



USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER
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MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

Issue No. 1084, 08 October 2013

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FARS News Agency – Iran
Saturday, October 5, 2013

Leader Reiterates Support for Gov't's Foreign Diplomacy, Lacks Trust in US

TEHRAN (FNA) - Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei voiced strong support for President Hassan Rouhani's diplomatic efforts, but meantime avoided throwing his weight behind each and every move that the president made in his recent New York visit, saying that he lacks trust in the US.

"We support the movement in government's diplomacy, including the New York visit, since we hold trust in the ... government and we are optimistic about it, but some of what happened in the New York visit were not proper because we believe the US administration is untrustworthy, conceited, illogical and unfaithful to its pledges," Ayatollah Khamenei said, addressing a cadets graduation ceremony here in Tehran on Saturday.

He reiterated his confidence in the Iranian officials, yet, he advised them "to take their steps strongly, but carefully and after thorough study", underlining that the country's officials should always have national interests, Islamic Republic's exalted causes and national honor in mind.

Ayatollah Khamenei elaborated on the reason for Iran's lack of confidence in the US administration, and said, "Actually, the US administration moves in the direction of the Zionists' interests, and it blackmails the entire world and is blackmailed by the Zionist regime."

Addressing the UN General Assembly meeting last week, US President Barack Obama said the US wanted to resolve the nuclear issue peacefully, and added, "We are not seeking regime change, and we respect the right of the Iranian people to access peaceful nuclear energy."

"Instead, we insist that the Iranian government meet its responsibilities under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and UN Security Council resolutions," he added.

Also, last Friday, media reports said that the Iranian and the US presidents talked over phone before President Rouhani's departure from New York.

The two presidents talked over the phone as President Rouhani was in a car and heading towards the New York International Airport.

President Rouhani and President Obama discussed different issues during their phone conversation.

The Iranian and US presidents underlined the need for a political will for expediting resolution of West's standoff with Iran over the latter's nuclear program.

President Rouhani and President Obama stressed the necessity for mutual cooperation on different regional issues.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and his US counterpart John Kerry have been commissioned to follow up talks between the two countries.

But after meeting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in New York, the US president made a U-turn, and said that "we take no options off the table, including military options" which revealed the US administration's lack of independency and decision-making power.

The United States and Iran broke diplomatic relations in April 1980, after Iranian students seized the United States' espionage center at its embassy in Tehran. The two countries have had tense relations ever since, but have shown willingness to attend talks to help resolve regional issues, including security in Iraq. Yet, the two countries have avoided talks on bilateral issues for the last thirty years.

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Washington and its Western allies accuse Iran of trying to develop nuclear weapons under the cover of a civilian nuclear program, while they have never presented any corroborative evidence to substantiate their allegations. Iran denies the charges and insists that its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes only.

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13920713001067>

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Ha'aretz Daily News – Israel

Obama: Iran 'a Year or More Away' from Building a Nuclear Weapon

U.S. president says if he were Israel's leader, he too would be 'wary' of Iranian diplomacy; acknowledges United States' 'more conservative' intelligence assessments than Israel's.

By The Associated Press and Barak Ravid

October 5, 2013

U.S. President Barack Obama said U.S. intelligence assessments show Iran is still "a year or more away" from building a nuclear weapon.

Obama, in an interview with The Associated Press, acknowledged that American estimates are "more conservative" than those of the Israelis, who say it will take Iran months to reach a nuclear weapons capability.

The president used the same timetable in March, before traveling to Israel. The United States and Israel contend that Iran's nuclear program is aimed at building a bomb, while Tehran says it is enriching uranium for peaceful purposes.

Obama also told the Associated Press that the world must "test" whether Iranian President Hassan Rohani is serious about resolving its nuclear dispute diplomatically. But he says the United States won't take a "bad deal" from Iran.

Last week, Obama spoke by phone with Rohani, marking the first direct exchange between U.S. and Iranian leaders in more than 30 years.

"Rohani has staked his position on the idea that he can improve relations with the rest of the world," Obama said. "And so far he's been saying a lot of the right things. And the question now is, can he follow through?"

But Obama said Rohani is not Iran's only "decision-maker. He's not even the ultimate decision-maker," a reference to the control wielded by Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Given the supreme leader's broad influence, some countries, most notably Israel, have questioned whether Rohani actually represents real change in Iran or just new packaging of old policies.

The president empathized with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, saying he is "understandably" very skeptical about Iran, "given the threats that they've made repeatedly against Israel, given the aid that they've given to organizations like Hezbollah and Hamas that have fired rockets into Israel."

Obama added that if he were Israel's leader, he'd be "be very wary as well of any kind of talk from the Iranians."

<http://www.haaretz.com/news/middle-east/1.550649>

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NPR (National Public Radio) - U.S.

Syria Expected To Spar With Inspectors As Weapons Hunt Begins

By NPR Staff

October 05, 2013

An international team of weapons experts is at work in Syria on the job of finding and destroying the nation's chemical stockpile. Inspectors crossed in Syria from Lebanon on Tuesday.

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But the job will be difficult and possibly dangerous, says Amy Smithson, a senior fellow at the Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Monterey Institute of International Studies.

Smithson, an expert in chemical and biological weapons, tells *Weekend Edition Saturday* host Scott Simon that Syrian President Bashar Assad has proven untrustworthy in the past and is unlikely to be completely upfront with inspectors about the location and extent of his chemical munitions.

He may also allow the joint team of experts from the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the United Nations to come in harm's way, Smithson says.

"The U.N. Security Council put the onus for providing security for these inspections on the Assad government, and when the investigators were there previously, it's very likely that the Assad government turned snipers loose," she says. "This is a dicey proposition, not in the least part because in the midst of Syria we also have Hamas, Hezbollah and al-Qaida."

Assad could also be scrambling to make his chemical weapons hard to find.

"If Assad is true to form — and previously he has stalled and delayed and done everything he could to hide evidence of his nuclear weapons program — now's the time for him to be moving things about and perhaps hiding what he wants to try keep away from the inspectors," Smithson says.

Making a challenging circumstance even more precarious, the team is operating under the Chemical Weapons Convention, which the Assad regime agreed to in September. The convention is designed for disarmament by cooperating partners, not states whose acquiescence has been coerced.

While the treaty allows access to Assad's weapons, it also give his government rights, Smithson says. Assad could potentially keep inspectors from certain areas, she says, declaring them irrelevant because they house conventional weapons or "unrelated" records.

"He can fence with inspectors a great deal. I do expect, given his past behavior, to try to hide evidence and maybe get away with what he can," Smithson says.

Intelligence experts may see through such smokescreens, she adds. However, she says, "previously there have been times when intelligence about chemical and biological weapons programs have been grossly off the mark."

Smithson expects the team will make significant progress in destroying Syria's chemical stockpile. The U.S. and Russia have powerful resources at hand to neutralize the weapons.

"There are a number of assets that the United States and also Russia can bring to bear to destroy bulk chemical warfare agents and even chemical weapons munitions," she says. "These assets involved cargo-container-sized equipment that will put water in the agent and put other chemicals to degrade it with great effectiveness."

But Smithson is cautious.

"I'm just not sure that Assad, Hezbollah, Hamas and al-Qaida are going to cooperate with this," she says. "So it's just difficult every which way you look, but there are definitely practical things that can be brought to bear."

<http://www.npr.org/2013/10/05/229384458/how-to-find-syrias-chemical-weapons>

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The Boston Globe

Despite Iranian Overtures, Anti-US Chants Continue

Hard-liners still oppose efforts by new president

By Nasser Karimi, Associated Press

October 05, 2013

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TEHRAN — Iranians chanted “Death to America” and burned the US flag after weekly prayers in Tehran on Friday despite their new president’s outreach to the West and promises of moderation and easing of tensions with the outside world.

The chants, customary after Friday services in the Iranian capital, reflect the challenges facing President Hassan Rouhani as he tries to build on the groundbreaking exchanges with Washington that included a telephone chat last week with President Obama — a gesture aimed at ending three decades of estrangement between the two countries.

Rouhani’s overtures have been hailed by both Iranian reformists and the country’s conservative clerical leadership.

But a wide array of Iranian hard-liners opposes any improved contact with the United States.

Diplomatic relations between the two were cut after the 1979 Islamic Revolution and the storming of the US Embassy in Tehran, when militants held 52 Americans hostage for 444 days.

During prayers Friday, the master of ceremonies led the crowd into chants of “Death to America” at least twice from the podium.

The chant was then repeated several times by a group of worshipers who rallied after the ceremony, burning the American and Israeli flags, as they do almost every week.

However, Ayatollah Kazem Sedighi, a cleric who led the prayers, tried to strike middle ground, saying that America and Iran should “join hands” in a struggle to overcome sanctions that have crippled Iran’s economy.

Sedighi criticized Washington over the threat of new punitive measures against Iran and urged Obama to “come and work with” Rouhani in lifting the sanctions, which the cleric said had hurt not only people in Iran but also in the wider region, the United States, and Europe.

