



USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER
CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL
MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

Issue No. 1086, 18 October 2013

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FARS News Agency – Iran
Saturday, October 12, 2013

IRGC Rejects Report on Maximum Range of Iranian Missiles

TEHRAN (FNA) - The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) in a statement on Saturday rejected media reports claiming that Iran has developed missiles which could reach targets 12,000 km in distance, stressing that the maximum range of Iran's missiles is 2,000 km.

"Some media have made a mistake when quoting a part of the remarks of the IRGC Aerospace Force Commander (Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh) about IRGC's missiles and said their range is 12000 kilometers," the statement issued by the IRGC's Public Relations said on Saturday.

"Actually, Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh has pointed to the IRGC Aerospace Force's defensive capabilities, and said 'at present, the range of our long-range missiles is 2,000km and the reason is that our enemies are within this range ... and they are not much worth to be targetted by costly missiles'," continued the statement.

Iranian Defense Ministry's Aerospace Organization has been responsible for developing Iran's solid-fuel, surface-to-surface Sejil and long-range Shahab-3 ballistic missiles which both have a range of up to 2,000 km.

The Shahab-3 reportedly has a range of maximum 1,250 miles (2000 kilometers) and is capable of carrying a 1,000-760 kilogram warhead.

This is while the solid-fuel, two-stage Sejil missile with two engines, is capable of reaching a very high altitude and therefore has a longer range than that of the Shahab 3 model, but not much.

Iran successfully tested second generation of Sejil missiles and brought it into mass production in 2009. Sejil missiles are considered as the third generation of Iran-made long-range missiles.

Also, Iran's 2000km-range, liquid-fuel, Qadr F ballistic missile can reach territories as far as Israel.

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13920720001131>

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Xinhua News – China

Iran to Offer 3-Stage Proposal in Geneva Nuclear Talks

October 13, 2013

TEHRAN, Oct. 12 (Xinhua) -- Iran will put forward a three-stage proposal in the upcoming Geneva nuclear talks with the world powers, semi-official ISNA news agency reported on Saturday.

The proposal package, if agreed upon at the first stage, will automatically commit the other party to "the recognition of the uranium enrichment right on Iran's soil" as the objective of the negotiations, said ISNA without referring to its information source.

The package also encompasses mutual steps in the course of negotiations so that the finality can be reached, said the report.

"The Iranian officials believe that, without any agreement on the first stage, the continuation of the negotiations will be very difficult and probably impossible," according to ISNA.

The P5+1 group, which includes the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council plus Germany, will resume talks with Iran on its controversial nuclear program in Geneva on Oct. 15-16.

On Friday, Press TV reported that Iran would attend the upcoming nuclear talks in Geneva with new proposals.

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Media outlets reported on Wednesday that Iran is preparing a package of proposals to halt production of 20 percent enriched uranium, a key demand of the U.S. and other global powers.

The Wall Street Journal reported that the package includes "limits on the numbers of centrifuges operating, enrichment amounts and the need for verification."

Tehran in return will request that the United States and European Union begin scaling back sanctions, said the report.

On the day, sources close to the Iranian nuclear negotiating team said Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad-Javad Zarif will be present in the negotiations only if other parties are represented by their foreign ministers, according to Press TV.

In case the meeting is not held at the foreign ministers level, the deputy of Iran's foreign minister for legal and international affairs, Abbas Araqchi, will lead Iran's negotiating team, semi-official Mehr news agency reported on Friday.

On Saturday, senior Iranian lawmaker Esmail Kowsari reiterated Iran's official stance that the right to uranium enrichment inside Iran is non-negotiable in the upcoming nuclear discussions with world powers.

Iran's Majlis (parliament) Speaker Ali Larijani said that the forthcoming negotiations between Iran and six major world powers on the country's nuclear program should aim to build trust in order to yield results, Press TV reported on Saturday.

"The negotiations will lead to positive results if they are aimed at building confidence based on international regulations," Larijani was quoted as saying in Tehran on Friday upon his arrival from a tour to three European countries.

The Iranian speaker expressed hope that the P5+1 group, which includes the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council plus Germany, would show "seriousness and wisdom" in the upcoming nuclear talks with Iran.

He asked them to abide by international regulations and pursue the negotiations within a "specific framework."

Besides, the Iranian political analyst, Sadeq Zibakalam, said the upcoming nuclear talks between Iran and the P5+1 in Geneva will likely yield "promising results" as the time is ripe for finding a way to resolve Iran's nuclear issue, the official IRNA news agency reported.

Zibakalam, also a professor at the University of Tehran, told IRNA that if the Geneva talks lead to breaking the nuclear stalemate, it would be regarded as a big success for Iran.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-10/13/c_125524975.htm

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FARS News Agency – Iran
Sunday, October 13, 2013

Negotiator: Taking Iran's Uranium Stockpile Out "Iran's Redline"

TEHRAN (FNA) - An Iranian deputy foreign minister, who is also a senior member of the country's team of nuclear negotiators, said Tehran is ready to negotiate over the form, amount and level of its uranium enrichment during the upcoming talks with the world powers, but taking the country's enriched uranium stockpile abroad is no way acceptable.

"We, of course, will negotiate on the different forms, amounts and levels of enrichment, but sending the (nuclear) materials out of the country is our redline," Seyed Abbas Araqchi said in a televised interview with Iran's state-run TV on Sunday.

He underlined that Iran's enrichment right and protecting the Iranian nation's rights are the other redlines in negotiations with the Group 5+1 (the US, Russia, France, Britain and China plus Germany), and said, "We will not retreat even an iota from whatever the Iranian nation is entitled to have based on the international treaties."



Araqchi underlined that Iran "will obviate all the rational concerns of the opposite side to the talks", and added, "These negotiations are on the nuclear issue, but if they show interest, we will also be ready for talks on the regional issues and other international challenges."

His remarks came after certain western media and officials raised a proposal saying that Iran will agree with transferring its 20-percent-enriched uranium supplies to reach an agreement with the West over its nuclear program.

The United States and its Western allies have been demanding that Iran cease enriching uranium to 20 percent grade.

Tehran has refused to scuttle its enrichment activities, citing the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), which allows nations to process uranium for civilian uses like energy production and medical research.

Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Ali Akbar Salehi said Iran had recently reduced its 240-kilogram stock of 20 percent uranium to 140 kilograms, a 42 percent drop, by converting it to fuel rods for Tehran's medical research reactor. He also said the rest of the stockpile was being converted as well.

Fordo enrichment facility hosts Iran's uranium enrichment to the purity level of 20 percent which is needed for fueling a research reactor in Tehran which produces radioisotopes for medical purposes.

The western media claimed recently that Iran's new president Hassan Rouhani is willing to shut down its nuclear facility if the West agrees to lift Islamic republic's sanctions.

Salehi strongly rejected western media reports claiming that Tehran has raised a proposal to the West to close its Fordo uranium enrichment facility near the Central city of Qom for lifting sanctions against the country.

"The closure of Fordo site is a sheer lie," Salehi told reporters at the end of a cabinet meeting in Tehran in September.

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.aspx?nn=13920721001094>

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Al Arabiya – U.A.E.

Iran Plans New Monkey Space Launch

Agence France-Presse (AFP)

Sunday, 13 October 2013

Tehran -- Iran is planning to send another live monkey into space within a month, a top space official said in remarks reported by media Sunday.

"The second live animal will be ready within a month to be sent into space," said Hamid Fazeli, deputy head of Iran's space organization, the Jomhuri Eslami newspaper reported.

Iran in January claimed to have successfully launched a live monkey into space and to have brought it safely back to earth.

The experiment's success was disputed, however, when a different monkey was presented to the media after the landing. An earlier attempt had failed in September 2011.

Iran's space program has prompted concern among Western governments, which fear Tehran is trying to master the technology required to deliver a nuclear warhead.

Iran denies it is seeking nuclear weapons or the means to deliver them.

Fazeli said the monkey would be sent into space via "a liquid-fuel launcher," while refusing to set a "definite date" for the launch. Iran has delayed past launches without giving specific reasons.

Akbar Torkan, the interim chief of Iran's space organization, said on Sunday the delays are due to budget woes.



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"The decrease in the country's total revenue, and thus the budget, has impacted our space-related activities," Torkan was quoted as telling the official IRNA news agency.

Iran is under harsh Western-led international sanctions targeting its vital oil income and aimed at curbing its controversial nuclear drive.

Earlier this week, Fazeli said Iran would put three satellites into space by the end of the Iranian year, in March 2014.

The Islamic republic, which first put a satellite into orbit in 2009, has outlined an ambitious program with plans to send a man into space within a decade.

<http://english.alarabiya.net/en/variety/2013/10/13/Iran-plans-new-monkey-space-launch-.html>

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The Jerusalem Post – Israel

'Netanyahu is Not Bluffing on Intention to Strike Iran'

Ex-army official: PM "thinks it's the 1930s. The Iranians are the Germans, and history has a sense of humor with 6 million Jews in Israel."

By MICHAEL WILNER

13 October 2013

WASHINGTON – Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu "is not bluffing" on his intentions to strike Iran, should the Islamic Republic continue its nuclear program for much longer, a former senior Israeli military official told *The Jerusalem Post* on Sunday.

"Bibi's not bluffing," said the retired senior official, who requested anonymity to speak freely. "He thinks it's the 1930s. The Iranians are the Germans, and history has a sense of humor with six million Jews now in Israel."

Since the UN General Assembly last month, Netanyahu has assured journalists in the United States that he supports President Barack Obama's diplomatic overtures to Iran's new president, Hassan Rouhani, while also calling him a "wolf in sheep's clothing" not to be trusted.

Western powers suspect Iran is trying to develop nuclear weapons, as it continues to enrich uranium well beyond the grade required for any civilian nuclear use.

The former senior official told the *Post* that Israeli intelligence assesses Saudi Arabia would not wait "a minute" after Iran acquires a nuclear weapon to build or buy one themselves, risking a nuclear arms race in the world's least stable region.

"The Saudis have the missile technology already," he said. "I'd be surprised if they don't just take warheads from the Pakistanis. They've already paid for them."

Emphasizing the importance of existing sanctions, the official said Iran would try to get the financial pressures lifted with as few concessions as possible.

While generally supportive of the prime minister's policy, he said that the leadership of Israel's intelligence community has repeatedly warned Netanyahu against striking and said that the tone of his speech to the UN last month was "a mistake."

"He's not the commander-in-chief," he added. "But he can achieve consensus. And it can be done without leaks – it can be done."

<http://www.jpost.com/Iranian-Threat/News/Netanyahu-is-not-bluffing-on-intention-to-strike-Iran-328611>

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FARS News Agency – Iran
Monday, October 14, 2013

Ayatollah Khamenei's Aide: Americans No Trustworthy Partner for Talks

TEHRAN (FNA) - Senior Military Aide to the Iranian Supreme Leader Major General Yahya Rahim Safavi blasted Washington for its long track record of hostilities against Tehran, and said the American officials cannot be trusted for talks.

"George W. Bush has said in his diary book that they wanted to attack Iran after the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, but their military forces opposed it," Rahim Safavi told FNA on Monday.

"This means that they had hatched plots against Iran, but the US has failed to succeed in the attainment of its strategic goals," he added.

Rahim Safavi also referred to Iran's assistance to the US during the Bonn Conference on Afghanistan, and said, "The Americans didn't make any concessions to Iran and for this and other reasons, the Americans cannot be trusted."

In relevant remarks early October, 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 at the time.

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 late September, 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, in September, 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.

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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.

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=13920722001134>

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Al Arabiya – U.A.E.

