental United States against ballistic missile attack.

While a site hasn't been chosen, whittling the potential locations down to a few sites will allow to Pentagon to begin environmental and other assessments if Congress provides the money to go ahead with the build.

In a statement on Sept. 12, MDA director Navy Vice Adm. James Syring said that "while the administration has not made a decision to build another missile defense facility in the U.S. for homeland defense, if a decision were to be made in the future to construct a new site, completing the required site study and environmental impact statement would shorten the timeline required to build such a site."

All of the sites are already on federal land:

- Fort Drum, N.Y.
- Camp Ethan Allen Training Site, Vt.
- Naval Air Station Portsmouth SERE Training Area, Maine
- Camp Ravenna Joint Training Center, Ohio
- Fort Custer Training Center, Mich.

Despite the fact that his state is being considered for the site, Sen. Patrick Leahy has said that he considers the program to be a waste of money, and he opposes placing it in his state.

John Isaacs, director of the Council for a Livable World, said in a statement that "the United States should not rush to deploy a missile defense site on the East Coast until a need for such a site is identified and the interceptors to be deployed at the site prove effective and suitable in operationally realistic tests." The group is a non-partisan organization focused on nuclear weapons proliferation.

The U.S. already operates GBI sites at Fort Greely, Alaska, and Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif., with 30 GBIs on line, and another 14 to be added by 2017.

The issue of an additional GBI site on the East Cost sparked controversy on Capitol Hill this summer, as Senate Democrats pushed back against congressional Republicans, who included money in their 2013 defense budget markup for the site.

It was further complicated by the MDA launching yet another failed test of its existing interceptors, marking a third failed intercept test in the past five years.

Issue No. 1077, 13 September 2013

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In a written reply to Sen. Carl Levin this past June, Syring, along with Lt. Gen. Richard Formica, commander of the Joint Functional Component Command for Integrated Missile Defense, admitted that there is “no validated military requirement” for a proposed East Coast missile defense site.

The letter came in response to one Levin sent to the two officers asking if there was an urgent need to begin work on a third site. In its 2013 budget markup, the Republican-controlled House Armed Services Committee voted to set aside \$250 million for the construction of a missile defense system on the East Coast, making its second attempt to get the site into the budget after having a similar proposal shot down by the Senate Armed Services Committee last year.

The proposal from the House comes at a time of increased worry about North Korean, Chinese, and Iranian ballistic missile threats against the mainland United States and its allies, even though many analysts say that neither the North Koreans nor the Iranians are close to having the ability to hit the United States.

Nevertheless, in March Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel announced that he was earmarking about \$1 billion to fund the emplacement of 14 additional missile interceptors in Alaska to guard against a missile attack from North Korea. The additional interceptors would bolster the 26 already deployed in Alaska and four in California, and give the United States 44 interceptor sites in all.

But in July, Syring said that the government wants even more. “The 44 [is for] what we see with North Korea today,” he said, adding that there is the real potential “to go beyond 44 as we start to evaluate the threat from Iran and from other nations.”

The Congressional Budget Office has estimated that expanding the ground-based midcourse defense system to the East Coast would cost about approximately \$3.5 billion over the next five years.

<http://www.navytimes.com/article/20130912/NEWS05/309120030/Sites-potential-East-Coast-missile-defense-plan-selected>

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

The Diplomat – Japan
OPINION/The Editor

Attacking Syria Won't Deter North Korea

By Scott A. Snyder
September 11, 2013

At Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings on the authorization of use of force in Syria, Secretary of State Kerry stated that “North Korea is hoping that ambivalence carries the day. They are listening for our silence.” Defense Secretary Hagel mentioned North Korea’s chemical weapons stockpiles, arguing that weakening of the norm against use of such weapons would “embolden other regimes to use or acquire chemical weapons.” No doubt North Korean leaders are closely watching the U.S. debate over intervention in Syria, but they will exploit Syrian intervention for their own ends regardless of what action the United States decides to take.

The Syria intervention debate draws a sharp distinction between weapons of mass destruction (WMD) acquisition and WMD use. North Korea has gained WMD capabilities and seems committed to their further development safe in the knowledge that their efforts will not elicit intervention. North Korea’s rocket launch and nuclear tests earlier this year elicited rhetorical condemnation, U.N. sanctions resolutions, and even shows of U.S.-ROK military force, but no pledges of kinetic action. The fact that the debate over intervention is about Syria and not about North Korea reaffirms to Pyongyang that its development of WMDs as part of a strategy to deter the United States has been correct.