Though Sedighi said Iran would not pull back from its “peaceful nuclear rights,” he expressed hope that Rouhani’s policies would “save the region and the world from a dead end and a crisis.”

Iran has faced repeated rounds of UN sanctions over its disputed nuclear program, which the West suspects is geared toward producing an atomic weapon.

The country is also living under tough US-led oil and banking sanctions that have slashed oil exports by half and shut Tehran out of the international financial system.

Tehran denies it wants nuclear weapons, insisting its nuclear activities are only for peaceful purposes such as power generation and cancer treatment.

In a visit to New York for the UN General Assembly last week, Rouhani agreed to restart nuclear talks with the five permanent members of the Security Council plus Germany in Geneva later this month.

Another speaker on Friday, Mohammad Hossein Saffar Harandi, who is part of an advisory council to the Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, said the United States decided to work things out with Iran through diplomacy because of the crisis it faces over Syria’s conflict.

“But, honestly, we also need them,” Harandi said, referring to Americans. “We would like to have an opening that would remove these oppressive sanctions.”

When the crowd erupted into another “Death to America” chant, Harandi said: “I did not raise that slogan that you are chanting.”

<http://www.bostonglobe.com/news/world/2013/10/04/iranians-still-chant-against-after-prayers/TFAtpHadY9rjJK1BNckOK/story.html>

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The London Guardian – U.K.

Syria Chemical Weapons Disarmament Begins

Inspectors begin work to destroy Syria's chemical weapons arsenal, with nine-month deadline to complete mission

By Kevin Rawlinson

Sunday 6 October 2013

International inspectors have begun destroying Syria's chemical weapons and the machinery used to create them, the United Nations has said.

A UN official said he could not confirm specifically what was being destroyed, but the hardware that would be put out of order by the end of the weekend included weapons and other equipment.

The team has a tight deadline of nine months to destroy the weapons arsenal, believed to include about 1,000 tonnes of toxic agents.

"Today is the first day of the phase of destruction and disabling. Verification will also continue," said the UN official, who works alongside the inspectors.

According to the Associated Press, he added: "The plan was that two types ... of materials would be destroyed: one is equipment for making [weapons], filling and mixing equipment, some of it mobile and some of it static. The other is actual munitions."

The destruction programme was prompted by a chemical weapons attack in August that killed hundreds of civilians on the outskirts of Damascus and brought a rare consensus at the UN.

Under a security council resolution in September, the first stage is to destroy Syria's capability to produce chemical weapons by 1 November.

A team from the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons was allowed into the country this month. They followed weapons inspectors who arrived in Syria after a deal was struck following the killing of hundreds of civilians near Damascus.

There were threats of military action to force the Assad regime to give up its stockpile, with the United States and France in the lead. But there was heavy opposition from Russia, and a Commons defeat forced David Cameron to concede that Britain would not be involved in any military strike.

Barack Obama avoided the possible ignominy of losing a vote himself when he put his plan for a military strike on hold after Syria's admission that it had chemical weapons.

UN inspectors are now expected to dismantle and ultimately destroy Syria's chemical weapons by mid-2014.

Videos of the dead and dying emerged online soon after sarin weapons were fired into civilian areas near the Syrian capital, prompting global condemnation. The Assad regime and the rebels blame each other.

Last month Obama said: "It is too early to tell whether [the Russian plan] will succeed, and any agreement must verify that the Assad regime keeps its commitments. But this initiative has the potential to remove the threat of chemical weapons without the use of force, particularly because Russia is one of Assad's strongest allies."

In an interview in a state-run newspaper on Sunday, Assad said the Syrian regime had begun producing chemical weapons in the 1980s to "fill the technical gap in the traditional weapons between Syria and Israel". He said production of chemical weapons was halted in the late 1990s, but provided no further information.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/oct/06/syria-chemical-weapons-destroyed>

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BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) News – U.K.

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October 6, 2013

Iran Nuclear: FM Zarif Wants 'New Approach' at Talks

Iran's foreign minister is urging world powers to come up with new proposals for talks on its nuclear programme, which are set to resume next week.

Mohammed Javad Zarif said the terms offered before Hassan Rouhani was elected president were now "history" and that a "new approach" was needed.

The existing proposals seek curbs on uranium enrichment in Iran.

Mr Rouhani has vowed to bring a plan to substantive nuclear negotiations due to take place on 15 October.

Just over a week ago, he spoke to President Barack Obama by phone in an effort to ease tension over Iran's nuclear ambitions - the first conversation between Iranian and US leaders in more than 30 years.

Iran wants talks to result in a lifting of UN sanctions imposed over concerns that it aims to build nuclear weapons clandestinely - an allegation Tehran denies.

In another development, a senior Iranian official said the authorities are holding four people believed to be involved in sabotage against Iranian nuclear facilities.

Illusions

"The previous plan given to Iran belongs to history and they must enter talks with a new point of view," said Mr Zarif, who is both foreign minister and chief nuclear negotiator.

"The players must put away this illusion that they can impose anything on the Iranian people," he told Iranian state TV late on Saturday.

The election of Mr Rouhani in June and appointment of Mr Zarif have raised hopes that Iran's standoff with the West over its nuclear programme can be resolved.

Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei endorsed Mr Rouhani's overtures to the US on Saturday.

"We support the diplomatic initiative of the government and attach importance to its activities in this trip," he said on his website.

Ayatollah Khamenei said that "some of what happened on the New York trip was not appropriate", without being specific.

"We are pessimistic towards the Americans and do not put any trust in them," he said.

"The American government is untrustworthy, supercilious and unreasonable, and breaks its promises."

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-24418073>

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Al Jazeera America

Iran Accuses Four of Nuclear Sabotage

Al Jazeera and wire services

October 6, 2013

Iranian state media reports four suspects have been arrested for trying to sabotage an unnamed nuclear facility

At least four people have been arrested in Iran for trying to sabotage a nuclear site, an Iranian official was quoted by Iranian media as saying on Sunday.



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The head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization, Ali Akbar Salehi, said officials had monitored and then arrested a "number of saboteurs" before they could carry out their plan.

"Four of these individuals were caught red-handed and their interrogations are ongoing," he was quoted as saying by the Mehr news agency Sunday, but did not release any further details about the incident.

Israel, widely believed to be the region's only nuclear-armed state, sees Iran's atomic work as a military threat and has actively discouraged the United States from pursuing a more conciliatory politics with Iran in response to Iranian President Hassan Rouhani's charm offensive at the United Nations in September.

In a much-publicized speech at the U.N.'s General Assembly, Rouhani said Iran has no interest in pursuing nuclear weapons. "Nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction have no place in Iran's security and defense doctrine, and contradict our fundamental religious and ethical convictions," he told the GA.

Iran says its nuclear work is solely peaceful and has recently declared a fatwa against the use of nuclear weapons.

In a first meeting between an American secretary of state and an Iranian foreign minister since May 2007, John Kerry and Mohammad Yavad Zarif discussed reigniting stalled negotiations over Iran's nuclear program in September.

Analysts say the contours of a deal would imply verifiable limits on Iran's nuclear activities, in exchange for a lifting of widespread sanctions on Iran.

In a long history of antagonism between Iran and the West, Iran accuses Israel and the West of being behind the assassination of Iranian nuclear scientists and of trying to damage its program in other ways, such as by cyber-attacks.

<http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2013/10/6/iran-arrests-4-nuclearsabotagesuspects.html>

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Express.co.uk

US 'Pleased' with Syria Progress

US secretary of state John Kerry has said that the United States and Russia are "very pleased" with the progress made so far in destroying Syria's chemical weapons stocks.

Associated Press (AP)

October 7, 2013

Mr Kerry, speaking at a press conference with Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov in Indonesia, said Syrian president Bashar Assad's regime deserved credit for its compliance with the UN Security Council resolution calling for the elimination of the weapons.

He added that Assad was not off the hook, but needs to continue to comply with UN demands.

Mr Kerry said it was "extremely significant" that the first weapons were destroyed yesterday, just a few weeks after the resolution passed the UN. "It is a good beginning, and we should welcome a good beginning," he said.

Mr Kerry and Mr Lavrov met today on the sidelines of an economic summit on the Indonesian resort island of Bali. Their meeting represented the first high-level talks between the two nations since they sealed a deal to secure and destroy Syria's chemical weapons.

International disarmament inspectors began work yesterday to destroy Syria's estimated 1,000-ton stockpile of chemical weapons. They are up against a November 1 deadline set by the United Nations last month to destroy the Assad government's capability to produce the weapons.

Mr Kerry and Mr Lavrov also discussed Iran and its nuclear programme. Officials from the five permanent members of the UN Security Council - the US, China, Russia, France and the UK - and Germany will meet representatives from Iran in Geneva on October 15 to hold renewed talks on the country's nuclear programme.