Kerry Says Diplomatic Window with Iran is ‘Cracking Open’

Al Arabiya with the Associated Press and AFP

Monday, 14 October 2013

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said on Sunday that the window for diplomacy with Iran over its nuclear program is "cracking open," but stated that "our eyes are open too."

While the United States seeks a peaceful resolution to Iran's nuclear program, "words must be matched with actions," Kerry told the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) summit in Washington via satellite from London.

Kerry assured the pro-Israeli lobbying group of U.S. support and spoke of a need to negotiate cautiously with Iran.

"In any engagement with Iran, we are mindful of Israel's security needs. We are mindful of the need for certainty, transparency, and accountability in the process. And I believe firmly that no deal is better than a bad deal," said Kerry, according to his prepared remarks quoted by the Associated Press.

While Iran frequently says that its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes, Israel believes that the Iranian government intends to build nuclear weapons which will threaten its existence.

Meeting with Iran

Kerry was on a trip to London to meet European Union foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton for talks on Syria and the upcoming meeting this week between Iran and world powers, according to a State Department official quoted by Agence France-Presse.

The two-day talks begin in Geneva on Tuesday amid hopes of a softer, more moderate approach Iranian President Hassan Rowhani, who took office in August promising to improve hostile relations with Western nations.

Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif will negotiate with Ashton and the P5+1 group, consisting of the United States, Britain, France, Russia and China, plus Germany.

Kerry flew into London earlier on Sunday from Kabul, on his way back to Washington following a 10-day trip around Asia.

Kerry and Ashton's talks included discussions on "the recent breakthrough on BSA (bilateral security agreement) negotiations which the EU will be closely engaged with, the upcoming Geneva conference with the P5+1 on Iran, the situation on the ground in Egypt, as well as efforts to plan a conference in Geneva on ending the civil war in Syria through a political transition," according to a State Department official quoted by AFP.



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The official added that Kerry and Ashton also discussed ongoing direct negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians. Kerry pledged U.S. support for Israel during his address to AIPAC, but repeated that a two-state plan was the “only solution” to bring peace.

<http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2013/10/14/Kerry-says-diplomatic-window-with-Iran-is-cracking-open-.html>

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The Times of Oman – Muscat, Oman

Oman Calls for a Nuclear-Free Middle East

By Omani News Agency (ONA)

October 14, 2013

New York: The Sultanate reiterated its support for initiatives aimed at making the Middle East a zone free from nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, aware of the hazards that these weapons pose to the security and stability of states, the region and the world at large.

In a speech at the UN General Assembly delivered by Plenipotentiary Minister Nujaim bin Sulaiman Al Abri, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Sultanate to the United Nations, the Sultanate also stressed the right of the states to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, adding that an end to the dispute in this area was not possible through any coercive policies and practices, such as sanctions and other measures, which have their limitations and can be weak when it comes to effectiveness, but through serious diplomacy that can help all the states to use nuclear energy towards peaceful purposes.

The Sultanate expressed the hope that the international community, particularly the depositary governments of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of nuclear weapons to other states in the Middle East to accede to the treaty and place their nuclear installations under comprehensive control system supervised by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

This may contribute towards making the treaty universally applicable and making the Middle East a zone free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, a goal that deserves all the support and backing of all the states, especially the major powers.

The Sultanate also expressed regret at the failure of the International Conference on the Middle East in ensuring implementation of the resolution adopted by the Review Conference of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The lack of support from some parties to hold such a Conference underlines a lack of understanding of the conditions and goals and the aspirations of the people of the Middle East.

<http://www.timesofoman.com/News/Article-24040.aspx#>

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The Jerusalem Post – Israel

Assad: Loss of Chemical Weapons is Blow to Syria's Morale, Political Standing

During a gathering in his palace, Syrian President Bashar Assad jokes that he should win Nobel Peace Prize.

By YASSER OKBI, the *Post* correspondent

14 October 2013

Syrian President Bashar Assad told a number of guests gathered in his palace in Damascus recently that his country's loss of chemical weapons resulted in a blow to its morale and political position.

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"There is no doubt that the loss of chemical weapons has resulted in a loss of morale and a political loss for Syria. Since 2003, Syria has demanded that the countries in the region dismantle their WMDs, and the chemical weapons were meant to be a bargaining chip in Syria's hands in exchange for Israel dismantling its nuclear arsenal," Lebanese Hezbollah identified newspaper *Al-Akhbar* reported Monday Assad as saying.

"The chemical weapons, which have lost their deterrent value over the past few years, were meant to be used only after Israel used its nuclear weapons," Assad said.

"Today the price has changed and we have agreed to give up our chemical weapons to remove the threat of the US attacking us."

According to Assad, the chemical weapons had an influence on Syria's morale because "Israel would distribute gas masks to its citizens when there was a rise in tension in the region."

Assad told the guests that Syria had stopped producing chemical weapons in 1997 because they were not efficient arms.

"Five of our soldiers were injured by chemical weapons that were used by the terrorists, and after they received an injection they returned to the battlefield after two days," Assad said.

On the issue of the issue of the global chemical watchdog OPCW's recent Nobel Peace Prize win, Assad joking with his guests said, "That prize should have been given to me."

According to the report, Assad addressed the possibility of war with Israel, saying, "I know that it would be enough to fire conventional missiles at Israeli airfields in order to cause immense damage and incapacitate it, because Israel is strong due its air force."

<http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/Assad-Loss-of-chemical-weapons-is-blow-to-Syrias-morale-political-standing-328668>

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Al Jazeera America

Gallup Poll: Iranians Divided on Nuclear Weapons

As sanctions bite, 41% of Iranians say Tehran should not pursue nuclear weapons - but 34% say it should build nukes

By Michael Pizzi

October 14, 2013

More Iranians say their country should not pursue nuclear weapons than the number that believe Iran should arm itself with nukes, according to Gallup poll results released Monday.

Although 56% of Iranians approve of their country's nonmilitary nuclear programs, just 34% support the idea that Tehran should develop nuclear weapons, with 41% saying they disapprove of the idea, according to the survey.

Iran's leaders say they have no intention of pursuing nuclear weapons -- indeed, the U.S. National Intelligence Estimate holds that Tehran has taken no decision to do so, despite steadily accumulating the technical capacity to build such weapons. And Iran's media reported in 2005 that Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei had issued a religious edict denouncing as un-Islamic the production, stockpiling or use of nuclear weapons.

The Gallup poll numbers indicate Iranian citizens remain divided over whether their country is well served by heeding such an edict.

The poll results come just a day before Iranian negotiators sit down with representatives of the U.S., Russia, China, the United Kingdom, France and Germany to discuss proposals under which Iran would agree to set limits on its nuclear work in exchange for the lifting of suffocating sanctions.

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Iran claims that its nuclear program is entirely peaceful in nature and that enriching uranium to 20 percent — just a technical step away from weapons grade — is done exclusively to create medical isotopes. The International Atomic Energy Agency, which has inspected Iran's nuclear facilities, confirms that Iran has converted about half its stockpile into forms difficult to turn into weapons-grade fuel.

The poll, which was conducted in May and June in Iran and drew 1,000 respondents, also found that 58% were either "very hopeful" or "somewhat hopeful" that the upcoming talks in Geneva would culminate in some sort of agreement acceptable to both sides.

Rising optimism on both sides of the negotiations is widely seen to reflect thawing relations between U.S. and Iran since the June election of Rouhani, himself a former nuclear negotiator. He has made efforts to re-establish contact with the U.S. — most notably a 15-minute phone call with President Barack Obama that marked the first direct contact between the two countries' heads of government in 30 years — in sharp contrast to his hard-line predecessor Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Iran and the West have been in a stalemate over the nuclear issue for a decade, but Rouhani's surprise election and comments from high-level Iranian officials indicate Iran may be prepared to move forward.

"We have some surplus, you know, the amount that we don't need. But over that, we can have some discussions," Ali Larijani, Iran's speaker of parliament, told The Associated Press last week. The country's deputy foreign minister later walked back those comments but reaffirmed that Iran would be willing to negotiate on various aspects of enrichment.

The U.S. and its allies remain cautiously optimistic for the first round of talks with the Rouhani administration.

"The world has heard a lot from President Rouhani's administration about its desire to improve the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran's relations with the international community, and President Obama believes we should test that assertion," a White House spokeswoman said after Obama's phone call with Rouhani.

Separate Gallup poll results released in February found that a majority of Iranians believed sanctions were hurting their compatriots' livelihoods "a great deal." That poll also found that 47% of Iranians found the U.S. "most responsible" for the sanctions, with only 10% blaming the Iranian government.

The U.S., United Nations and European Union have all imposed sanctions on Iran. An E.U. oil embargo adopted last year is estimated to be costing Iran \$4 billion to \$8 billion per month.

In February, Obama signed into law yet another round of sanctions, increasing economic pressure on Iran to reconsider its stance on nuclear development.

But some analysts say the poll questions on weapons may be missing how Iranians see the question of the country's nuclear development.

"It's a matter of principles," said Rasmus Christian Elling, an Iran expert and an assistant professor at the University of Copenhagen in Denmark. "The public debate in Iran is not about weapons but about their country's right to uranium enrichment and peaceful use of nuclear energy."

Elling said that while most Iranians support their country's right to pursue a peaceful nuclear program, "some may think that the political leaders are sometimes too willing to pay too high a price for the uranium-enrichment program."

Talks are set to begin Tuesday in Geneva.

<http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2013/10/14/iranians-dividedonnuclearweapons.html>

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The Daily Star – Lebanon

Chemical Watchdog says has Verified 11 Syria Sites

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Agence France-Presse (AFP)
October 16, 2013

THE HAGUE: The world's chemical weapons watchdog said Wednesday its inspectors have checked 11 out of 20 sites identified by Damascus as it works to eliminate Syria's banned weapons.

"The OPCW mission has now conducted verification activities at a total of 11 sites that are identified by Syria's disclosure," the Hague-based Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons said.

The OPCW has said that there are a total of 20 sites to be visited in Syria.

Since inspectors arrived in the country two weeks ago, activities have also included "critical equipment destruction at six sites as well as some Category 3 weapons destruction", the organisation added in a statement.

The chemical watchdog, which last week was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, classifies Category 3 as "unfilled munitions and devices and other equipment specifically designed to aid the deployment of chemical weapons".

The OPCW and the United Nations now have about 60 experts working in Syria to eradicate chemical weapons, around a month after the OPCW accepted President Bashar al-Assad's application to join the Chemical Weapons Convention, in a bid to stave off a possible Western military strike.

The key convention came into force on Monday.

So far Syria has won rare praise for its cooperation with the inspectors, but the UN has stressed that key deadlines in the destruction of the war-ravaged country's chemical weapons should be met.

This included verifying Syria's disclosed chemical weapons, identifying key equipment, destroying production facilities and starting the destruction of Category 3 chemical weapons by November 1.

Inspectors have until June 30, 2014 to complete the destruction of Syria's chemical arsenal.

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2013/Oct-16/234820-opcw-says-has-verified-11-sites-identified-by-syria.ashx#axzz2huwVmGmi>

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Khaleej Times – U.A.E.

Iran, World Powers Pledge New Nuclear Talks

Rohani has pledged transparency on the nuclear programme and engagement with major powers to try to remove the sanctions.

By Agence France-Presse (AFP)
17 October 2013

GENEVA — Both Washington and Tehran were upbeat after Iran agreed to hold fresh nuclear talks with world powers next month and made a "breakthrough" proposal to allow spot checks on its nuclear sites.