North Korea has already crossed other WMD red lines drawn by the United States with impunity, including lines drawn to prevent North Korea’s nuclear acquisition and proliferation. Today North Korea’s most prominent customer for WMD-related items is Syria. Syria nearly completed the secret construction of a reactor capable of producing weapons-grade plutonium with North Korean help before the facility was bombed in the mid-2000s. The North Korea-Syria WMD

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relationship has extended to chemical weapons, with at least two North Korean shipments of chemical weapons related cargo having been interdicted in recent years based on reports to the UN Panel of Experts. Yet chemical weapons have barely appeared on the U.S.-DPRK policy agenda despite Pyongyang's extensive stockpiles.

North Korea has successfully avoided accountability for its persistent efforts to expand its WMD capacity. The United States intervened in Iraq at the same time that North Korea was on the verge of conducting its first nuclear test. North Korea has publicly stated that the Obama administration's intervention in Libya affirms that North Korea has taken the right path by pursuing its nuclear development. A U.S. focus only on Syria, despite evidence of North Korea's support for the latter's WMD programs, will strengthen Pyongyang's belief that its nuclear weapons program is successfully deterring U.S. and international efforts from holding it accountable for its actions.

Thus, a precision strike to teach Syria a lesson on WMD use will not deter North Korea from building a capacity to directly threaten the United States or from using WMD if it deems necessary. It may instead strengthen the position of North Korean hardliners that it must build this capacity to strengthen deterrence. A U.S. strike on Syria will however provide a measure of assurance to U.S. allies who live under the threat of North Korean chemical and nuclear weapons use. Secretary Hagel's references to concerns expressed by South Korea's defense minister over Syrian use of chemical weapons and South Korea's support for U.S. intervention at the G-20 reflect these concerns.

Earlier this year, North Korea made reckless threats to conduct a preemptive nuclear strike on the United States, highlighting the consequences that may ensue from North Korea's persistent, gradual drive to marry a nuclear and long-range delivery capability that in only a few years could directly threaten the United States. North Korea is indeed watching, but its leaders are unlikely to take a lesson from U.S. intervention in Syria and instead will use whatever happens in Syria to its advantage. It is self-delusion to tell ourselves that action or inaction in Syria will prevent North Korea's efforts to build a nuclear blackmail capability.

Scott A. Snyder is senior fellow for Korea studies and director of the program on U.S.-Korea policy at the Council on Foreign Relations. He was previously a senior associate in the international relations program of The Asia Foundation and Pacific Forum CSIS. He blogs at Asia Unbound, where this piece originally appeared.

<http://thediplomat.com/the-editor/2013/09/11/attacking-syria-wont-deter-north-korea/>

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

Eurasia Review – Spain
OPINION/Op-Ed

Pakistan: Role of Tactical Nukes and 'Full-Spectrum Deterrence' – Op-Ed

By Syed Adnan Bukhari
September 11, 2013

The development of tactical weapons is of significant vitality particularly in South Asia as it is aimed at preserving "full spectrum deterrence" in the region, amid shifting strategic environment

The National Command Authority (NCA), the apex political body that deals with nuclear related matters in Pakistan, made three points under the chairmanship of Prime Minister, Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif on September 5. First, Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme was safe and secure; second, the development of tactical nuclear weapons was aimed at preserving "full spectrum deterrence" against any possible external aggression and third, Pakistan is committed to be a responsible nuclear state, avoided arms race and would remain engaged with the Nuclear Security Summit process.

The NCA meeting came in the wake of The Washington Post revelation that the US intelligence ramped up its surveillance of Pakistan's nuclear weapon programme. Its meeting is also significant when the strategic environment in the region is shifting.

Issue No. 1077, 13 September 2013

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A former Indian Foreign Secretary, Shyam Saran, now head of the National Security Advisory Board explained that India would retaliate with strategic weapons against Pakistan if a 26/11 like attack occurred on its land in late April, 2013. The statement came when India realized that its Cold Start Doctrine (now proactive operations) seem foiled with Pakistan's acquisition of Tactical Nuclear Weapons as highlighted by Dr. Maleha Lodhi in her article, "Nuclear Bluster or Dialogue."