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Tehran insists its nuclear programme is peaceful and says it is enriching uranium to levels needed for medical isotopes and reactor fuel.

Western powers, including the US, fear Iran is trying to build a nuclear bomb and have imposed crippling economic sanctions to encourage the country to curb its enrichment program.

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/434932/US-pleased-with-Syria-progress>

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The Indian Express – India

John Kerry Urges New Nuclear Proposals from Iran

Press Trust of India (PTI)

Monday, October 07, 2013

Indonesia -- US Secretary of State John Kerry on Sunday urged Iran to come up with new nuclear proposals, rebuffing Tehran's position that the onus is now on foreign powers to unblock the long-running impasse.

Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said on Sunday that the previous foreign offer, made by the "P5+1" group at two meetings in the Kazakh capital of Almaty before the June election of moderate President Hassan Rouhani, was no longer valid.

But Kerry, while welcoming recent overtures including a historic contact between Rouhani and US President Barack Obama, said the ball remained in Iran's court.

"The group of six put a proposal on the table at Almaty and I don't believe as of yet Iran has fully responded to that particular proposal. So I think we are waiting for the fullness of the Iranian difference in their approach now," he told reporters in Indonesia after meeting Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov.

"So what we need are a set of proposals from Iran that will fully disclose how they will show the world that their programme is peaceful."

Western powers and Israel have long accused Iran of seeking to develop nuclear bombs in the guise of a civilian programme, charges Tehran has always vehemently denied

The proposals made in Almaty required Iran to suspend uranium enrichment at the 20 percent level it says it needs for a medical research reactor, and to halt enrichment at its underground plant at Fordo near the central city of Qom.

EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton, who represents the six powers in the talks, said last month that she was still waiting for Iran's response to those previous proposals.

But Zarif said that Rouhani's election had changed the dynamics.

"The previous offer by the P5+1 is history and they should come to the negotiating table with a new approach," the ISNA news agency quoted him as saying yesterday, while renewing his insistence that a deal could be reached to address the concerns of both sides.

A new round of talks is due in mid-October in Geneva between Iran and the P5+1, comprising the five UN Security Council permanent members-Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States-plus Germany.

They will be the first formal talks held since a phone conversation last month between Rouhani and Obama, the first direct contact between presidents of the two countries since Iran's 1979 Islamic revolution.

"We are encouraged by the outreach," Kerry said.

But he stressed Obama's belief that "it's not words that will make the difference. It is actions that will make the difference".



Speaking to reporters alongside Kerry, Lavrov appeared to play down the significance of Zarif's latest comments.

He said Iran and the world powers still had the same final goals, and that the leadership in Tehran "probably wanted more specifics" in the roadmap already laid out.

<http://www.indianexpress.com/news/john-kerry-urges-new-nuclear-proposals-from-iran/1179452/0>

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Global Post – Boston, MA

N. Korea Vows Not Give Up Nuclear Weapons under U.S. Pressure

Yonhap News Agency

October 5, 2013

SEOUL, Oct. 5 (Yonhap) -- North Korea reiterated its nuclear ambition Saturday, saying it will never give up its nuclear arsenal unless the United States first ends its hostility toward the communist country.

The North's acerbic rhetoric, which is not new, comes as the United States is set to launch joint naval exercises with South Korea and Japan off the Korean Peninsula's east coast next week. The U.S. naval fleet taking part in the routine drills includes nuclear-powered supercarrier USS George Washington.

"Under the condition where the United States' nuclear threat (against the North) continues, it is so reasonable for us to possess and further develop nuclear capabilities to defend its dignity and the safety of the nation," North Korea said in a statement issued through its Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of Korea, a party organization handling inter-Korean affairs.

"To fairly resolve the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula, the United States' nuclear threat, which is the very source of the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula in the first place, must be removed, along with the United States' hostile policy toward the DPRK, and the U.S. forces in South Korea must withdraw with its nuclear weapons," it added, referring to the North's official name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The statement, carried by the North's Korean Central News Agency, came one day after the country's top military organization, the

National Defense Commission, vehemently criticized South Korean President Park Geun-hye for urging the North to give up its nuclear ambition.

In its Saturday statement, North Korea again blasted the South Korean president, saying that Park "should keep silent if she has nothing right to say."

"For the rogues, who do not even have the basic knowledge about North-South relations and know nothing about manners or morality, to speak of manners and to call (North Korea) unreasonable are, in fact, an intolerable provocation and ridicule toward us," the statement said.

"The Park Geun-hye group must listen carefully to our rightful criticism and just warnings and stop making useless remarks, and behave itself in order to avoid a miserable fate," it added.

<http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/yonhap-news-agency/131005/n-korea-vows-not-give-nuclear-weapons-under-us-pressure>

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Yonhap News Agency – South Korea

N. Korea Warns of Pre-Emptive Strike to Counter S. Korea, U.S. Provocation



October 7, 2013

SEOUL, Oct. 7 (Yonhap) -- North Korea warned Monday that it will carry out pre-emptive strikes to counter military provocations by South Korea and the United States.

In a statement released by spokesman for the Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of Korea (CPRK), Pyongyang strongly denounced the agreement reached at the latest joint South Korea-U.S. Security Consultative Meeting that calls for so-called customized deterrence against North Korea's nuclear weapons.

Customized deterrence calls on South Korea and the United States to attack the North and take out the communist country's nuclear arsenal if there are clear signs it may be used against their allies.

"The military plot aims to derail the ongoing peace process and dialogue on the Korean Peninsula and can fuel tensions that can lead to a nuclear conflict," the North Korean body in charge of inter-Korean relations said in a report carried by the state-run Korean Central News Agency.

It added that the North is prepared to respond to all provocations by its enemies in Seoul and Washington and made clear if its warnings are ignored, the country will respond firmly and without hesitation.

"If our enemies try to threaten us in the slightest, the country will launch ruthless pre-emptive strikes of annihilation," the CPRK said.

The organization then made clear that talking about denuclearization when the United States is bent on plotting to invade the North shows the level of hypocrisy on the part of Washington.

The committee then lashed out at South Korean President Park Geun-hye, saying her calls on the North to give up its nuclear program are ludicrous.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2013/10/07/98/0301000000AEN20131007004600315F.html>

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The Chosun Ilbo – South Korea
October 8, 2013

Xi Pledges to Stand Firm against N.Korean Nukes

Chinese President Xi Jinping on Monday said he is against North Korea having nuclear weapons and firmly opposes any more nuclear tests, a senior government official here said.

Xi made the remarks when he met President Park Geun-hye in Bali, Indonesia on the sidelines of the APEC summit. It was already their third meeting this year.

Xi pledged that China will "strictly abide by UN Security Council resolutions" against North Korea. "We need to prevent a repeat of the vicious cycle related to the North Korean nuclear issue," he added.

He also called for an early resumption of the six-party nuclear disarmament talks "as it's impossible to resolve" the issue "through the use of force."

Park called on Xi to try to persuade the North to give up on nuclear weapons and focus instead on economic development.

The North Korean regime cannot afford to "concentrate all its energy on developing nuclear weapons" in view of reports that many North Koreans are suffering from chronic malnutrition, she said.

"The North needs to stop enhancing its nuclear capabilities. We're grateful to China for cooperating with us," she added.



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Park also expressed support for a Chinese export ban to North Korea of goods that could be used in making nuclear weapons and materials.

"Our fundamental view is that the North should be denuclearized in a way that is helpful to achieving substantial progress," she said. "It's important to realize the complete and verifiable denuclearization as early as possible."

But she differed from Xi over the six-party talks, saying the North must first take concrete steps to end its nuclear program.

Meanwhile, the two leaders hailed the first phase of negotiations for a bilateral free trade agreement as a success. Xi called for "balanced negotiations at a higher level," and Park urged "cooperation" so the second phase can be wrapped up quickly.

http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2013/10/08/2013100800668.html

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The London Daily Telegraph – U.K.

North Korea Puts Army on Alert and Warns US of 'Horrible Disaster'

North Korea places military on high alert and steps up rhetoric against 'hostile' US and South Korea

By Danielle Demetriou, Tokyo

08 October 2013

North Korea has threatened the United States with an "unexpected horrible disaster" and placed its troops on high alert in response to a major regional naval drill.

The bellicose warning was issued following the arrival of a US nuclear-powered aircraft carrier alongside South Korean and Japanese vessels in waters surrounding the Korean Peninsula.

The three nations are scheduled to operate joint naval drills in the region this week, resulting in the most recent outburst of rhetoric from Pyongyang, where all troops have received an emergency order to remain on high alert.

Warning of "disastrous consequences" due to the presence of the vessels, a statement from the state-run Korean Central News Agency said: "In this connection, the units of all services and army corps level of the KPA [Korean People's Army] received an emergency order from its supreme command to re-examine the operation plans already ratified by it and keep themselves fully ready to promptly launch operations any time.

"The US will be wholly accountable for the unexpected horrible disaster to be met by its imperialist aggression forces' nuclear strike means."