After the talks deal Wednesday, Iran said it was hopeful for a "new phase in our relations" with the international community.

The White House said Iran had shown a greater level of "seriousness and substance" than ever before at the two days of talks in Geneva.

Germany was also positive, saying the latest talks had boosted hopes for a diplomatic solution but a wary Russia warned there was "no reason to break into applause".

European Union foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton told reporters the next meeting would convene in Geneva on November 7 and 8.

Issue No. 1086, 18 October 2013

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She read from what she underlined was an unprecedented joint statement agreed with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and herself as chair of the international negotiating team.

The EU is at the helm of the so-called P5+1 group — Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States, plus Germany — which has spent years trying to reach a deal with Iran amid fears that it is developing nuclear weapons.

The Islamic republic vehemently denies that and insists its nuclear programme is for peaceful purposes.

The statement described this week's Geneva talks as "substantive and forward-looking", calling Iran's plan a "proposed basis for negotiation".

The talks were the first between all parties' nuclear negotiators since Iranian President Hassan Rohani, seen as a relative moderate, succeeded Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in August.

They ended a six-month freeze over Iran's refusal to curb uranium enrichment in exchange for easing the international sanctions battering its economy.

Amid signs of a thaw with the international community, Rohani has pledged transparency on the nuclear programme and engagement with major powers to try to remove the sanctions.

"We hope that this a beginning of a new phase in our relations," Zarif told reporters.

While the details remain under wraps, Iran's lead nuclear negotiator Abbas Araqchi said its proposal involved "proportionate and reciprocal steps by both sides".

After an hour-long presentation Tuesday by Iran's team — in English, a first in the nuclear talks — Araqchi said the proposal had the "capacity to make a breakthrough".

Iran's plan contains three steps that could settle the nuclear dispute "within a year", Araqchi has said, the first achievable "within a month or two, or even less".

He said that snap inspections of Iran's atomic facilities were part of the last step.

White House spokesman Jay Carney said Iran's presentation at the talks was "useful", showing a "level of seriousness and substance that we have not seen before".

State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki cautioned however that "a great deal more work that needs to be done".

German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle said the talks had "reinforced hope that a diplomatic solution is possible to completely calm our concerns about the nature of the Iranian nuclear programme".

But Russian negotiator Sergei Ryabkov was less than upbeat.

"The talks were difficult, sometimes intense, and sometimes unpredictable. One of the reasons is the extremely low level of mutual trust — practically the absence of the required level of trust," he said.

Ryabkov agreed that the results were better than April's round in Kazakhstan — when Ahmadinejad was in power, and the talks hit the wall.

"But this does not guarantee further progress. There is no reason to break into applause. Things could have worked out better," he said.

Iran has already drawn red lines, saying it will not accept demands to suspend uranium enrichment or ship stockpiles of purified material abroad.

"We will not back down on our rights," Zarif said.

"At the same time we feel there is no need for concerns about our nuclear program... It is logical to remove any concerns though," he added.



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Araqchi said: "We entered into details about the first and final steps... Differences still exist and there are a number of them. But we are on a path to bridge those differences."

The rapprochement comes after Zarif held a landmark meeting with US Secretary of State John Kerry during the UN General Assembly in New York last month, when Rohani also spoke on the telephone with US President Barack Obama.

http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?section=middleeast&xfile=data/middleeast/2013/October/middleeast_October168.xml

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Asharq Al-Awsat – London, U.K.

Saudi Arabia Declines UN Security Council Seat

Saudi Foreign Ministry cites UN Security Council's inability to end international conflicts for decision

By Asharq Al-Awsat

Friday, 18 October 2013

Riyadh, *Asharq Al-Awsat*—Saudi Arabia declined to take up the non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council on Friday, citing "double standards" in the international organization hampering its ability to end international conflict. Riyadh cited a number of international issues precluding it from joining the UN Security Council, including the Palestinian Cause and the Syrian crisis, calling for the Security Council to be reformed to allow it to carry out its responsibilities in maintaining international peace and security.

A Saudi Foreign Ministry statement, published by the state Saudi Press Agency (SPA) said: "First of all, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is pleased to extend its sincere thanks and deep gratitude to all the countries that have given their confidence in electing it as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council for the next two years."

"The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as a founding member of the United Nations, is proud of its comprehensive and enduring commitment to the purposes and principles of the UN charter, believing that the commitment of all member states—honestly, truthfully, and accurately, as stipulated in the Charter—is the real guarantee for world security and peace."

However the Saudi Foreign Ministry statement added: "The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia believes that the manner, the mechanisms of action, and double standards, existing in the Security Council prevent it from performing its duties and assuming its responsibilities towards preserving international peace and security as required, leading to the continued disruption of peace and security, the expansion of injustice, the violation of rights, and the spread of conflicts and war around the world."

"In this regard, it is unfortunate that all international efforts that have been exerted in recent years, in which Saudi Arabia has participated very effectively, did not result in reaching the reforms required to enable the Security Council to regain its desired role in the service of peace and security in the world," the statement added.

"The continuation of the Palestinian Cause without a just and lasting solution for 65 years, resulting in several wars that threatened international peace and security, is irrefutable evidence and proof of the Security Council's inability to carry out its duties," the Foreign Ministry statement said.

"The failure of the Security Council to make the Middle East a region free of all weapons of destruction, its inability to subdue the nuclear programs of all countries in the region without exception...is more irrefutable evidence of its inability to shoulder its responsibilities," it added.

"Allowing the ruling regime in Syria to kill and burn its people through the use of chemical weapons, while the world stands idly by, without applying any deterrent sanctions against the Damascus regime, is also proof of the Security Council's inability to carry out its duties and responsibility," the Foreign Ministry statement said.

"Accordingly, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, based on its historic responsibilities towards its own people, and Arab and Islamic nations, as well as towards all people aspiring for peace and stability across the world, announces its apology for

Issue No. 1086, 18 October 2013

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not accepting membership of the Security Council until the body is reformed and enabled, effectively and practically, to carry out its duties and responsibilities in maintaining international peace and security," the statement concluded.

<http://www.aawsat.net/2013/10/article55319608>

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The Huffington Post

North Korea Rejects U.S. Offer of Non-Aggression Agreement, Wants Sanctions Halted

By Associated Press (AP)

October 12, 2013

SEOUL, South Korea -- SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea refused to sign a non-aggression agreement that U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry offered last week on condition of denuclearization.

In a statement carried by the North's official state media on Saturday, the National Defence Commission spokesman said the U.S. should stop sanctions meant to punish its February nuclear test and provocations including military exercises on the Korean Peninsula.

Earlier this week, North Korea criticized joint two-day naval drills among the U.S., South Korea and Japan, which the allies said were aimed at improving readiness to maritime disasters. North Korea called the drills as a military confrontation, saying it is ready to foil any enemy provocation.

The powerful commission's statement came in response to recent U.S. official's remarks. During his trip to Japan, Kerry said the door for negotiation with North Korea is open if it abandons nuclear weapons and complies with international demands.

Kerry said the Washington is ready to have a peaceful relationship with Pyongyang providing it decides to denuclearize.

The North's statement came as the mother of an American held in North Korea visited her son for the first time in his 11-month detention.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/10/12/north-korea-rejects-us_n_4089020.html?ir=World

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Defense News

North Korea Warns of 'All-Out War'

By Agence France-Presse (AFP)

October 13, 2013

SEOUL — North Korea on Saturday issued a fresh warning of an "all-out war", urging the United States to stop military drills and what it described as "nuclear blackmail."

In a thinly veiled threat to strike the United States, the North's National Defence Commission (NDC), chaired by leader Kim Jong-Un, said the US government must withdraw its policy of hostility against the North if it wants peace on both the Korean Peninsula and the "US mainland."

"(The United States) must bear it in mind that reckless provocative acts would meet our retaliatory strikes and lead to an all-out war of justice for a final showdown with the United States," a spokesman of the NDC was quoted as saying in a statement carried by Pyongyang's Korean Central News Agency.

"We emphasize again that the United States must withdraw various measures aimed to isolate and strangulate us. Dependent upon this are ... peace and security, not only on the Korean Peninsula but the US mainland as well."

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The comments come after a two-day joint naval drill between Japan, South Korea and the US, which included an American nuclear aircraft carrier, sparked a series of angry responses and threats from Pyongyang.

On Friday, the North slammed the naval drill as a “serious military provocation” and vowed to “bury in the sea” the American carrier taking part in the exercise.

The latest bellicose statement from the NDC demanded that the US lift sanctions against the North, stop the “constant nuclear blackmails” and various war drills.

It rejected as “intolerable contempt” a US demand that it should show tangible commitment towards abandoning its nuclear programs if it wants substantive talks with the United States.

“The de-nuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is an inalterable policy goal of the DPRK government,” it said, but added that getting rid of such weapons should also include a total removal of US nuclear threats against the North.

The US and South Korea have long demanded that Pyongyang show tangible commitment to ending its nuclear weapons program before the six-party talks, which have been stalled for several years, can resume.

Later Saturday, South Korea’s President Park Geun-Hye warned the North was a “serious threat” to the region.

Speaking in Jakarta, where she met with Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono on a state visit, Park told reporters: “North Korea’s nuclear weapons development poses a serious threat to peace and stability in the region, including the Korean peninsula”.

“We cannot accept North Korea as a nuclear state,” she said.

The North has said for years it wants de-nuclearization of the whole Korean Peninsula and that it is developing a nuclear arsenal to protect itself from the US military, which occasionally sends nuclear-powered warships and aircraft capable of carrying atomic weapons.

In February the North carried out its third underground nuclear test in defiance of UN Security Council resolutions, sending tensions soaring and raising fears of possible conflict. It also launched a rocket in December that Washington said was a disguised ballistic missile test.

As well as the two Koreas, China and the US the six-party talks also involve Russia and Japan.

<http://www.defensenews.com/article/20131013/DEFREG03/310130006/North-Korea-Warns-All-Out-War->

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The Korea Herald – South Korea

N. Korea Ready to Make another Nuke Test Anytime: S. Korean Envoy

October 15, 2013

North Korea has “very serious nuclear capabilities” and it is able to conduct another round of nuclear tests “any time,” South Korea’s nuclear envoy said Tuesday.

The communist country has restarted a nuclear reactor at its Yongbyon nuclear center, a provocative move that would provide Pyongyang with enough plutonium to build one atomic bomb a year, according to Seoul’s spy agency.

Pyongyang conducted its third nuclear test in February.

“The assessment on North Korea’s nuclear capabilities is very grave, and we see it has the ability to carry out another round of nuclear tests whenever it wants in technological terms,” said Cho Tae-yong, South Korea’s top nuclear envoy during a forum held in Seoul.

“There are signs that the five-megawatt graphite moderated reactor has been in operation recently, the North is expanding nuclear enrichment facilities, and construction is underway for a small-scale light-water reactor,” Cho said.



The reactor in Yongbyon, located 90 kilometers north of Pyongyang, has been cited for producing plutonium for the North's nuclear weapons program before it was shut down under a deal brokered at the six-party talks six years ago.

The nation had blown up the reactor's cooling tower in 2008 to show its seriousness about suspending operations.

Pyongyang, however, announced in April when tensions spiked on the Korean Peninsula that it would restart work on the small reactor, which does not generate any energy, and use it to strengthen the country's nuclear deterrence.

Cho said that the North's unrelenting efforts to advance its nuclear capabilities are expected to make China deal with its communist neighbor "just as any other country."