It is to be clarified firstly that tactical nukes are meant for deterrence, instead of 'nuclear blackmail.' Second, it is imprudent to visualize a situation when an act of terrorism is responded through the use of nuclear weapons because terrorism is a global phenomenon and not related to one country.

It is imperative to flag Pakistan's rationale for acquiring tactical nukes. Unequivocally, tactical weapons have provided a strategic leverage to Pakistan's nuclear programme. They perform two-pronged advantages for Pakistan's national security; first, they maintain deterrence stability in the region and second, they add strength to battleground military operations of strategic forces of the country.

Before analysing the significance of these weapons in Pakistan's force posture, it is important to obtain know-how about these weapons. Tactical weapons are one of the variants of nuclear arsenal. They are opposed to conventional nuclear arms. These are low-yield weapons that are aimed at counter force targets instead of counter value target. These are smaller in scope and size therefore, their deployment and maneuverability is more convenient than that of strategic nuclear weapons. Their usefulness in a battlefield adds to their strength. These weapons inflict lesser damage than conventional weapons. Pakistan's development of tactical weapons plus the development of a battlefield cruise missile has spurred Pakistan's deterrence capability in the dynamic strategic environment of the region.

Evaluating Pakistan's options for maintaining strategic stability in the region, it is critical to know our strength and limitations. National power and threat perceptions are intrinsically linked for determining military security. It is believed that a prudent strategist takes into account the capabilities and limitations of its military force. In such a scenario, securitization of existential threats is made so that a country is prepared to meet any daunting challenge to its supreme national interests.

Analysing the South Asian case, India and Pakistan are key players in the regional security complex and shape the security of the region. Mutual distrust and suspicion are the inherent elements in state relations of the two. Nonetheless, a Balance of Power has been maintained in the region between the two states in one way or other. Pakistan in the past maintained this balance by adopting tactics such as alliance-formation and by means of bandwagoning. However, the Indian tests of 1974 and subsequently the 1998 test of nuclear weapons validated Pakistan's acquisition of nukes to ensure strategic stability in the region.

However, regional and international developments in the last decade (2003-2013) have altered this balance. First among them is the Indian military Cold Start Doctrine (initiated in 2004) that is aimed at carrying out a limited war against Pakistan under the threshold of nuclear use.

Second, the Indian pursuit of acquiring a Ballistic Missile Defence system that would give an ostensible protective cover to its major cities for any anticipated coming missile from enemy.

Third, the discriminatory and selective Indo-US 123 nuclear deal under the guise of Enhanced Indo-US Cooperation that would set free the indigenous Indian fissile material for nuclear weapon production.

Fourth, exceptional Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) waiver arrangement to India that would allow nuclear supplier countries to carry out nuclear cooperation with India, a country that is not a member of Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT). NSG waiver and Indo-US nuclear deal would have direct consequences on fissile material disparity between the two arch-rivals of South Asia.

Fifth, the US commitment to make efforts for India's membership in the UN Security Council and other export control regimes [Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), Wassenaar Arrangement, Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and, Australia Group]. India's massive conventional militarization is also a source of concern for regional security. SIPRI 2011 report highlighted that "India was the world's largest importer of major conventional weapons from 2006-10." These



developments create a security-insecurity paradox in South Asia. Pakistan strongly opposes such policies of discrimination, selectivity and exceptionalism.

In the wake of such adventurous doctrines and militarization in the region, Pakistan responded in a judicious manner by developing tactical weapons along with cruise missiles. These steps equalized a daunting threat to Pakistan's national security.

A critical question exists in the strategic community about use of tactical weapons and nuclear weapons. This query could be looked in the nature of security environment in the region. Hypothetically speaking, in the war pronged situation, if nuclear threshold is reached, tactical weapons can be used in battlefield for counter force targets. It would serve three purposes; one, avoidance of civilian casualties (as strategic weapons are aimed at counter value target), second, Pakistan's option to react promptly in war-pronged situation and third, it ensured Minimum Credible Deterrence.