The naval drills were scheduled to start Tuesday although a spokesman for the US-South Korea Combined Forces Command warned that they may be delayed due to an approaching typhoon.

"The joint exercises will be conducted this week as planned," he told AFP.

"But like any other maritime exercises, we will continue to monitor weather conditions and adjust them as necessary."

The warning, the latest in a string of angry outbursts, came a week after Seoul and Washington signed a new joint strategy to counter threats of a nuclear attack after reports emerged that Pyongyang had restarted an ageing plutonium reactor.

The communist state has repeatedly incurred condemnation and sanctions from the international community by defying warnings against building and testing nuclear or long-range missiles.

The renegade regime is thought to have enough fissile material to build up to 10 nuclear bombs, although experts believe that it has not yet mastered the technology to deploy such weapons.

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Referring to the latest threats issued by Pyongyang, Professor Yang Moo-Jin of the University of North Korean Studies, said: "The North is simply trying to drawing attention from the outside world to the fact that it is closely watching the drill.

"It also aims to alert its people to security threats from the United States, South Korea and Japan and pave the way for shifting blame for any military tension on the peninsula to the three."

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/northkorea/10362622/North-Korea-puts-army-on-alert-and-warns-US-of-horrible-disaster.html>

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New York Times

South Korea Says North Restarted Nuclear Reactor

By CHOE SANG-HUN

October 8, 2013

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korea's main intelligence agency confirmed Tuesday that North Korea has restarted a Soviet-era nuclear reactor that the country had used to obtain plutonium fuel for bombs, according to South Korean legislators.

Nuclear experts in the United States, including at the U.S.-Korea Institute at Johns Hopkins University, reported last month that satellite photographs indicated that North Korea had restarted the five-megawatt reactor at its main nuclear complex in Yongbyon, north of Pyongyang, the capital.

Nam Jae-joon, the director of the National Intelligence Service of South Korea, confirmed the restarting of the reactor during a closed parliamentary session on Tuesday, Cho Won-jin, a governing-party lawmaker, and Jung Cheong-rae, an opposition legislator, told reporters during a joint news briefing. The two were designated by the political parties to inform reporters of part of the intelligence briefing.

Mr. Nam said North Korea had restarted the reactor as part of its plan to produce both plutonium and highly enriched uranium to expand its nuclear arsenal.

A spokesman for the intelligence service refused to confirm or deny the legislators' comments.

North Korea has yet to confirm the reported resumption of nuclear activity, although it had repeatedly warned that it was readying to restart it after a six-year hiatus.

If the reactor has been restarted, it would give North Korea the means to produce fuel for weapons. Until the North shut the reactor down in 2007 in a short-lived nuclear disarmament deal with the United States, its spent fuel had been the source of plutonium fuel for the nation, which conducted three underground nuclear tests between 2006 and February of this year. North Korea secured enough plutonium for as many as a dozen bombs through the reprocessing of spent fuel from the reactor, according to estimates by American intelligence officials.

The country has also said it is running a program that can provide it with another type of bomb fuel: highly enriched uranium.

The Yongbyon reactor, coupled with the North's uranium enrichment program, is likely to increase international concerns over the North's nuclear capabilities and its potential to export nuclear materials and technologies to other states.

Also on Tuesday, North Korea said it had put its military on high alert, warning the United States of "disastrous consequences" for moving a group of ships, including an aircraft carrier, into a South Korean port for a military exercise. But the exercise, scheduled to begin on Tuesday, was postponed because of a typhoon.

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/09/world/asia/south-korea-says-north-restarted-nuclear-reactor.html?_r=0



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The Nation – Pakistan

Minimum Deterrence Policy Being Pursued: PM

Our Staff Reporter

October 05, 2013

ISLAMABAD - Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif Friday said Pakistan was not in an arms' race with any country and was following the policy of minimal defence ability.

The prime minister made these remarks during his visit to the National Command Centre (NCC) of the National Command Authority (NCA) and a weapons' storage site.

Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee Chairman General Khalid Shamim Wynne, Strategic Plans Division (SPD) Director General Lt-Gen (r) Khalid Ahmed Kidwai, senior military officers, scientists and engineers were also present during the visit.

The prime minister reiterated Pakistan wanted peace in the region and was not involved in any arms' race, adding its strategic capability was based on the policy of credible minimum deterrence. While welcoming the prime minister, the SPD DG said the NCC was a highly secure and a fully protected facility. The PM was also briefed on the indigenously developed strategic command, control and support system, which was designed to facilitate decision making at the NCC.

Nawaz Sharif was given a demonstration of the state-of-the-art connectivity of countrywide strategic assets, which was an exclusive network and ensured an effective control over the strategic assets.

The prime minister commended the skill, expertise, professionalism and dedication of individuals as well as the organisations involved in the development of the NCC and the requisite support systems. He said Pakistan's strategic capability would continue to follow its policy of credible minimum deterrence.

Later, the PM visited a technical site where he was briefed by the commander, Army Strategic Force Command. The premier expressed complete satisfaction over the safe, secure and foolproof security architecture in place for the physical safety and security of the country's strategic assets.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif held a meeting with Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani and discussed with him key issues pertaining to security, especially in the backdrop of the prevailing law and order situation.

During the meeting, the appointment of a new chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee also came under discussion as the incumbent CJCSC Khalid Shameem Wynne is set to retire on Saturday (today).

No successor has so been named as yet because of which speculations have mounted. The decision appears to be a joint chief from either the army or the navy.

If the army retains the office, the next CJCSC will most likely be Lt-Gen Haroon Aslam, the most senior general in the army, while Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Asif Sandila could be the next man if the position goes to the navy.

Prior to the visit, Premier Sharif and outgoing CJCSC Gen Khalid Shameem Wynne visited the Kahuta Research Laboratories located on the outskirts of the federal capital. The prime minister was briefed on the country's nuclear and missile programmes. Sharif also reviewed the performance of the atomic plant.

Earlier, General Lloyd Austin, commander, CENTCOM, United States, also called on General Wynne. The two discussed matters of mutual interests.

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/national/05-Oct-2013/minimum-deterrence-policy-being-pursued-pm>



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The Economic Times – India

Nuclear Capable Prithvi-II Missile Test Fired from Odisha

Press Trust of India

October 7, 2013

BALASORE: The Government today test-fired its indigenously developed nuclear-capable Prithvi-II missile with a strike range of 350 km from a test range at Chandipur, about 15 km from here.

The surface-to-surface missile was test fired from a mobile launcher in salvo mode from launch complex-3 of the Integrated Test Range at about 9.14 AM, defence sources said.

"The missile was randomly chosen from the production stock and the total launch activities were carried out by the specially formed SFC and monitored by the scientists of DRDO as part of practice drill," the sources said.

"The missile trajectory will be tracked by the DRDO radars, electro-optical tracking systems and telemetry stations located along the coast of Odisha," they said.

"The downrange teams onboard the ship deployed near the designated impact point in the Bay of Bengal will monitor the terminal events and splashdown," they said.

Inducted into India's Strategic Forces Command in 2003, the Prithvi II missile, the first missile to be developed by DRDO under India's prestigious IGMDP (Integrated Guided Missile Development Program) is now a proven technology, said a defence source.

"The launch was part of a regular training exercise of SFC and was monitored by DRDO scientists," the source said.

Such training launches clearly indicate country's operational readiness to meet any eventuality and also establishes the reliability of this deterrent component of India's Strategic arsenal, the source said.

Prithvi is capable of carrying 500kg to 1000kg of warheads and is thrustured by liquid propulsion twine engines. It uses advanced inertial guidance system with manoeuvring trajectory.

The last user trial of Prithvi-II was successfully carried out from the same base on August 12, 2013.

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/nuclear-capable-prithvi-ii-missile-test-fired-from-odisha/articleshow/23630744.cms>

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The Times of India – India

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh Reviews Status of Country's Nuclear Arsenal

By Rajat Pandit, Tamil News Network (TNN)

October 7, 2013

NEW DELHI: Barely a few hours after the Strategic Forces Command (SFC) tested the 350-km Prithvi-II missile on Monday morning, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh held a top-level meeting in the afternoon to take stock of the "consolidation" and "funding" of the country's nuclear weapons arsenal as well as its command and control structures.

The meeting of the "political council" of the Nuclear Command Authority (NCA) was held at the PM's residence, and was attended by top ministers, the national security advisor and the three service chiefs. During the meeting, the progress in making nuclear submarine INS Arihant fully-operational towards end-2014 was also reviewed, said sources.

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A major concern of the NCA has been the delay in developing "a credible nuclear weapons triad" - the ability to fire nukes from land, sea and air. The first two legs of the nuclear triad are in the form of the long-range Agni and short-range Prithvi series of ballistic missiles, and fighter bombers, modified to deliver nuclear weapons.