As a way to induce North Korea to abandon its nuclear ambitions, Cho said the international community "has been strengthening its stick approach and pressuring (the North) now rather than the using the carrot," adding the multilateral talks "will go nowhere at this juncture."

The six-party talks, involving two Koreas, the U.S., China, Japan and Russia, were suspended in late 2008, and Seoul and Washington have urged Pyongyang to take concrete and meaningful steps toward denuclearization as a precondition to resume the forum.

"Even if the talks begin, we should not reduce pressure on the North, such as the U.N. sanctions." (Yonhap News)

<http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20131015001106>

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Yonhap News Agency – South Korea

S. Korea Seeks Multi-Layered Missile Defense against North

By Kim Eun-jung

October 15, 2013

SEOUL, Oct. 15 (Yonhap) -- South Korea will speed up building its own missile defense aimed at low-flying targets, while seeking ways to develop "multi-layered" deterrence against North Korea, the defense ministry said Tuesday.

Seoul has been gradually building an independent, low-tier missile shield called the Korea Air and Missile Defense (KAMD), with mid-term plans to acquire the latest Patriot missiles and long-range early warning radars.

In addition to the terminal phase system, the defense ministry said it is considering multi-layered defense to effectively strike ballistic missiles coming from different altitudes.

"Our military is establishing a low-tier terminal-phase KAMD considering the range of North Korea's incoming ballistic missiles. It was reflected in the military acquisition plan and will be completed faster than expected," ministry spokesman Kim Min-seok said in a briefing. "Our military is also looking into various measures to bolster the terminal phase, low-altitude defense to effectively counter North Korea's nuclear and missile threat."

The Korea Air and Missile Defense (KAMD) is currently being developed with the purpose of deterring North Korea's nuclear and missile threat. (Yonhap)

Kim didn't specify weapons systems, but he excluded the Standard Missile-3, which intercepts missiles at an altitude over 400-500 kilometers, from the shopping list.

Although there have been calls to adopt the long-range missile defense to establish a multi-layered shield against the North, Seoul's defense ministry has remained cautious over the American missile program as it could spur a regional arms race involving China and further contribute to mounting costs in the national missile program.

Kim's remark raised speculation that Seoul is seeking to adopt systems like the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) by Lockheed Martin as a possible next step. THAAD is designed to shoot down short, medium and intermediate ballistic missiles in their terminal phase, using a hit-to-kill method.



South Korea plans to upgrade PAC-2 missiles imported from Germany to PAC-3 by Lockheed Martin as skepticism has risen over the old interceptor's capability to thwart North Korea's ballistic missiles, which might be tipped with chemical or nuclear warheads.

The latest move comes as South Korea is scheduled to take over the wartime operational command of all troops on the peninsula in December 2015, a timeline that had already been pushed back from the previous deadline of 2012.

In light of Pyongyang's nuclear test and warlike rhetoric in the spring, Seoul asked Washington to delay the schedule to buy more time to beef up its military. The two nations have agreed to reset the appropriate timing next year.

It also comes at a time as Seoul is under pressure to play a bigger role in the U.S. initiative to beef up its regional missile defense along with Japan as part of its rebalancing toward Asia.

In response to Seoul's move to delay the 2015 transition deadline, lawmakers demanded the military lay out a blueprint plan to bolster its missile defense for budget deliberations, the key deterrence capability against North Korea's nuclear and missile program.

Defense Minister Kim Kwan-jin also said the South Korean military is speeding up efforts to establish the KAMD, while reviewing other options to bolster the missile shield.

"In addition to upgrading (the current system) to the PAC-3 system, we will review other measures for multi-layered defense," Kim said during a parliamentary audit on Monday. "For the multi-layered defense, long-range and mid-range surface-to-air missiles as well as other systems will be considered."

Seoul has been pushing to bolster its defense against the communist rival after it successfully fired off a long-range rocket last December. Pyongyang claims the launch was aimed at putting a satellite into orbit, but Seoul and Washington consider it as a covert ballistic-missile technology test.

When the North threatened to strike South Korea and U.S. Pacific islands and placed its medium-range missiles on its east coast in April, the Pentagon stationed missile interceptors in Alaska and moved Aegis guided-missile destroyers and THAAD to Guam. Japan deployed its PAC-3 batteries in Tokyo.

During a bilateral defense summit earlier this month, U.S. Secretary Chuck Hagel pledged to cooperate with Seoul to bolster interoperability of the alliances command and control system for missile defense against North Korea.

"We're working with the Republic of Korea on their missile defense system. These don't have to be identical as long as they are interoperable," he said. "We want systems that work together and that are interoperable. It involves a lot of command and control, which is complicated."

Military experts say operating missile defense at different altitudes could provide enhanced protection against North Korea's mid- and long-range ballistic missiles.

"THAAD has a large footprint, and the Patriot ... protects a smaller area. Usually THAAD and Patriot are deployed together because they provide in-depth tier and layered defense capability," Orville Prins, the vice president of business development for air and missile defense at Lockheed Martin, told Yonhap News Agency last month.

South Korea's procurement agency and Air Force officials showed interest in a long-range surface-to-air system during their visit to the U.S. in April and that discussions are currently under way on whether to acquire THAAD or develop an indigenous program that fits the role, Prins said.

In July, the defense ministry submitted a 214.5 trillion won (US\$192.6 billion) budget request for the 2014-2018 fiscal year to the parliament for deliberation, with 70.2 trillion won assigned for acquisition of interceptors, satellites and high-altitude spy drones.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2013/10/15/25/0301000000AEN20131015002500315F.html>



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Bellingham Herald – Bellingham, WA

North Korea Replaced General Linked to Cuban Weapons Shipment

By JUAN O. TAMAYO — El Nuevo Herald

October 15, 2013

MIAMI — North Korea has confirmed it replaced the general who was chief of staff of its military when a Pyongyang-registered freighter carrying Cuban weapons was seized in Panama, although the two events are probably not directly related, according to an analyst.

Gen. Kim Kyok Sik was on a temporary appointment to the chief of staff post, so the freighter's seizure most likely merely provided the proper time to replace him, said Michael Madden, editor of the Web page North Korean Leadership Watch.

Kim's departure after less than five months as Chief of the Korean Peoples Army's General Staff "was only a matter of time. I think the seizure of the ship in Panama just hurried things along," Madden told El Nuevo Herald on Monday.

North Korea's official media confirmed last week that Kim had been replaced by Gen. Ri Yong Gil, Madden added. Unofficial reports of the switch that made the rounds in August had triggered speculation Kim had been fired because of the Cuba case.

Kim's name was linked to the scandal surrounding the freighter Chong Chon Gang because he led a high-ranking military delegation that visited Havana in July, about the same time the ship was in Cuba loading 420 tons of weapons and 10,000 tons of sugar.

After Panama seized the ship and found the undeclared weapons before it entered the Panama Canal on its way to North Korea, the Cuban foreign ministry described the shipment as "obsolete" weapons sent to be repaired and returned to Havana.

U.N. Security Council officials are investigating whether the shipment violated an international arms embargo slapped on Pyongyang since 2006 because of its nuclear weapons and missile development programs.

Kim's replacement was first rumored around the same time that Cuba's official news media announced that Gen. Pedro Mendiondo Gomez, head of the island's Anti Aircraft Defense and Revolutionary Air Force, had been killed in a car accident on Aug. 25.

Mendondo's title put him in overall charge of two Soviet-made anti-aircraft missile systems, two MiG 21 warplanes and 16 engines for the jets found hidden under the tons of Cuban sugar aboard the North Korean freighter.

The report of Mendiondo's death did not detail where or how the accident occurred and said his body was cremated. Cuba's official media did not publish the usual praise for government officials who die, or the usual photos of the funeral services.

Cuba's report noted that the crash also killed his in-laws, Juan Rubalcaba Gato and Graciela Terry Aguirre, and severely injured his wife, Rafaela Rubalcaba Terry. There had been no updates on her condition or the crash since then.

Madden said he believed Kim's removal as chief of the general staff soon after the Chong Chon Gang's seizure was a coincidence because the 75-year-old had served in that post before and has a history of short-term assignments.

Kim first served as chief of the general staff from April 2007 to February 2009, Madden said. From July 2011 until October 2012, he was military adviser to North Korean ruler Kim Jong Un and his father and predecessor, Kim Jong Il, while publicly holding the position of vice minister of the People's Armed Forces.

He also served as minister of the People's Armed Forces, the equivalent of defense minister, from October 2012 until May 2013, when he was appointed to this second term as chief of the general staff



Today, Kim is either retired or is holding a behind-the-scenes role in the government, Madden said.

<http://www.bellinghamherald.com/2013/10/15/3261038/north-korea-replaced-general-linked.html>

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Arirang News – South Korea

October 16, 2013

Defense Chief Denies U.S.-Led Missile Defense Participation

South Korea's Defense Minister Kim Kwan-jin on Wednesday made it clear that Korea is not keen on joining a U.S.-led missile defense program.

The minister said the South Korean military aims to enhance its Korea Air and Missile Defense system, to better counter missile threats from North Korea.

He added that U.S. missile program is too costly and the interception range is unnecessary on the Korean Peninsula.

Instead, Kim said the military had already approved a plan to upgrade its PAC-2 patriot missiles to PAC-3s and develop mid- and long-range surface-to-air missiles.

Kim added that the military is not considering purchasing SM-3 missiles or the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system, which is focused on intercepting short, medium and intermediate ballistic missiles, saying they are not a good fit for Korea's needs.

http://www.arirang.co.kr/News/News_View.asp?nseq=152280&category=2

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Yonhap News Agency – South Korea

N. Korea Must Break 'Illusion' of Nuclear Status: China Expert

October 16, 2013

BEIJING, Oct. 16 (Yonhap) -- Nations involved in the long-stalled talks aimed at ending North Korea's nuclear weapons program should keep up pressure on the North to break its "illusion" of becoming a nuclear state before any resumption of the six-party talks can take place, a Chinese expert said Wednesday.

After conducting its third nuclear test in February, North Korea amended its constitution in May, proclaiming its status as a nuclear-armed country, a move that further complicated international efforts to persuade the North to give up its nuclear program.

Zhang Liangui, an expert on North Korea at China's Central Party School, told China's state-run Global Times newspaper that the North's nuclear policy has not changed although Pyongyang wants to resume the six-party talks "without preconditions."

"Now, each party should try every possible means to show Pyongyang their firm determination to realize the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula," Zhang said.

"They should also break the North's illusion that one day they will admit its status as a nuclear state," he said.

"In the past, the North considered the possibility of giving up nuclear weapons in exchange for assistance," Zhang said.

"But now, it wants to turn back to the negotiation table as a nuclear state and act as a supervisor of other nuclear states, implying that if it were to give up nuclear weapons, it would want others to do the same first."



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China has been keen to restart the six-party talks, but South Korea and the U.S. insist that a new round of six-party talks will not take place unless North Korea demonstrates its seriousness about denuclearization through concrete actions.

The off-and-on six-party talks that involve the two Koreas, China, the U.S., Japan and Russia have been stalled since late 2008. North Korea has conducted three nuclear tests since 2006.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2013/10/16/77/0301000000AEN20131016002900315F.html>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

Refitted Aircraft Carrier to Leave for India November 30 – Deputy Premier

14 October 2013

GORKI (Moscow region), October 14 (RIA Novosti) – A Russian-built aircraft carrier refitted for the Indian Navy will finally leave for India on November 30, Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin said Monday, following an overhaul that is years late, and cost over twice the original budgeted price.