The development of cruise missiles is indispensable for deterrence stability as it is an effective counter measure against Indian BMD capability. Successful tests of Babur (Hatf VIII) and Raad (Hatf IX) cruise missiles by Pakistan have strengthened its defence manifold. Cruise missiles are low-flying, terrain-hugging missiles that can hardly be visible in radars. They can carry both conventional and nuclear arsenals. If geographical contiguity of Pakistan and India is analysed, these missile provide a strategic leverage to the former, particularly in the wake of growing asymmetry of conventional weapons as well as fissile material production. At present, Pakistan is in a full position to carry out any anticipated war.

Pakistan developed short-range missiles on account of three assumptions as highlighted by Pakistan's Foreign Office, one, the rising conventional asymmetry in view of ever escalating defence budgets by India; two, offensive doctrines postulated by India in the nuclear overhang; and three, development of ballistic missile defence.

It is pertinent at this juncture to state that arms race neither suit India, nor Pakistan with regard to their developing economies. Adventurous doctrines and developments in the region which aim at shifting strategic environment have compelled Pakistan to respond by developing tactical nuclear weapons to ensure deterrence in South Asia.

The author is a Technical Assistant at Department of Defence and Strategic Studies, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad.

<http://www.eurasiareview.com/11092013-pakistan-role-of-tactical-nukes-and-full-spectrum-deterrence-oped/>

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

The Pittsburgh Tribune-Review – Pittsburg, PA
OPINION/Commentary

The Case for a Robust Missile Defense

By John Thorne

Wednesday, Sept. 11, 2013

The brutal chemical weapons attack in Syria serves as a horrible reminder of the nature of modern warfare. The major threat to global security is now radical actors with access to weapons of mass destruction, like these chemical agents and the kind of nuclear missiles under development in North Korea and Iran.

Rogue governments and terrorist groups have demonstrated a clear desire to develop such weapons and launch them against the United States and her allies. We have to answer this mounting threat.

Fortunately, there is a technology proven capable of doing just that. It's missile defense.

When President Reagan unveiled his vision of a missile defense shield, many derided the idea as science fiction. "Star Wars" quickly became a derogatory catchphrase. Yet in the decades since, American scientists have demonstrated that missile defense can be a practical reality. We now have the sophisticated technologies needed to effectively identify and take down incoming missile threats.



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Indeed, in February, U.S. military personnel successfully tested new shield technologies at an Israeli range over the Mediterranean Sea. And in May, U.S. sailors successfully intercepted a target over the Pacific Ocean using a cutting-edge shield system called Aegis.

Defense officials have also completed a successful test of a three-stage ground-based interceptor at Vandenberg Air Force Base in California. During the test, the system performed precisely as planned, deploying an anti-ordnance interceptor to a designated point in space.

These capabilities are precisely what America needs to counter the major threats on the international scene.

For North Korea remains undeterred in its push for long-range missiles. Just this summer, Pyongyang broke a U.N. arms embargo by attempting to ship missile radar systems from Cuba through the Panama Canal.

North Korea has engaged in provocative missile tests over the Pacific. Evidence indicates it has a small nuclear arsenal and programs to develop it further.

Iran is well on its way to developing a long-range missile threat. The clerical leaders who run the country's government are determined to pursue a nuclear weapon and are working diligently to improve Iran's already considerable missile capabilities. Intelligence estimates suggest that Iran is just a few years away from the capacity to hit targets in Europe.

America's missile shield technologies should play an important role defending against these dangerous rogue agents. Indeed, our public officials have already started to deploy missile defense systems to areas of major security importance.

In March, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel announced plans to deploy 14 more ground-based interceptors in Alaska and California to counter the North Korean threat. The U.S. territory of Guam, home to more than 150,000 American citizens as well as critical U.S. military bases, is closer to North Korea than San Francisco is to Washington, D.C. In April, a new interceptor system was positioned there to defend against the rogue regime.

Missile defense has gone from a dream to firm reality. We need to continue to invest in these technologies. They are bearing fruit just when we're really beginning to need it. And they can play a vital role in America's defense in the future.

John Thorne is a senior consultant at Diligent Innovations, a defense and national security strategy consulting firm in Washington, D.C. Previously, he spent 13 months in Afghanistan as a civilian employee of the Department of Defense.