But the triad will be in place only after INS Arihant sets sail on "deterrent patrols" armed with the 750-km-range K-15 missiles. At present, after its 83MW pressurized light-water reactor went "critical" on August 11, the 6,000-tonne submarine is being "readied for extensive sea-trials" at the secretive ship-building centre in Visakhapatnam. "It has to be a very careful, deliberative process since this is the first time we have built a nuclear submarine. Three more follow-on vessels to INS Arihant are already being built," said a source.

India is also at least two years away from deploying its first intercontinental ballistic missile, the over 5,000-km Agni-V, tested for the second time last month, as well as the 3,500-km Agni-IV missiles. The tri-Service SFC, till now, has inducted the Agni-I (700-km), Agni-II (2,000-km) and Agni-III (3,000-km).

The Prithvi series, with strike ranges from 150-350 km, are also fully-operational.

After the Prithvi-II test from the Chandipur test range off Odisha coast, the missile unit's commanding officer said, "Such successful training launches clearly indicate our operational readiness to meet any eventuality as also establish the reliability and credibility of this deterrent component of India's strategic arsenal to meet future security challenges."

A DRDO scientist said the missile was "randomly selected from the stock held" by SFC units for the training exercise. "Equipped with improved high-accuracy, navigation and manoeuvring system, the missile achieved all its targeting and technical parameters set for the exercise," he said.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Prime-Minister-Manmohan-Singh-reviews-status-of-countrys-nuclear-arsenal/articleshow/23662385.cms>

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DefenseWorld.net – India

India to Conduct Ballistic Missile Test by Year End: Reports

Source: Our Bureau

Monday, October 7, 2013

India is likely to conduct a trial on its ballistic missile system by the year end, for intercepting the 'enemy or target ballistic missile', at a distance 'longer than 100 kilometres'.

"We know that the talks about installing the BMD system at Delhi and some other cities have been doing the rounds for quite some time. But so far nothing has been finalised on this front. What we are working on is that in order to protect important border establishments, the BMD system can be placed in such a way that it would intercept enemy missile bang inside the enemy country itself. Thus, the target would be engaged far away from the point of deployment of the defence system and the debris would also fall far off, causing little damage to our territory," an Indian official was quoted as saying by the Times Of India.

The BMD system, part of the Advanced Air Defence (AAD) system, is being spearheaded by DRDO's Missile Complex and is a unique two-tiered or a twin-layer system consisting of two interceptor missiles for both high and low altitude interception and handling of target ballistic missiles.

http://www.defenseworld.net/news/9205/India_To_Conduct_Ballistic_Missile_Test_By_Year_End_Reports

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Defense Update – Israel

New ICBM under Development in Russia



Posted by Noam Eshel
October 6, 2013

The Moscow Institute of Thermal Technology (MITT) is developing a new Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) under the name RS-26 Rubezh. This 'medium class' ICBM attributed as 'fifth generation' missile is in a different weight class from the Topol-M/Yars, as it is intended to supplement the current missile fleet as a more transportable and maneuverable land mobile weapon system. Speaking after the June 2013 test of the missile, the head of the Main Operational Directorate of the General Staff, Gen.-Col. Zarudnitskiy said the Russian Rocket Forces would receive the first Rubezh regiment in 2014, following the conclusion of five flight tests to be conducted through 2013. He said the Rubezh missile would offer higher accuracy compared to current missiles.

RS-26 has not been seen yet in public. It is estimated to weigh 36 tons and is likely to measure about 12 meter in length – about the size of the Submarine-launched R-36 Bulava. Developed by the Moscow Institute of Thermal Technology (MITT), the Rubezh will be manufactured at the Votkinsk plant in the Urals republic of Udmurtia, where all solid-propellant missiles are made. The new missile is likely to be carried and launched from a land mobile launcher, possibly the MZKT-27291. The missile is propelled by solid fuel and carries either a single warhead, or multiple independent reentry vehicles (MIRV) – both configurations were tested this year. Commenting on one of the recent tests, in June 2013, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin, who oversees the defense industry, referred to these warheads as "missile defense killer." Combined with advanced ICBM targeting system, which is currently being developed in Russia, the missile will be able to penetrate the most sophisticated missile defenses anywhere in the world.

http://defense-update.com/20131006_r26_rubezh_icbm.html

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Defense Update – Israel

Return of the Russian Missile Trains

Posted by Tamir Eshel
October 6, 2013

Moving to decommission almost all liquid-propelled ballistic missiles by 2020, the Russian Strategic Missile Force is planning to pursue a new liquid-propelled missile by that time, maintaining high payload to weight capability that only liquid propulsion can offer. A future liquid-propelled heavy ICBM currently under preliminary design, is expected to enter service by the year 2020, and replace the remaining SS-18 Satan. The Russian defense ministry announced its plans to develop such missile in 2011. Construction of the 100-ton prototype would begin in 2014, and an operational missile could be ready for testing in four years, in time to replace the SS-18, which have been in service since 1967.

Another move, and somewhat peculiar ambition by Moscow is the restart of development and production of railway-based ICBM, of which a first prototype could be deployed by 2020. The new missile will be about half the weight of the SS-24 Scalpel, which weighed 104 tons and required three locomotives to move on the rails. The MITT is also developing the new missile. It will be half the weight of the decommissioned SS-24, allowing them to fit into one railcar. The missiles were based on trains in order to make them harder to find than stationary launchers, complicating a counter-strike.

The Soviet military deployed its first rail-portable long-range missile in 1987, and had 12 of them by 1991. Rail-mobile missiles were removed from service in 2002 and the last base dismantled in 2007 under the START II arms reduction treaty with the United States. However, the New START agreement from 2010 does not prohibit development of rail-mobile ICBMs. The return to missile trains is an apparent response to US plans to position elements of its missile defense system in Eastern Europe.

Russia's Strategic Missile Forces commander Col. Gen. Sergei Karakayev said that this heavy missile would offer better payload-to-launch-weight ratio than in a solid-fuel missile. As a result, the missile would carry more powerful warheads, including MIRVs with decoy elements. "The higher energy provided by liquid fuels gives it more varied and effective



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methods of countermeasures against global missile defense screens including space-based elements of those systems,” Karakayev explained.

He added that the high payload capacity could also be considered by Moscow to produce a conventionally armed ICBM, based on this platform, making it an attractive counterbalance to the US ambition to field its “prompt global strike” (PGS) conventional global attack capability. “The availability of a powerful liquid-fueled ICBM allows us the capability of creating a strategic high-accuracy weapons system with a conventional payload with practically global range, if the US does not pull back from its program for creating such missile systems,” he said. In 2010 the US has tested a PGS prototype based on a Minuteman III ICBM, but have since opted to pursue hypersonic glider as the delivery means for PGS. Despite this test, US officials have stated their reservations from using a sea- or land-based ICBM system for Prompt Global Strike, as they would be expensive to develop and potentially “dangerous” to deploy, with enemy potentially confusing their launch to a nuclear attack.

http://defense-update.com/20131006_return-of-the-russian-missile-trains.html

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Defense Update – Israel

Russian Air Force to Field a Stealth Bomber By 2020

Posted by News Desk

October 6, 2013

In April 2013 the Russian Air Force has approved the conceptual design and specification of its future strategic bomber known as ‘PAK-DA’ (future long-range aircraft), paving the way for development of components for the aircraft. Air Force Commander Lt. Gen. Viktor Bondarev was quoted by Novosti news agency saying that the PAK-DA project has been in the works for several years but was given the formal go-ahead by the Russian leadership in 2012. It is due to replace Russia’s aging fleet of 63 Tupolev Tu-95MS Bear and 13 Tu-160 Blackjack strategic bombers in the next decade. The principal nuclear armed weapon used with these platform is the Kh-102 that has entered service in the 2000s. The Tu-95MS can carry eight missiles and Tu-160 carries 12 on two rotary launchers.

The Tupolev design bureau has won the PAK-DA development tender offering a subsonic “flying wing” design, providing advanced stealth capabilities. It was selected over more speculative ‘hypersonic bomber’ recommended by Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin. The new bomber will carry both conventional and nuclear weapons, including a new long-range cruise missile that has already been adapted for the new bomber. The characteristics of such weapon are still classified, but, according to debate that has surfaced in the Russian media this year, such missile could feature hypersonic performance. In the 1980s the Russians conducted several hypersonic missile researches, although none of the programs reached technological maturity. Experts say the combination of subsonic stealth and hypersonic flight overcoming access denial and counter-air weapons would enable the future bomber superior capabilities over existing platforms. The new bomber is expected to go in production by 2020 and will be built at a new aircraft assembly line at Russia’s Kazan plant (KAPO). The same plant previously built the Tu-95MS and Tu-160. According to defense ministry officials, the PAK-DA could enter service by the year 2025.

http://defense-update.com/20131006_russian-air-force-to-field-a-stealth-bomber-by-2020.html

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Brietbart.com

Russians Divided on Likelihood of Cold War with U.S., Poll Indicates

United Press International (UPI)

October 7, 2013

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MOSCOW, Oct. 7 (UPI) -- Russians are closely divided on whether a new cold war between Russia and the United States will occur, a Russian Public Opinion Research Center poll indicated.