The carrier Vikramaditya, which is now five years past its original 2008 delivery date, was supposed to have been handed over to India in December 2012 after the contract was renegotiated, but had to undergo additional repairs after last year's sea trials revealed that the vessel's boilers were not fully functional due to problems with their insulation.

"The problems revealed during sea trials last year have been fixed," Rogozin, who oversees Russia's defense and space industries, said at a meeting with Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev.

"The ship is ready a month ahead of the handover ceremony and will leave our territorial waters on November 30," Rogozin said.

Russian arms exports monopoly Rosoboronexport said in September that the Vikramaditya will be handed over to India on November 15 and was expected arrive at the Indian naval base at the port of Mumbai by February.

The warship, previously known as the Admiral Gorshkov, is a Project 1143.4 or modified Kiev class aircraft carrier commissioned by the Soviet Navy in 1987 and decommissioned in 1996 after cuts to the Russian Navy fleet.

The refit of the ship has lurched from one crisis to another since India and Russia signed a \$947 million deal in 2004 for its purchase and refit according to the Times of India. Delivery has been delayed three times, pushing up the cost of refurbishing the vessel to \$2.3 billion, sparking acrimony between Moscow and New Delhi over the contract.

The Indian Navy has already taken delivery of some of the carrier's MiG-29K naval fighter aircraft, that were completed before their parent ship was ready for sea.

http://en.ria.ru/military_news/20131014/184137951/Refitted-Aircraft-Carrier-to-Leave-for-India-November-30--Deputy-Premier.html

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The Washington Times

Inside the Ring: Russia to Test New Missile

By Bill Gertz, *The Washington Times*

Wednesday, October 16, 2013

Russia will test launch a controversial missile over the next several weeks that U.S. officials say is raising new concerns about Moscow's growing strategic nuclear arsenal and Russia's potential violations of arms treaties.

Issue No. 1086, 18 October 2013

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The RS-26 missile is expected to be deployed with multiple supersonic, maneuvering warheads designed to defeat U.S. missile defenses in Europe, U.S. officials told Inside the Ring.

A House defense aide said the new missile appears to violate the 1987 Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, based on recent tests and Russian statements that it is designed to thwart U.S. defenses. The treaty bans missiles with ranges of between 310 and 3,400 miles.

“The Russians are advertising this as a system capable of defeating U.S. missile defenses in Europe,” the aide said. “At the same time, the State Department is accepting Russia’s claim that this is an ICBM and doesn’t violate INF. It can’t be both.”

The Air Force National Space and Missile Intelligence Center reported recently that Russia’s June 6 test of an RS-26 was a test-firing of an intermediate-range missile disguised as an intercontinental ballistic missile.

Russian officials have denied that the RS-26 violates the INF Treaty, claiming it has a range greater than the treaty threshold of 3,410 miles.

However, Moscow officials in recent months have said the INF Treaty must be altered or scrapped to balance China’s growing arsenal of intermediate-range missiles. The Russians also have been quoted in state-controlled press reports as saying the new missile will be used to defeat and destroy U.S. and NATO missile defenses in Europe.

The Obama administration is deploying land- and sea-based defenses in and around Europe to counter Iranian long-range missiles.

Officials familiar with intelligence reports said the next test-firing of the RS-26 is expected in December.

In June, Russian Deputy Prime Minister **Dmitry Rogozin** described it as a “missile defense killer” after a successful test flight with dummy warheads.

The new missile will be equipped with three multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles, or MIRVs. What is new is that the warheads are super-high-speed vehicles capable of maneuvering from missile interceptors. The maneuvering warheads are considered advanced technology that will increase the precision targeting of the missile system.

The missile also reportedly will be equipped with a high-performance fuel that boosts acceleration shortly after launch, a feature useful for avoiding anti-missile interceptors.

The U.S. officials commented on the missile development after Russia’s RIA Novosti news agency reported Oct. 3 that the next RS-26 test will be conducted before the end of the year from the Kapustin Yar test range.

The new missile is raising questions under the 2010 New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START). The treaty does not prohibit modernizing strategic weapons but allows each side “to question” whether a new type of strategic arm is being developed.

A Pentagon spokesman could not be reached for comment.

The RS-26 will add to Russia’s formidable and growing arsenal, which includes SS-27 and SS-29 road-mobile, solid-fuel missiles; a new submarine-launched nuclear missile called Bulava; and plans for a new silo-based ICBM. Russia also announced plans to build rail-mobile ICBMs that were deployed during the Soviet-era and later dismantled.

Under the 2010 U.S.-Russia New START, both countries are to reduce deployed strategic warheads to 1,550. The treaty, however, does not prohibit Russia’s development and deployment of new strategic missile systems and weapons.

The strategic nuclear buildup is Moscow’s response to U.S. missile defenses, which Russia opposes as threatening its strategic nuclear forces.

The Obama administration has said U.S. missile defenses would not be used against Russian or Chinese nuclear missiles, although both nations have rejected the U.S. claims.

Issue No. 1086, 18 October 2013

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Russian government procurement documents provided the first official confirmation of the RS-26 on Sept. 23 when discussing insurance liability for related to test launches, Russia's Vedomosti news outlet reported Oct. 1.

A Russian defense official told Interfax this week that the RS-26 "is fitted with advanced warheads that travel at supersonic speeds and are able to perform altitude and course maneuvers."

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

US Lab in Georgia at Center of Storm Over Biological Warfare Claims

15 October 2013

WASHINGTON, October 14 (RIA Novosti) – A US-funded laboratory in the former Soviet republic of Georgia, accused by a prominent Russian official Monday of developing biological weapons, has been repeatedly touted by US officials as a key tool in guarding the region against dangerous infectious diseases.

"This laboratory has the potential to become a regional center for disease surveillance, research, as well as biosafety and security," US Sen. Richard Lugar said in a speech last year at the christening of the laboratory that bears his name in the Georgian capital of Tbilisi, several months before he retired from the Senate.

The laboratory, formally known as the Richard G. Lugar Center for Public Health Research, became the target of a renewed attack by Russian authorities Monday when Gennady Onishchenko, head of the state consumer rights watchdog Rospotrebnadzor, expressed "extreme concern" about the lab.

"According to our assessments, this laboratory constitutes an important offensive link in the US military-biological capability," Onishchenko was quoted by Russian media as saying, adding that compounds developed at the facility could be secretly employed to destabilize the political and economic situation in Russia.

It was the latest in a series of accusations this year by Onishchenko that the research center could be used for nefarious purposes, allegations that US and Georgian officials have repeatedly denied.

"There still seems to be misperception that this laboratory is a military facility or is engaged in biological weapons research which is absurd," Richard Norland, the US ambassador to Georgia, said in July.

Washington has funded the research center to the tune of \$150 million since its groundbreaking in 2004, according to US officials, an initiative that came in the wake of the Rose Revolution that swept US ally Mikheil Saakashvili to the Georgian presidency.

Saakashvili's ascent rattled officials in Moscow, many of whom saw the revolution as engineered by the United States and its allies at the expense of Russian interests.

Years of diplomatic tensions between Washington and Moscow ensued as Saakashvili sought greater integration with the West, with the nadir coming during Russia's crushing victory against Georgian forces in a brief 2008 war over the breakaway Georgian regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

The laboratory opened in March 2011 as the Central Public Health Research Laboratory, with Lugar saying it will "serve as a manifestation of America's commitment to Georgia."

The US Army Medical Department's Medical Research and Materiel Command (USAMRMC) has been tasked with training Georgian scientists at the lab in areas such as "pathogen research, biosecurity, biosurety and facility operations and maintenance," according to the USAMRMC.

The goal of the US military and the Georgian government "is to address the threat of infectious diseases at the source with approaches that utilize modern technological developments applied from the rapidly expanding knowledge base in

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public and animal health,” Jamie Blow, director of Overseas Operations for Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, said last year.

Onishchenko said last year that an outbreak of African Swine Fever Virus (ASFV) in southern Russia was the result of “economic subversion” by Georgia

Swine fever outbreaks can seriously impair the animal breeding industry because the disease can neither be treated nor prevented by vaccination, and Onishchenko suggested in July that the virus had likely come to Russia from the US-funded laboratory in Georgia.

Russia’s objections to the lab have come from more powerful corners of the government than its consumer protection watchdog. In an apparent reference to the facility, Russia’s Foreign Ministry said in July that it has “serious concerns” about “the US Defense Department’s biological activity near Russia’s borders.”

US officials have said the facility is run by the Georgian government and have dismissed accusations that secretive research is being conducted there.

“It’s an open, transparent facility,” Norland said earlier this year. “We believe there is interest, including from Russian scientists, in taking advantage of the resources of this state-of-the-art facility and we hope they’ll do that.”

<http://en.ria.ru/world/20131015/184149734/US-Lab-in-Georgia-at-Center-of-Storm-Over-Biological-Warfare-Claims.html>

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NBC News.com

A Real Nuclear Deterrent: US, Russia may Team Up to Use Weapons against Asteroids

By Douglas Birch, The Center for Public Integrity
October 16, 2013

When geophysicist H. Jay Melosh attended a meeting of U.S. and ex-Soviet nuclear weapons designers in May 1995, he was surprised by how eager the Cold Warriors were to work together against an unlikely but dangerous extraterrestrial threat: asteroids on a collision course with Earth.

After Edward Teller, father of the hydrogen bomb, urged others meeting at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory to consider building and orbiting huge, new nuclear weapons for planetary protection, some top Russian weaponeers lent their support.

“It was a really bizarre thing to see that these weapons designers were willing to work together -- to build the biggest bombs ever,” said Melosh, an expert in space impacts who has an asteroid named after him.

Ever since, he has been pushing back against scientists who still support the nuclear option, arguing that a non-nuclear solution – diverting asteroids by hitting them with battering rams -- is both possible and far less dangerous.

But Melosh’s campaign suffered a setback last month when Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz signed an agreement with Russia that could open the door to new collaboration between nuclear weapons scientists in everything from plutonium-fueled reactors to lasers and explosives research. A Sept. 16 DOE announcement cited “defense from asteroids” as one potential area of study.

President Barack Obama has committed the United States to seeking a world without nuclear weapons, but NASA is spending hundreds of thousands of dollars a year to study their use against asteroids and the U.S. nuclear weapons labs appear to be itching to work with their Russian colleagues on the problem.

Issue No. 1086, 18 October 2013

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Moreover, weaponeers in both countries are citing the asteroid threat as a reason to hold onto – or to build – very large yield nuclear explosives, which have declining terrestrial justification.

Depending on the nature of the work, it could run afoul of several international pacts, including the 1967 Outer Space Treaty signed by 129 countries, which prohibits deploying nuclear weapons in space. Some experts worry that radioactive debris from blasting an asteroid could itself wreak havoc on Earth.

To some critics, the idea smacks of bad science fiction. Exhibit A is the 1998 Bruce Willis action film “Armageddon,” which shows a team of deep-sea oil drillers landing on an Earth-bound asteroid, planting a nuclear warhead and neatly blowing the rock in halves that just miss Earth. Film critic Kenneth Turan called it “sporadically watchable.”

In real life, Bong Wie, the director of Iowa State University, says he has a three-year, \$600,000 grant from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to design a “hypervelocity nuclear interceptor system,” basically an ICBM-borne warhead fitted with a battering ram.

The ram would separate from the bomb before impact, gouging a crater in the asteroid so the bomb could then blast it to bits.

Keith Holsapple, an engineering professor at the University of Washington, meanwhile says NASA has given him a five-year, \$1.25 million research grant to study how either an impact device or a nuclear explosion could deflect an Earth-bound asteroid from its path.