<http://triblive.com/opinion/featuredcommentary/4681705-74/missile-defense-north#axzz2ehXR4V9c>

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

The Diplomat – Japan

OPINION/Flashpoints

Do Chemical Weapons Threaten US Extended Deterrence in Asia?

By Mira Rapp-Hooper

September 13, 2013

Prior to President Obama's decision to delay the Congressional vote on military intervention in Syria, top administration officials told Congress that a failure to punish Bashar al-Assad's chemical weapons use would reverberate with allies in East Asia.

"North Korea is hoping for ambivalence from the Congress," Secretary of State John Kerry told the House Foreign Affairs Committee last week. Similarly, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel suggested that South Korea was gravely concerned about the North's WMD capacity, and argued that the DPRK could be emboldened to use chemical weapons if the U.S. failed to uphold the norm of chemical weapons non-use.

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With military action on “pause” as the administration evaluates the prospects of a chemical weapons handover by Assad, it is worth contemplating this question: If the United States fails to take punitive action against Syria for chemical weapons use, will allies (and South Korea in particular) doubt the United States’ commitment to defend them from the same?

On one hand, there is a strong case to be made that Syria and South Korea are apples and oranges: A decision not to intervene militarily to uphold an internationally accepted chemical weapons taboo hardly suggests that the United States would fail to come to the aid of a close treaty ally if it were the victim of a chemical attack. Syria is not party to the Chemical Weapons Convention, and though it is a signatory to the Geneva Protocol, which outlaws the use of poison gas in interstate war, that treaty has no formal enforcement mechanism. The United States’ decision to intervene in Assad’s horrendous gassing of his own people would be out of a desire to reinforce a norm, rather than out of any specific, positive legal obligation.

Contrast this to the U.S.-ROK relationship. In 1953, the United States and South Korea signed a Mutual Defense Treaty, which states that an attack on either ally in the Pacific region will be treated as a threat to the peace and security of the other. Since that document was signed, the United States has deployed tens of thousands of troops on South Korean soil, participated in a joint military command structure with its ally, and coordinated action to respond to countless provocations by North Korea. Moreover, in recent years, as the United States has reduced the role of nuclear weapons in its overall deterrence posture, it has taken great care to account for South Korea’s concerns about a chemical or biological attack from the North. The 2010 Nuclear Posture Review strengthened its negative security assurances and circumscribed the United States’ willingness to use nuclear weapons to respond to chemical or biological attacks *unless* the attacker possessed nuclear weapons and was out of compliance with its NPT (read: North Korea). The United States has therefore retained the right to respond to a chemical attack on South Korea from the North using *nuclear weapons*. Given this forceful and carefully crafted declaratory policy, it is difficult to imagine that Washington would ever abandon Seoul if it were the victim of a brutal gas attack.

On the other hand, the decision-making process over intervention in Syria has proceeded in a way that may be deeply disquieting to allies, treaties and declaratory policies aside. The President’s decision to turn to Congress “in the absence of a direct or imminent threat,” suggests that the United States may delay military action even if the Commander-in-Chief deems it necessary. While, once again, South Korea is no Syria, the credibility of U.S. security guarantees not only requires the United States to convince its allies that it will provide them with military support, but that it will do so promptly in their hour of need. In an age of massively destructive weapons and long-range delivery vehicles, these promises have generally been associated with the centralization of war powers in the executive branch. The decision to pause to consider Congress’s views may stoke allies’ fears that their security could be held hostage to checks and balances. Indeed, most of the United States’ defense treaties state that it will “act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes.” In the last week and a half, said constitutional processes can’t look pretty if you’re sitting in Seoul.

Given the often-cacophonous messaging of the last several weeks, assurances to treaty allies like South Korea must be made clear. Specifically, the U.S. should state clearly that an attack on its allies, be it conventional, chemical, or anything else, *is* an “imminent threat,” and that protecting them is a vital U.S. interest. Whether or not North Korea is hoping for ambivalence, the South should get nothing of the sort.

Mira Rapp-Hooper is a Stanton Nuclear Security Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations and a PhD candidate at Columbia University. She works on nuclear strategy, signaling, and alliance politics.

<http://thediomat.com/flashpoints-blog/2013/09/13/do-chemical-weapons-threaten-us-extended-deterrence-in-asia/>

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

Issue No. 1077, 13 September 2013

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