Forty-six percent of respondents said they believe a new cold war scenario is possible while 48 percent said it was unlikely or impossible, poll results released Monday indicated.

Nine percent said U.S. secrets-leaker Edward Snowden was the chief problem in Russia-U.S. relations while 6 percent cited the struggle for global domination and the situation in the Middle East as the main reasons. Five percent cited policy issue differences and only 3 percent said nuclear weapons were a problem.

In the poll, respondents also cited collaborative efforts between the two countries, including international terrorism, efforts to prevent armed conflicts, economic collaboration, cultural and scientific exchanges, and space.

Results are based on interviews with 1,600 residents in 130 communities across Russia conducted Aug. 24-25. The margin of error is 3.4 percentage points.

<http://www.breitbart.com/system/wire/upiUPI-20131007-102204-4955>

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Military.com

US Reliability Questioned Overseas

By Steven R. Hurst, Associated Press

October 05, 2013

An unmistakable sense of unease has been growing in capitals around the world as the U.S. government from afar looks increasingly befuddled - shirking from a military confrontation in Syria, stymied at home by a gridlocked Congress and in danger of defaulting on sovereign debt, which could plunge the world's financial system into chaos.

While each of the factors may be unrelated to the direct exercise of U.S. foreign policy, taken together they give some allies the sense that Washington is not as firm as it used to be in its resolve and its financial capacity, providing an opening for China or Russia to fill the void, an Asian foreign minister told a group of journalists in New York this week.

Concerns will only deepen now that President Barack Obama canceled travel this weekend to the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum in Bali and the East Asia Summit in Brunei. He pulled out of the gatherings to stay home to deal with the government shutdown and looming fears that Congress will block an increase in U.S. borrowing power, a move that could lead to a U.S. default.

The U.S. is still a pillar of defense for places in Asia like Taiwan and South Korea, providing a vital security umbrella against China. It also still has strong allies in the Middle East, including Israel and the Gulf Arab states arrayed against al-Qaida and Iran.

But in interviews with academics, government leaders and diplomats, faith that the U.S. will always be there is fraying more than a little.

"The paralysis of the American government, where a rump in Congress is holding the whole place to ransom, doesn't really jibe with the notion of the United States as a global leader," said Michael McKinley, an expert on global relations at the Australian National University.

The political turbulence in Washington and potential economic bombshells still to come over the U.S. government shutdown and a possible debt default this month have sent shivers through Europe. The head of the European Central Bank, Mario Draghi, worried about the continent's rebound from the 2008 economic downturn.

"We view this recovery as weak, as fragile, as uneven," Draghi said at a news conference.

Germany's influential newspaper Sueddeutsche Zeitung bemoaned the U.S. political chaos.

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"At the moment, Washington is fighting over the budget and nobody knows if the country will still be solvent in three weeks. What is clear, though, is that America is already politically bankrupt," it said.

Obama finds himself at the nexus of a government in chaos at home and a wave of foreign policy challenges.

He has been battered by the upheaval in the Middle East from the Arab Spring revolts after managing to extricate the U.S. from its long, brutal and largely failed attempt to establish democracy in Iraq. He is also drawing down U.S. forces from a more than decade-long war in Afghanistan with no real victory in sight. He leads a country whose people have no interest in taking any more military action abroad.

As Europe worries about economics, Asian allies watch in some confusion about what the U.S. is up to with its promise to rebalance military forces and diplomacy in the face of an increasingly robust China.

Global concerns about U.S. policy came to a head with Obama's handling of the civil war in Syria and the alleged use of chemical weapons by the regime of President Bashar Assad. But, in fact, the worries go far deeper.

"I think there are a lot of broader concerns about the United States. They aren't triggered simply by Syria. The reaction the United States had from the start to events in Egypt created a great deal of concern among the Gulf and the Arab states," said Anthony Cordesman, a military affairs specialist at the Center for International Studies.

Kings and princes throughout the Persian Gulf were deeply unsettled when Washington turned its back on Egypt's long-time dictator and U.S. ally Hosni Mubarak during the 2011 uprising in the largest Arab country.

Now, Arab allies in the Gulf voice dismay over the rapid policy redirection from Obama over Syria, where rebel factions have critical money and weapons channels from Saudi Arabia, Qatar and other Gulf states. It has stirred a rare public dispute with Washington, whose differences with Gulf allies are often worked out behind closed doors. Last month, Saudi Foreign Minister Saud al-Faisal warned that the renewed emphasis on diplomacy with Assad would allow the Syrian president to "impose more killing."

After saying Assad must be removed from power and then threatening military strikes over the regime's alleged chemical weapons attack, the U.S. is now working with Russia and the U.N. to collect and destroy Damascus' chemical weapons stockpile. That assures Assad will remain in power for now and perhaps the long term.

Danny Yatom, a former director of Israel's Mossad intelligence service, said the U.S. handling of the Syrian crisis and its decision not to attack after declaring red lines on chemical weapons has hurt Washington's credibility.

"I think in the eyes of the Syrians and the Iranians, and the rivals of the United States, it was a signal of weakness, and credibility was deteriorated," he said.

The Syrian rebels, who were promised U.S. arms, say they feel deserted by the Americans, adding that they have lost faith and respect for Obama.

The White House contends that its threat of a military strike against Assad was what caused the regime to change course and agree to plan reached by Moscow and Washington to hand its chemical weapons over to international inspectors for destruction. That's a far better outcome than resorting to military action, Obama administration officials insist.

Gulf rulers also have grown suddenly uneasy over the U.S. outreach to their regional rival Iran.

Bahrain Foreign Minister Sheik Khalid bin Ahmed Al Khalifa said Gulf states "must be in the picture" on any attempts by the U.S. and Iran to open sustained dialogue or reach settlement over Tehran's nuclear program. He was quoted Tuesday by the London-based Al Hayat newspaper as saying Secretary of State John Kerry has promised to consult with his Gulf "friends" on any significant policy shifts over Iran - a message that suggested Gulf states are worried about being left on the sidelines in potentially history-shaping developments in their region.

In response to the new U.S. opening to Iran to deal with its suspected nuclear weapons program, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu told the U.N. General Assembly that his country remained ready to act alone to prevent Tehran



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from building a bomb. He indicated a willingness to allow some time for further diplomacy but not much. And he excoriated new Iranian President Hassan Rouhani as a "wolf in sheep's clothing."

Kerry defended the engagement effort, saying the U.S. would not be played for "suckers" by Iran. Tehran insists its nuclear program is for peaceful energy production, while the U.S. and other countries suspect it is aimed at achieving atomic weapons capability.

McKinley, the Australian expert, said Syria and the U.S. budget crisis have shaken Australians' faith in their alliance with Washington.

"It means that those who rely on the alliance as the cornerstone of all Australian foreign policy and particularly security policy are less certain - it's created an element of uncertainty in their calculations," he said.

Running against the tide of concern, leaders in the Philippines are banking on its most important ally to protect it from China's assertive claims in the South China Sea. Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin said Manila still views the U.S. as a dependable ally despite the many challenges it is facing.

"We should understand that all nations face some kind of problems, but in terms of our relationship with the United States, she continues to be there when we need her," Gazmin said.

"There's no change in our feelings," he said. "Our strategic relationship with the U.S. continues to be healthy. They remain a reliable ally."

But as Cordesman said, "The rhetoric of diplomacy is just wonderful but it almost never describes the reality."

That reality worldwide, he said, "is a real concern about where is the U.S. going. There is a question of trust. And I think there is an increasing feeling that the United States is pulling back, and its internal politics are more isolationist so that they can't necessarily trust what U.S. officials say, even if the officials mean it."

EDITOR'S NOTE - Steven R. Hurst, The Associated Press' international political writer in Washington, has covered foreign affairs for 35 years, including extended assignments in Russia and the Middle East.

AP writers Brian Murphy in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Robert H. Reid in Berlin, Hrvoje Hranjski in Manila, Gregory Katz in London, Josef Federman in Jerusalem, Rod McGuirk in Canberra, Australia, and Sarah DiLorenzo and David McHugh in Paris contributed to this report.

<http://www.military.com/daily-news/2013/10/05/us-reliability-questioned-overseas.html?comp=1198882887570&rank=1>

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Bloomberg News

U.S.-Russia Agree to Update 1987 Accord on Reducing Nuclear Risk

By Indira A.R. Lakshmanan

October 6, 2013

The U.S. and Russia agreed to update a 1987 accord aimed at reducing the risk of nuclear war to reflect changing technologies.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov signed the agreement on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Bali, Indonesia. Today's agreement adapts the original accord to today's reality, Lavrov said at a press conference with Kerry.