But the leading supporter of the nuclear solution in the U.S. is probably David S.P. Dearborn, a research physicist and weapons designer at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California who is presently helping refurbish the U.S. nuclear arsenal.

Wie called Dearborn a senior figure among scientists studying the nuclear option. “I am just following in his footsteps,” he said.

Dearborn said that he was offended years ago when he other researchers told the media that nuclear weapons simply couldn’t work against asteroids. “That’s just not true,” he said, calling these claims scientifically “indefensible.”

For years, Dearborn worked to refute the skeptics on his own time. Since 2012 he said he and a colleague have had a grant from Livermore worth several hundred thousand dollars to work on the project part time, he said. He estimated that about a dozen other scientists have studied aspects of the approach at U.S. weapons labs.

Nuclear weapons could be used in two ways, he says. When the collision is still a decade or longer away, a “standoff” nuclear blast could knock the asteroid off course. When the time to impact is short, he says, defenders would try to blow up the asteroid.

“You fragment it with enough force so that the pieces spread out,” and most miss the Earth, he said. Small bits of rock would burn up in the atmosphere.

There would be no need to build new weapons or test old ones, he said. But shattering a large asteroid close to hitting Earth would probably require a weapon with the yield of about a megaton, or 1 million tons of TNT, he said, which is roughly the power of the largest in the current U.S. arsenal.

Meanwhile, Dearborn says, he hopes to compare notes with his Russian counterparts, saying weapons scientists are in the best position to evaluate nuclear planetary defense schemes.

“A truly accurate understanding ... of the impulse caused by a standoff nuclear explosion depends on having access to information that is available only to the nuclear laboratories,” he wrote in an email.

Mark Boslough, a physicist at Sandia National Laboratories in New Mexico, another weapons lab, has worked on part time in the past modeling the effects of nuclear blasts on asteroids and agrees that on short notice nuclear “really is the only option.”

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Melosh disagrees. He was co-investigator on a 2005 NASA mission known as Deep Impact, which launched an 820-pound copper-covered battering ram that gouged a crater out of the comet Tempel 1 in 2005. He says that 90 percent of the biggest asteroids have already been found and ruled out as a near-term threat, demonstrating there is time for find suitable, non-nuclear alternatives – such as hitting asteroids with rams, zapping them with lasers, tugging them off a kamikaze trajectory, or deflecting them with solar sails.

Even as a last-ditch effort, he says, nuclear weapons can't work using existing warheads but only with new, even larger nuclear explosives than exist in any arsenal. "A lot more people have been recorded to have died from nuclear weapons than have been recorded to have died from asteroid impacts," he warned.

The actual 47-page U.S.-Russian agreement – which the Energy agency has not released but the Center for Public Integrity obtained -- does not mention asteroids and instead lays out broad areas for potential cooperation between nuclear weapons complexes on civilian nuclear power, including plutonium-fueled breeder reactor research, and other nuclear-related technologies.

"We are making the implementation of the agreement a priority and will be reviewing possible projects soon," Energy Department spokeswoman Keri Fulton said in an email, after declining to address the mention of asteroid defense.

But according to a former DOE official who stays in close touch with the agency, an important proponent for new, joint work on the asteroid threat between U.S. and Russian nuclear weapons scientists was Donald L. Cook, deputy administrator at the Energy Department's National Nuclear Security Administration, where he oversees the nation's weapons labs. Cook is a former chief executive of Britain's Atomic Weapons Establishment, and former administrator at Sandia National Laboratories in New Mexico, which makes the nonnuclear components for nuclear weapons.

Fulton said she could neither confirm nor deny his role in the deliberations.

The Russians, for their part, are also weighing a nuclear response to the asteroid threat. "In the opinion of Oleg Shubin, a departmental director at Rosatom, non-nuclear ways of deflecting and destroying Earth-bound asteroids may be exotic but ineffective," the state-owned Russian news service RIA Novosti reported March 25.

David Wright, co-director of the Union of Concerned Scientists' Global Security Program, said he hoped any joint asteroid defense work would not become a "jobs program" for weapons scientists.

"When you've got the weapons labs sort of pushing for this in the various countries, it starts to make me feel a little uneasy," he said. "Which doesn't mean it's not a legitimate thing to do, but you want to know it's being done for legitimate reasons."

This article was edited for length. Go to the following URL to read the complete version:

<http://www.publicintegrity.org/2013/10/16/13547/new-use-nuclear-weapons-hunting-rogue-asteroids>

The Center for Public Integrity is a nonprofit independent investigative news outlet. For more of its stories go to publicintegrity.org.

http://investigations.nbcnews.com/_news/2013/10/16/20979593-a-real-nuclear-deterrent-us-russia-may-team-up-to-use-weapons-against-asteroids?lite

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The Chicago Tribune

U.S. Nuclear Arms Modernization Plan Misguided: Scientists' Group

By David Alexander, Reuters

October 17, 2013

Issue No. 1086, 18 October 2013

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WASHINGTON (Reuters) - An Obama administration plan to spend \$60 billion over the next 25 years to modernize the U.S. nuclear arsenal is misguided and violates the spirit of its pledge not to develop new nuclear arms, a Union of Concerned Scientists report said on Thursday.

The 81-page report by the independent nonprofit said the \$60 billion for upgrading warheads is a fraction of what Washington plans to spend on its nuclear deterrent in the coming decades, on top of billions for new manufacturing facilities and billions more for delivery systems like submarines.

The spending comes despite President Barack Obama's endorsement of the goal of a world without nuclear weapons and his negotiation of the "New START" treaty with Russia, which committed the former Cold War rivals to reducing deployed strategic nuclear weapons to 1,550 each by 2018.

But Obama also has insisted that the United States must be confident that its remaining weapons will work as it attempts negotiate smaller and smaller nuclear arsenals with other atomic weapons states.

And he has come under pressure from Republicans to address the problems of the aging U.S. nuclear complex.

The Pentagon and the National Nuclear Security Administration, which is responsible for the maintenance and reliability of the arsenal, did not immediately respond to requests for comment on the report.

The United States produced its last nuclear weapon, based on 1970s technology, in 1990 and halted underground nuclear testing in 1992. Since then it has relied on computer simulation for testing and has refurbished older weapons to extend their life.

But concern about security and reliability has prompted the NNSA and the Pentagon to push for additional efforts to modernize the weapons. A plan released in June by the NNSA, which is part of the Department of Energy, calls for a new manufacturing complex to reconfigure and upgrade the arms.

MIX AND MATCH

The United States has seven warhead types. The new program would reduce the number of types and make some interchangeable on different weapons. There would be three warhead types for long-range missiles and two for bombs and cruise missiles.

"NNSA's plan violates the spirit if not the letter of the administration's pledge to not develop new nuclear weapons. It sends the wrong message to the rest of the world," said Philip Coyle, a researcher at the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation who co-authored the report.

Lisbeth Gronlund, a co-director of UCS's Global Security Program who worked on the report, said in an interview that modernization efforts by NNSA could undermine confidence in the reliability of the arsenal.

Weapons in the U.S. arsenal have elements for a primary and secondary explosion. Under the new approach, Gronlund said, some primary and secondary elements would be mixed and matched, even though they may not have been physically tested together.

"People could well raise this as a concern and suggest we need to resume testing," she said. "So I don't see any reason to go down that road."

Gronlund said the idea behind moving to a smaller number of interchangeable warheads was that it would make it easier to reduce the size of the nuclear "hedge," the non-deployed warheads that are held in reserve.

The United States is thought to have as many as 2,650 non-deployed warheads, plus about 3,000 waiting to be dismantled, according to The Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation.

"The claim is that this (modernization) would allow them to eventually reduce the hedge," Gronlund said, but that would only be done after 25 years, which she described as "a little lame."

Issue No. 1086, 18 October 2013

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With the United States already cutting deployed warheads under New START, it is a "very realistic assumption" that Washington would reduce the number of non-deployed weapons over the next 25 years as well, she said.

Editing by Xavier Briand.

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/sns-rt-us-usa-arms-nuclear-20131017,0,2202980.story>

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National Journal

New Treatment May Cure Ebola Even Days after Infection

Global Security Newswire Staff

October 17, 2013

Canadian scientists have created a treatment for the Ebola virus that has saved the lives of monkeys days after they were infected, the Xinhua News Agency reported on Wednesday.

Ebola hemorrhagic fever is one of the most deadly and contagious diseases known to exist in nature. The lack of adequate vaccines and antidotes for the virus have made it a serious worry for biodefense specialists concerned about its possible applications as a biological weapon.

Individuals carrying the virus can die less than a week after being infected or three to four days after first displaying symptoms -- which include a skin rash, red eyes, internal and external bleeding, and diarrhea. That does not leave much time for the administration of life-saving medical countermeasures.

"For this reason, such treatment has been considered by many to be closer to the domain of science fiction than contemporary scientific research," lead study author Qiu Xiangguo of the Canadian Public Health Agency said in an interview.

Qiu and his colleagues administered their new combination therapy treatment, which contains three different antibodies and a special disease-fighting molecule called interferon alpha, to monkeys that had been exposed to Ebola. The combination treatment was 75 percent and 100 percent effective in saving infected monkeys, which had been exposed to Ebola three days earlier.

The antibodies are "like three little but powerful missiles" that go after three separate components of the disease, according to Qiu.

The scientists' findings were released in the *Science Translational Medicine* journal. A Phase 1 safety trial to try out the new treatment on humans provisionally has been planned for late 2014 or early 2015.

<http://www.nationaljournal.com/global-security-newswire/new-treatment-may-cure-ebola-even-days-after-infection-20131017>

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Global Times – China
OPINION/Commentary

Seoul Treads Tricky Line Around US, National Missile Defense Needs

Global Times, October 13, 2013

By Lee Dong-jun

Recently South Korea and the US agreed to adopt a "tailored deterrence strategy" against the threat of North Korean nuclear weapons.

Issue No. 1086, 18 October 2013

United States Air Force Counterproliferation Research & Education | Maxwell AFB, Montgomery AL
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The joint communiqué released on October 2 after the annual Security Consultative Meeting said that "This strategy establishes a strategic alliance framework for tailoring deterrence against key North Korean nuclear threat scenarios across armistice and wartime, and strengthens the integration of alliance capabilities to maximize their deterrence effects."

From Seoul's perspective, its adoption is significant in that it develops and codifies the abstract US promise of a nuclear umbrella into an actual operational plan.

But it could increase the chances of a nuclear conflict, since it also contains provisions for a "preemptive response" to the detection of signs of the use of nuclear weapons.

Tailored deterrence identifies plans of response for both sides to three stages of North Korean nuclear weapon capabilities: threat, signs of imminent usage, and usage.

This means that in responding actively to a North Korean nuclear threat, the two militaries would be mobilizing all available forces; the US nuclear umbrella, the two sides' conventional military power, and missile defense.

Key to this is the "kill chain" and the Korea Air and Missile Defense (KAMD), which President Park Geun-hye has declared her intention to "establish as soon as possible."

The kill chain is aimed at launching a preemptive strike on the North's asymmetric warfare capabilities, while the KAMD is South Korea's low-altitude air and missile network for intercepting Pyongyang's missiles after launch.

South Korea is planning on pouring 15 trillion won (\$14 billion) into these two projects through 2022.

US Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said on October 2 that "The South Korean and US missile defense systems don't have to be identical as long as they are interoperable."

His remarks suggest that South Korea is not obliged to take part in the US system, but that the two countries' systems should allow for inter-operation.

The US government under President Barack Obama views the establishment of a US-led missile defense system linking South Korea, Japan, and the US as a key goal during its rebalancing to the Asia-Pacific region.

However, the South Korean government has persistently denied the possibility that its missile defense could be incorporated into the US system.

Seoul is particularly concerned that Seoul's official participation in US missile defense could lead to the worst possible scenario for its national security, by being hustled onto the front lines in a major power conflict pitting the US and Japan against China and Russia.

This would make it impossible for Park to carry out her policy goals of cooperating with China while maintaining an alliance with the US and bringing about change in North Korea.

And in an environment like the Korean Peninsula where firing ranges are so short, the most effective missile defense system is low-altitude defense. Both South and North Korea have maximum firing ranges of just 1,000 kilometers.

The US missile defense system, in contrast, would be designed mainly to intercept intercontinental ballistic missiles.

These issues are tied to another postponement of the transfer of wartime operational command (OPCON) of South Korean army from the US. With the OPCON transfer slated for December 2015, Seoul asked Washington to reconsider the process, citing increasing threats from Pyongyang.

It can be inferred that Washington used Seoul's request for delaying the OPCON handover as a way of accomplishing its own long-standing desire to building a three-way missile defense system in Northeast Asia.

South Korea is in a strategic dilemma. Seoul finds it hard to oppose the US requests to contribute to its missile defense system, taking into account the need to step up security coordination involving Washington against North Korea.

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However, Seoul is also conscious of the repercussions, which could provoke China and Russia and exercise a bad influence on North Korean nuclear problem. Seoul is walking a tightrope between US needs and its own.

The author is a professor with the Asiatic Research Institute of Korea University.

http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/817469.shtml#_UI8YzYAo5Dx

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The London Guardian – U.K.
OPINION/Comment Is Free

We Cannot Verify and Must Not Trust Iran's Promises on Nuclear Weapons

Ignore the 'moderate' smokescreen. Sanctions have failed, so our choice is stark: use military force or let Tehran get the bomb

By John Bolton

Tuesday, 15 October 2013

Tuesday's opening of yet another round of negotiations with Iran over its nuclear-weapons program creates enormous risks for America's anti-proliferation efforts. Tehran's extensive propaganda campaign, stressing the "moderation" of its new president, Hassan Rouhani, seems to be working, softening up the gullible in the United States and Europe.

As in previous iterations of the charade now reopening in Geneva, Iran's bargaining position benefits from our own repeated mistakes. The ayatollahs need only take advantage of these unforced errors, and success may well fall into their undeserving hands. Consider the most blatant errors that Iran is eager to exploit.

First, both Presidents Bush and Obama conceded that Iran was entitled to a "peaceful" nuclear program, for energy and scientific purposes. Under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), however, that view is flatly wrong. By pursuing nuclear weapons for over two decades, Iran has violated key NPT provisions – notably, the obligation it freely undertook to be a non-nuclear weapons state. Tehran is not, therefore, entitled to claim benefits under NPT sections permitting peaceful uses of nuclear power.

Beyond treaty interpretation, Iran's long record of ignoring its commitments and lying about its nuclear program demonstrates beyond dispute that it cannot be trusted. What conceivable reason exists to believe today's pledge to abstain from nuclear weapons when the ayatollahs have violated so many previous pledges? Only if credibility counts for nothing would Iran's likely upcoming "commitment" hold any weight.

Second, by allowing Iran to possess any uranium enrichment, nuclear reactors, or spent nuclear fuel reprocessing capabilities, the west will both legitimize Iran's nuclear program and ensure that it can move to weaponization at a time entirely of its choosing. President Obama's negotiators conceded last year that Iran could enrich uranium to reactor-grade levels, so long as it didn't enrich to higher levels. But reactor-grade enrichment levels already take Iran nearly 70% of the way to weapons-grade enrichment. "Stopping" enrichment above standard reactor-grade levels saves, at best, a few weeks of enrichment effort. By misunderstanding the physics of uranium enrichment, the Obama administration has made a mockery of itself.

Third, the White House retort that international inspections will prevent Iran from speedily moving to weaponization is a complete fiction. Given the broad, deep nuclear infrastructure Iran is building aggressively, Tehran need merely expel the International Atomic Energy Agency when it chooses to do so, and then move rapidly to weaponization. North Korea expelled the IAEA ten years ago, and Iran will calculate it can do so, too.

Even with the IAEA in-country, Iran's large territory and mountainous topography will greatly facilitate concealing its ongoing nuclear activities. Mineral "mines", for example, can easily hide nuclear-related work; or Iran could build facilities elsewhere, such as North Korea, with which it has co-operated for over 15 years on ballistic-missile programs.

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Fourth, what Iran really wants near-term, and what the west seems poised to give, is relief from international economic sanctions. Although these measures have caused Iran economic pain, there is no evidence they have impeded the nuclear program. Obama's director of National Intelligence, James Clapper, so testified earlier this year, and the IAEA has repeatedly reaffirmed that Iran's nuclear program continues to grow at alarming rates.

While America and Europe insist they will demand reciprocal concessions for any weakening of the sanctions, Iran (with its backers, Russia and China) is bargaining from a position of strength. The ayatollahs sense from Obama's desperate efforts for a handshake or phone call with Rouhani at September's UN opening that he is hungry for a deal, thus allowing them to extract concession from the west before making even a superficial response.

Our negotiators are already talking about "sequencing" steps by the two sides – meaning, in reality, we will make the first concessions, hoping that Iran will make substantive concession later. In fact, the likely scenario is the exact opposite: Obama will make significant reductions in sanctions that will be very hard to restore subsequently, and Iran will give us blue smoke and mirrors. Even worse, these non-reciprocal episodes could continue at length, giving Tehran another precious resource, time, to continue building its nuclear facilities.

There is a theoretical case that economic sanctions might, at some point in the past, have been sufficient to bring Iran's nuclear efforts to a halt. Our historical experience, however, demonstrates that economic restrictions must meet several preconditions before they can achieve any significant geopolitical objective. To be effective, sanctions must be sweeping and comprehensive; swiftly and unhesitatingly applied; and widely complied with or rigorously (that is, militarily) enforced. None of these criteria has met in the case of Iran.

Sanctions have been applied sporadically, in a piecemeal fashion, have had only intermittent and ineffective enforcement, and often have been flatly disregarded by Iran's champions, including Russia and China. Accordingly, therefore, even if the current sanctions were continued or tightened – highly unlikely in present circumstances – they would prove insufficient.

We have only two very unpleasant choices: either Iran gets nuclear weapons in the very near future, or pre-emptive military force, fully justified by well-established principles of self-defense, must break Iran's control over the nuclear fuel cycle and prevent (or, at least, substantially delay) weaponization. President Obama has said repeatedly that "all options are on the table", the standard euphemism for military action. But, especially after Syria, no one believes him, the ayatollahs in Tehran, most notably.

By default that leaves Israel, which is watching today's negotiations most uneasily.

The fact is we shouldn't trust and can't verify Iranian promises not to fabricate nuclear weapons. Indeed, even now, Washington really doesn't know how quickly Iran could assemble a small number of nuclear weapons. But a crash program has never really been Tehran's objective. Iran is playing a much longer game than the west, largely because it fears neither our sanctions nor a possible military strike.

Our inability to see through this strategy has brought us grief time and again. Unfortunately, in Geneva, we may be watching a re-run.

John Bolton is a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. He was the Bush administration's US ambassador to the United Nations from August 2005 to December 2006, and is the author of *Surrender Is Not an Option: Defending America at the United Nations and Abroad* (2007).

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/oct/15/cannot-verify-trust-iran-nuclear-weapons>

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Defense One – Washington, D.C.

OPINION/National Security

Submarines Alone Are Not Enough Nuclear Deterrent

Issue No. 1086, 18 October 2013

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By Robert Spalding
October 16, 2013

There are ten primary missions outlined in the Department of Defense's 2012 strategy guidance. Three of those missions require the Pentagon to maintain an effective deterrent to nuclear war that, the guidance says, "can under any circumstances confront an adversary with the prospect of unacceptable damage, both to deter potential adversaries and to assure U.S. allies and other security partners that they can count on America's security commitments."

The CATO Institute's Christopher Preble and Matt Fay's recent article "To Save the Submarines, Eliminate ICBMs and Bombers" is a policy recommendation that fails to meet DOD's high standard for an effective nuclear deterrent. While they mention the submarine's inherent survivability, power and accuracy, they neglect other aspects required of an effective deterrent force. The deterrent force must be survivable, affordable, flexible, visible, available, credible and provide stability. While each element of the triad comprises many of these attributes, no one leg has them all.

Affordability is also a key component of nuclear deterrent forces. While the \$60 billion dollars quoted for the new nuclear-armed submarines seems daunting, it pales in comparison to the \$400 billion for the Joint Strike Fighter, according to the Government Accountability Office. Moreover, the entire nuclear deterrence force represents only around \$20 billion per year, according to Deputy Defense Secretary Ash Carter. ICBMs are the least expensive leg to maintain. Bombers still have a required conventional role, so making them non-nuclear nets only minor savings. Thus, even with the addition of new submarines, the nuclear deterrent force is incredibly affordable compared to the overall defense budget of \$526 billion.

The nuclear deterrent force must be credible. While the United States enjoys a technological advantage in submarine technology, there is no guarantee we will maintain it. The triad of submarines, ICBMs and bombers provides a hedge in the case of a technological breakthrough that renders any one system obsolete. It also provides insurance in the case of a systemic technological failure.

A nation's leaders must think twice about using nuclear weapons if they must strike another nation's homeland. Submarines operating at sea do not evoke targeting concerns similar to an ICBM field in North Dakota. Submarines provide a viable second strike, but this also applies to ICBMs under any circumstance short of an all-out strike from Russia. In addition, bombers can be survivable when dispersed.

Submarines are inherently flexible, but fortunately, bombers and ICBMs share this trait. Bombers can be used for conventional operations and are forward deployed. ICBMs can be re-targeted almost immediately.

Submarines are not visible. They are supposed to remain undetectable until they are needed. ICBM operations are invisible as well. The actions to retarget ICBMs, or to bring them on/off alert, all happen behind the veil of a silo. Bombers are the only visible component of the triad. This makes them a vital component. No other leg can advertise American will better than the bomber. The bomber can fly a mission as a show of resolve as occurred during North Korea's recent nuclear provocation. They can also go on alert, which can also be witnessed by adversaries.

Deterrent forces also must be readily available. The ICBMs are the most available of the triad. They are always on alert at very low cost, allowing bombers to remain off alert for the majority of the time and for submarines to be swapped out or repaired when needed.

Once the war in Afghanistan winds to its inevitable conclusion, phase 0 and 1 (Shape the Environment; Deter the Enemy) operations must once again rise to the fore. The triad of submarines, ICBMs and bombers has all of the qualities required of an effective deterrent force. The affordability of the nuclear triad makes arguments against any one leg shortsighted.

Robert S. Spalding, III, is military fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations.

<http://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2013/10/submarines-alone-are-not-enough-nuclear-deterrent/72032/?oref=d-skybox>

Issue No. 1086, 18 October 2013

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Breaking Defense.com

OPINION/Article

Why Russia Keeps Moving the Football on European Missile Defense: Politics

By Joan Johnson-Freese and Ralph Savelsberg

October 17, 2013

America wants to use policy — talks on missile defense cooperation — to make Russia feel better about the European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA). But the Russians, who say they think EPAA threatens their ICBMs and thus creates all sorts of arms control problems. say technology — not policy — is the problem.