The original agreement, which was signed with the Soviet Union, led to the creation of Nuclear Risk Reduction Centers in Washington and Moscow to provide time-sensitive communications required by arms control treaties and security agreements, the U.S. State Department said in a statement.

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“With over 26 years’ experience, the Centers continue to support a robust array of conventional and strategic arms control treaties and agreements and confidence-building measures,” the State Department said in the statement.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-10-07/u-s-russia-agree-to-update-1987-accord-on-reducing-nuclear-risk.html>

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The Boston Herald
The Wall Street Journal
October 6, 2013

U.S. Raids Terror Targets in Somalia, Libya

Commandos Capture Embassy Bombings Suspect in Libya

By JULIAN E. BARNES and DEVLIN BARRETT in Washington and HEIDI VOGT in Nairobi, Kenya

Weekend raids aimed at capturing terror suspects in Africa showed that the Obama administration's counterterrorism strategy still relies on unilateral action despite its attempts to enlist other governments, officials and experts said on Sunday.

A successful raid in Libya Saturday by the U.S. Army's Delta Force—assisted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Hostage Rescue Team—captured Nazih Abdul-Hamed al-Ruqai, a militant known as Abu Anas al-Libi.

Hours earlier, a group of Navy SEALs struck a stronghold in Somalia used by the al-Shabaab militant group, intending to capture a senior leader of the organization two weeks after the group claimed responsibility for a deadly mall attack in Kenya.

But after a gunbattle in which several al-Shabaab members were killed, the SEALs pulled back to avoid civilian casualties, U.S. officials said. They said they didn't know if the militant leader they targeted—whom they identified as Ikrima, a Kenyan national of Somali origin—was killed.

The precision strikes were carried out by the most elite teams in the military's arsenals: members of Joint Special Operations Command's special mission units. The raids were approved by President Barack Obama, who was given regular updates.

The Obama administration has been stung by international criticism that its counterterrorism operations, often conducted by drone strikes, kill suspects rather than capture them. In the past two years, the U.S. has tried to move more to a system in which U.S. special-operations teams partner with local governments, an approach touted by Mr. Obama in his recent speech to the United Nations.

However, developing the prowess of a developing nation's security forces is a long-term proposition, U.S. officials acknowledged. So for the foreseeable future, when it comes to the most difficult missions, officials said the U.S. will have to act alone. "We have a responsibility to protect Americans, period," said a U.S. official.

Somali government officials said they were notified of the U.S. raid on a compound in the town of Barawe. However, the Libyan government demanded the U.S. provide more information about the raid, and some Libyan officials spoke critically of the operation.

U.S. officials wouldn't say if they had informed top Libyan leaders of the attack, but said it was done under U.S. military authorities. Military operations on the territory of friendly nations typically require the consent of partner countries.

Mr. Ruqai had been sought for years, but the operation to capture him only was put together in recent days, U.S. officials said.

The Libyan native was on the FBI's most-wanted list in connection with the 1998 bombings of U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania which killed 224 people. But U.S. officials said he was also involved in active planning for future attacks on U.S. interests in the region.

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Officials said Mr. Ruqai was taken out of Libya, but wouldn't say where he was being held. The U.S. has used warships previously to temporarily hold militant suspects before transferring them to the U.S. to face charges.

U.S. officials said they planned to eventually deliver Mr. Ruqai to the federal courthouse in New York City, where he has been under indictment for more than a decade, though the timing of his arrival wasn't clear.

Mr. Ruqai is being questioned for his knowledge of continuing al Qaeda operations in the Middle East, North Africa and elsewhere, officials said.

Don Borelli, a former FBI counterterrorism official, said Mr. Ruqai's capture was good news on two counts. "First, it shows we have good intelligence capability inside Libya, which is not an easy area of operations," said Mr. Borelli. "It's also a moral victory because it shows that we can grab a guy even 10 or 15 years later. It says, 'We will get you.'"

Both the Libya and Somalia raids were aimed at capturing, not killing accused terrorists. U.S. officials Sunday disputed that the raids, whose timing they said was coincidental, signaled a new approach, noting that the U.S. has captured other militants affiliated with al-Shabaab and regularly captures Taliban leaders in Afghanistan.

In Somalia, the Navy SEAL commander on the ground ordered the raid called off after an intense firefight broke out that left several militants dead, officials said. The military had an option to call in an airstrike to destroy the compound. But the ground commander believed that continuing the firefight or ordering an airstrike would endanger noncombatants, U.S. officials said.

U.S. officials said the militant they sought, Ikrima, who goes by one name, is associated with two deceased al Qaeda who played roles in the 1998 bombing in Nairobi and in the 2002 attacks on a hotel and airline in Mombasa. They said he wasn't directly involved in planning the Westgate attack.

The U.S. had been gathering intelligence on the al-Shabaab leader for years and the raid was the product of months of operational planning, officials said.

The U.S. has supported the Kenyan military's efforts to counter al-Shabaab in their own raids into Somalia, and has praised efforts by other African nations to help stabilize Somalia.

However, they said it would be years before Kenya or other African countries would be able to target the most-wanted militants in Somalia.

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said Sunday that both operations show that the U.S. will act against accused terrorists.

"We will continue to maintain relentless pressure on terrorist groups that threaten our people or our interests, and we will conduct direct action against them, if necessary, that is consistent with our laws and our values," he said.

"We will continue to maintain relentless pressure on terrorist groups that threaten our people or our interests, and we will conduct direct action against them, if necessary, that is consistent with our laws and our values," he said.

Lt. Gen David Barno, a senior adviser at the Center for a New American Security, a Washington think tank that focuses on the military, said while the U.S. works with partners wherever it can, the Pentagon would always retain the ability to act unilaterally. "The U.S. in the years ahead will reserve the right to reach out with our own forces to strike al Qaeda related threats nearly anywhere in the world," Gen. Barno said.

The strike in Somalia came just days after the 20th anniversary a U.S. Special Forces operation in which Somali militants shot down two Army Black Hawk helicopters and killed 18 soldiers.

It was also the first such strike in Somalia since a 2009 raid by Navy SEALs that killed a major al Qaeda figure, Saleh Ali Saleh Nabhan in a town near Barawe, where the weekend raid took place. Mr. Nabhan, a Kenyan citizen, was wanted in connection with the car bombing of a Kenyan beach resort in 2002.

Barawe residents, who awoke to gunfire and explosions, said the fighting started a few hours after midnight.



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Ahdurahman Ali, a Barawe resident reached by phone, estimated the firefight lasted 40 minutes. Yassin Haji Nur, an elder in Barawe, said he woke up about 2 a.m. on Saturday to the sound of machine guns and saw between nine and 15 foreign forces.

"They were shooting toward the town as they were running in three separate lines" he said. "They were not talking. There were no lights to see. The only light to be seen was from the guns."

He said that when the commandos returned to their boat, the al-Shabaab militants fired at them as they departed.

Although some witnesses reported seeing a blood trail in the sand leading to the boat used by the American forces, U.S. officials said no commandos were killed or injured in the raid.

Adam Entous and Maria Abi-Habib contributed to this article.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304441404579119063300215486.html>

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The Frontier Post – Pakistan

OPINION/Article

Tactical Nuclear Weapons & Deterrence

By Shakir Baacha

October 6, 2013

Strategic stability revolves primarily around the development of a relation of mutual deterrence among the adversaries. Credibility and communication of threat through intent of use shapes deterrence. Cold Start Doctrine, which aims to launch a limited offensive conventional attack against Pakistan, would cause significant damage to the Pakistan armed forces. India continued with this approach in recent years and at the same time equipping its armed forces with the latest jet fighters, warships, radars, tanks, missiles, submarines, weapons systems and platforms. Indian military developments compelled Pakistan to maintain credible deterrence and ensure its national security from the external threats like India.

Deterrence in South Asia is delicate because of rapid militarization and Cold Start Doctrine has the potential not only to operationalize Indian military's aggressive doctrine on the basis of pre-emption but can also trigger a nuclear conflict. Main purpose of Cold Start is to give a "punishing" reply to Pakistan in case of any alleged terrorist attack on Indian soil with totally different orientation of the Indian armed forces from defensive to offensive. Responding to this offensive doctrine Pakistan had tested 'NASR' missile which is a Multi Tube Ballistic missile. It is basically to counter the Indian Cold Start Doctrine. Pakistan has also done Azm-I-Nau exercise to response to Cold Start Doctrine specification of Nasr suggests that it is designed to carry a warhead which is mainly to counter Cold Start Doctrine and implications of the doctrine on strategic stability of the region.

NASR was developed to add deterrence value at shorter ranges with high accuracy, shoot and scoot attributes for "quick response.". It has been developed as low yield battle field deterrence. NASR is deployed to deter and respond to India's CSD. At the Centre of the global strategic corridors Pakistan is a unique position of historic, regional and global power struggles.

Pakistan needs to have advanced military technology to remain an effective deterrent to India. Indian concept of war below the nuclear threshold adversely affected the strategic stability of South Asian region and this lead region to a never-ending arms development in this region. India and Pakistan, both countries have been involved in several conflicts that continue to pose the risk of inadvertent war. The terrorism phenomenon is an additional factor that has all ingredients to explode the situation out of proportion thus inviting more troubles in the region. Unlike in the past, any future war between the two countries, no matter how limited it might be, will be consider the failure of the deterrence between India and Pakistan. Pakistani deterrence posture is based on Credible Minimum Deterrence, and Pakistan without entering into an arms race with any other country, would not remain unaware to the developing security

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changing aspects in South Asia as any country won't keep their selves un aware of the developments around, which would maintain a full spectrum deterrence capability to deter all forms of aggression. The regional discriminatory approach by which India would be able to secure huge reserves of stockpiles under the Indo-US deal putting strategic stability of south Asia in disorder. Currently India possesses 500 kg plutonium and 11.5 metric tons of reactor grade plutonium in spent fuel. According to estimates India would be able to increase its nuclear arsenal from 100 warheads currently to 300-400 warheads in the next five years. Indian technological advancement in the conventional and nuclear field will bring qualitative and quantitative transformation in the Indian Military and impinge upon Pakistan's national security interests.

<http://www.thefrontierpost.com/article/46134/>

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

The Need for Nuclear Weapons

By Robert Spalding
Monday, October 7, 2013

The U.S. rebalance — or “pivot” — to the Asia-Pacific must be peaceful and affordable. Unfortunately, our country neglects the one aspect of national defense that can deliver this outcome: nuclear weapons.

As I entered active duty as a bomber pilot at the end of the Cold War, I was among those who questioned the continued relevance of nuclear weapons. The Cold War was over and, thankfully, we had escaped nuclear armageddon. I believed it was time to put away the bomb and focus on more relevant conventional capabilities. Lately, however, I have become keenly aware of the need for our nuclear force.

The United States won the Cold War by maintaining a credible nuclear force to stand in opposition to the Soviet Union. U.S. nuclear weapons defended Europe against a numerically superior conventional force. Missile-equipped submarines and the bombers and intercontinental ballistic missiles of Strategic Air Command were the nuclear triad that deterred the Soviets from attacking. These forces were at the forefront of our defense strategy and received priority in both rhetoric and funding.

The U.S. nuclear force exists to keep a threshold on the level of violence. This is especially important when disagreements between nuclear powers move beyond dialogue. While numerous smaller wars existed in proxy states during the Cold War, direct conflict between nuclear powers always deescalated back to dialogue. It is possible that the international body politic that arose after World War II is the reason we have not witnessed a third world war. Yet it is also possible that has not occurred because the threat of nuclear holocaust is too menacing. More likely, it is a combination of the two.

To be credible, nuclear weapons must be a key component underpinning relevant U.S. foreign policy. It erodes morale and encourages perpetually low funding when the Nuclear Posture Review adds “as long as nuclear weapons exist” to the phrase “safe, secure and effective,” as if it is a foregone conclusion that these weapons will be eliminated. Russia, China, India, Pakistan, Israel, France, Britain and North Korea all treat nuclear weapons as a key component in their nation's strategy, and they are modernizing weapons and/or delivery systems.

Nuclear weapons are instruments of peace. Airmen and sailors nobly ensure that nuclear conflict will be deterred by being ready to use them. Americans may feel guilty for possessing such terrible capacity to destroy life. Despite their distastefulness, however, nuclear weapons probably have saved lives. A new day dawned on Aug. 6, 1945. Many who worked on the Manhattan Project believed that they had condemned the world. They could not have known that they might have liberated it. Since Aug. 9, 1945, approximately 7 million to 10 million people have died from conflict. Before the introduction of nuclear weapons, two world wars alone led to the deaths of 70 million to 100 million — a difference of a decimal point.



Nuclear weapons are an affordable deterrent. The cost of the triad represents less than 3 percent of the \$526 billion Defense Department budget. In 2012, the U.S. Postal Service lost about \$16 billion, or three times the amount it cost U.S. taxpayers for intercontinental ballistic missiles and bombers, two-thirds of the triad. Although the nuclear budget needs to rise to offset the more than 20 years of neglect in modernization, a modest increase would barely register in the overall defense budget.

A perceived march toward complete nuclear disarmament, evident in phrases like “as long as nuclear weapons exist,” weakens the very thing that ensures a peaceful future. The idea that such weapons are here only until we can figure out how to get rid of them gnaws at the morale of every airman and sailor tasked with this awesome responsibility. As conventional forces modernize, nuclear weapons funding dwindles, and weapons systems age. The irony is distressing: We are funding weapons that kill on a daily basis to the detriment of the weapons that exist to prevent war.

The sensible path to peace starts with the realization that peace can be secured only through strength. Nuclear weapons represent that strength. We must embrace it through funding and rhetoric. The troops tasked with ensuring our peaceful future must hear that they are important, and they must see and feel it as well. We need new weapons and delivery systems, but, most important, we need a new strategy that recognizes the importance of nuclear weapons to a peaceful future.

Richard Clarke and Steve Andreasen: A new threat doesn't justify new deterrence policy Eric Edelman and Robert Joseph: The Obama administration's risky disarmament agenda Henry Kissinger and Brent Scowcroft: Nuclear weapons reduction must be strategic Douglas Feith and others: Obama's 'nuclear zero' rhetoric is dangerous The Post's View: The GOP is wrong to say Obama cut nuclear weapons budget

Robert Spalding is a military fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations.

<http://triblive.com/opinion/featuredcommentary/4838806-74/nuclear-weapons-war#axzz2h8mPly5S>

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Hawaii Reporter – Honolulu, HI
OPINION/Guest Contributor

North Korea's Foiled Plot Reveals the Importance of Missile Defense

By Seth M.M. Stodder
Monday, October 7, 2013

Earlier this summer, Panamanian authorities discovered parts of a missile system hidden in a ship traveling from Cuba to North Korea.

The incident underscores two important points about North Korea. First, one of America's most unpredictable enemies is committed to developing and distributing missile technology. More disturbing still, the totalitarian nation is capable of transporting weapons in the Western hemisphere.

In recent years, the threat of a missile strike from adversarial regimes like North Korea as well as non-state terrorist actors has become more acute. In light of these developments, it's imperative that the United States and its allies continue to invest in missile defense technologies.

The North Korean government has been working to improve its missile capabilities for decades. The nation began developing tactical artillery rockets in the 1960s and 70s and moved on to short- and medium-range missiles in the 1980s and 90s.

Last December, North Korea successfully launched a satellite into orbit using long-range missile technology known as Taepodong-2. A fully functioning Taepodong-2 missile is capable of reaching the United States. And in April, the Defense Intelligence Agency's announced that North Korea likely has a nuclear weapon small enough to deliver with a ballistic missile.



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What makes North Korea's missile program even more dangerous is that, for years, the country has supplied ballistic missiles to Iran and other American adversaries. According to the Council on Foreign Relations, Pyongyang has made hundreds of millions of dollars in recent years exporting ballistic missiles to such countries as Syria - a country in the midst of a civil war, and that has apparently used chemical weapons - as well as other nations known for supporting terrorists and other enemies of the United States.

The Panama episode is merely the latest example of Pyongyang's efforts to help anti-American regimes improve their missile capabilities.

For the United States and its allies to remain secure in a world where oppressive regimes and terrorist organizations have greater and greater access to sophisticated ballistic missiles, a strong system of missile defense is an absolute necessity.

In the last three decades, research into missile defense technologies has yielded remarkable results.

Just this year, American military personnel teamed up with Israeli defense forces to successful test cutting-edge interceptors over the Mediterranean Sea. Shortly after that, the U.S. Navy's shield program intercepted a fast-moving test target over the Pacific Ocean.

Back in the 1980s, when missile defense was first considered by the United States, many skeptics believed that destroying an enemy missile mid-flight was a pipe dream. Today, they've been definitively proven wrong. One shield program alone -- the Patriot Air Defense Missile System -- has completed more than 2,500 successful search and track tests. The Patriot is just one part of the U.S. Missile Defense Agency's proven "family of systems."

As the missiles available to unfriendly regimes and terrorist groups become more advanced, so too must systems for defending against those missiles. It's for this reason that the Department of Defense is currently looking for new, more effective ways to intercept missiles, whether by making use of unmanned aerial drones or even relying on spaced-based assets that can sense and destroy incoming threats.

Given the major threats on the international scene, investments in these and other technologies for strengthening American missile defense aren't just prudent -- they're essential.

The United States and its allies must be prepared for the unique security challenges we will face in the coming years. While North Korea's latest plot may have been foiled, the proliferation of ever more powerful missile systems will continue. We must be prepared.

Seth M.M. Stodder teaches national security law at the University of Southern California Law School and is a partner at Obagi & Stodder LLP.

<http://www.hawaiireporter.com/north-koreas-foiled-plot-reveals-the-importance-of-missile-defense/123>

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