The Russian Foreign Ministry has continually insisted on legally binding guarantees that US missile defenses are not aimed at it and that would allow Russia access to sensitive aspects of the system. Russia has also threatened to deploy a range of countermeasures against NATO's missile defenses, including tactical nuclear missile deployment in Kaliningrad and improvements to its strategic nuclear missile arsenal to make it capable of evading missile defense. Whether EPAA is aimed at Russia or technically capable of even potentially intercepting Russian missiles, however, are very different considerations. But the Russians seem to ignore that simple truth that the technology is limited by physics and engineering, not political considerations.

Ironically, moving the technology further away from Russian borders could increase the potential for its successful use against Russian missiles. So, whether or not Russian technical concerns could ever really be assuaged must be questioned.

Frank Rose, deputy assistant secretary of State for arms control, verification and compliance, restated in May 2013 the declaration made at the Chicago NATO Summit held in May 2012. "The NATO missile defense in Europe will not undermine strategic stability. NATO missile defense is not directed against Russia and will not undermine Russia's strategic deterrence capabilities." He went on to state that "through transparency and cooperation with the United States and NATO, Russia would see firsthand that this system is designed for ballistic missile threats from outside the Euro-Atlantic area, and that NATO missile defense systems can neither negate nor undermine Russia's strategic deterrent capabilities."

So let's look at EPAA's technology and its limits .

In Phase I of EPAA, allied navy ships in the Mediterranean have been equipped with SM-3 Block IA interceptors. Phase II adds more advanced SM-3 Block IB missiles and the interceptors will also be land-based in Romania. Under Phase III, faster SM-3 Block IIA interceptor missiles are to be based at Redzikowo, Poland. In addition to protecting Europe, these can potentially offer a first line of defense against future Iranian ICBMs heading for the East Coast of the United States. (Phase IV, which includes even faster Block IIB missiles in Poland, was cancelled in March 2013.) A hypothetical Iranian ICBM (based on the North-Korean Unha-3 space launcher) heading towards the Northwestern United States passes over Poland, as illustrated in Figure 1. Russian ICBMs launched from bases in Western Russia heading for targets on the US East Coast, such as an SS-19 'Stiletto' launched from a silo in Tatishchevo aimed at Norfolk Va. (as shown in the map), would pass north of Poland. This puts them within the maximum range of the interceptors.

But range is not everything. Obviously, the interceptor needs to be fast enough to reach the ICBM before it goes out of range. The SM-3 block IIA, (currently under development) has a maximum speed of roughly 4.5 km/s, which is considerably faster than the Block IA/B at 3 km/s. Its increased performance is illustrated in Figure 2, in (so-called) fly-out contours, i.e. the horizontal distances (measured over the surface of the Earth) and altitudes that the missile can reach at different times after launch. The contours were calculated based on open source data. The Block IIA obviously covers a much larger volume than the Block IA/B. The speed difference is evident from the figure, by comparing the contours at, for instance, 300 s.

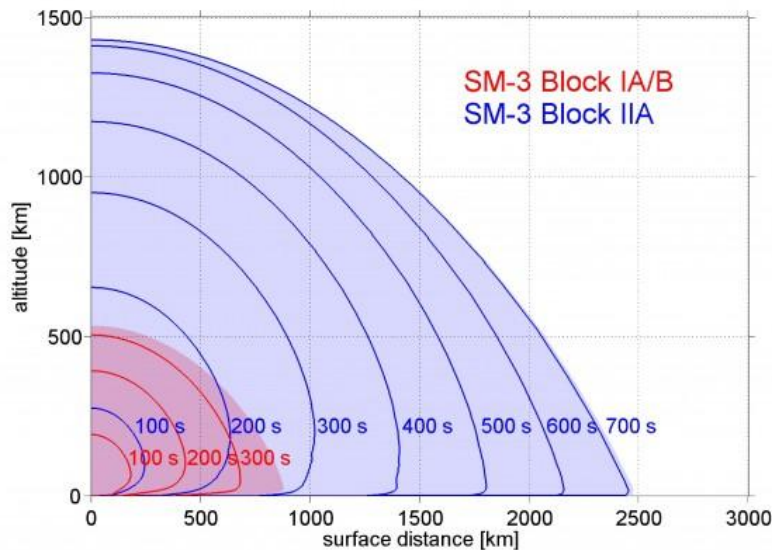


Figure 2: Fly-out contours of the Standard Missile 3 Block I (red) and Block II (blue), that follow from computer simulations of the missile trajectories.

For a successful intercept, the ICBM should be inside the fly-out contour corresponding to that particular time at some time after the interceptor launch. Figure 3 shows the simulated trajectory of the Iranian ICBM, seen from Poland, superimposed over the fly-out contours of the Block IIA missile. The interceptor is launched at time $t=0$ s. This is 300 s after the ICBM launch, just after the end of the ICBM boost phase, i.e. the time during which the ICBM engines are running. The somewhat unusual shape of the ICBM trajectory is due to it being shown in coordinates measured from the interceptor launch site. At first the ICBM approaches Redzikowo, while gaining altitude. After passing south of the interceptor site, it moves away, with the surface distance increasing.

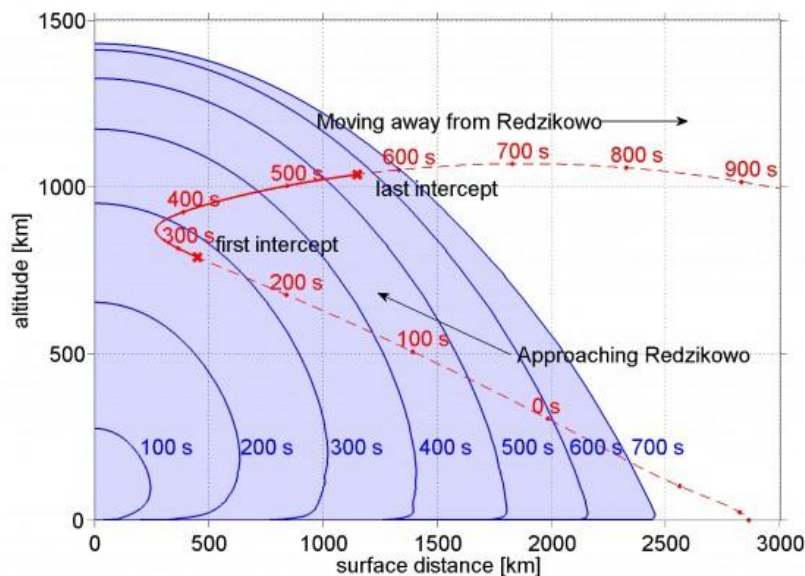


Figure 3: Trajectory of a hypothetical Iranian ICBM heading for New York superimposed on fly-out contours of the Block IIA missile in Poland. Time $t=0$ corresponds to the interceptor launch, 300 s into the flight of the ICBM.



Figure 3 shows that at $t=300$ s (600 s after its launch) the ICBM is inside the 300 s fly-out contour, where the interceptor can reach it. In this particular case the SM-3 Block IIA can intercept the ICBM between 280 s (first opportunity for intercept) and 563 s (last opportunity) after interceptor launch.

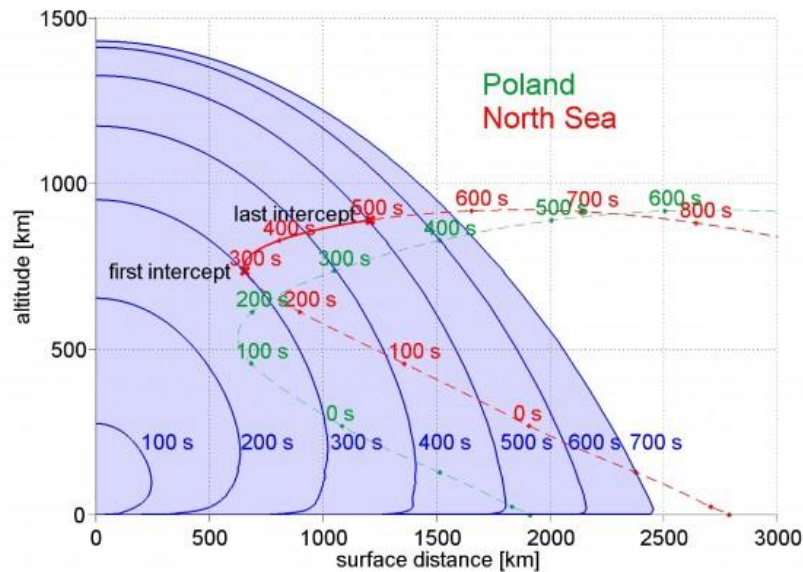


Figure 4: Trajectory of an SS-19 heading for Norfolk Va. superimposed on fly-out contours of a Block IIA missile based in Poland (in green) and in the North Sea (in red).

Results of a similar simulation for the Russian SS-19 are shown in Figure 4, in green. The interceptor is again launched at 300 s after the ICBM launch (this is now a few seconds before the end of the boost phase). The launch site itself is now within range of the interceptor but the ICBM is long gone by the time the interceptor can reach it, and is never inside the corresponding fly-out contour. Other combinations of targets in the US and launch sites in Russia give a similar result: when launched from Poland, the SM-3 Block IIA interceptor is just not fast enough to intercept Russian ICBMs.

An interceptor launched within 230 s after the SS-19 launch could reach it, but currently this is not feasible. The interceptor has to be launched after the end of the ICBM boost phase. During the boost phase, the ICBM is steered towards its target and an interceptor that is launched early does not know precisely where its target will be heading and is unlikely to be able to compensate for the error. Even launching a few seconds after the boost phase has ended, as in the example of the Iranian ICBM, is fraught with difficulty.

A recent report by the U.S. General Accounting Office states that, to be more effective against Iranian ICBMs, interceptors should be based on ships in the North Sea (between the Netherlands, the UK and Scandinavia) rather than in Poland. This would buy valuable time against Iranian missiles but it is not without consequences for intercepting Russian ICBMs. Figure 4 also shows the trajectory of the SS-19 when seen from a site in the North Sea (in red). Now, an interceptor launched at 300 s after the launch of the ICBM can reach it at 300 s into flight. Placing interceptors further away from Russia actually makes intercepting (some) Russian ICBMs easier. Russian protests would likely then follow missile defense placement there as well. However, if an early launch were possible somehow or interceptors were indeed to be based in the North Sea, Russia could still prevent its ICBMs from being intercepted by allocating ICBMs based in Western Russia to targets in the Western United States instead of near the East Coast and vice versa.



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The Russians have certainly run such simulations and are aware of the technical limitations of EPAA as currently configured. Whether missile defense in Europe is the right answer to the question of dealing with missile threats from countries like Iran and North Korea aside, Russian protests ring hollow and their demands for assurance are reminiscent of that wonderful Charles Schultz cartoon series where Lucy kept moving the football away from Charlie Brown whenever he tried to kick it. Whatever assurances we give the Russians will probably not be enough. Simply put, Russia is just playing politics.

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<http://breakingdefense.com/2013/10/17/why-russia-keeps-moving-the-football-on-european-missile-defense-politics/>

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The Washington Times
OPINION/Commentary

FRANKS: Behind Iran's Charm Offensive

By Trent Franks

Thursday, October 17, 2013

Immediately after new Iranian President Hasan Rouhani appeared before the U.N. General Assembly for the first time, a blog headline of The New York Times positively gushed, "Rouhani, blunt and charming, pitches a moderate Iran."

The article, which went on to quote sources calling Mr. Rouhani "clever," "unflappable," "composed," "pragmatic," "bold" and "a risk-taker," was indicative of some of the flowery language we have seen heaped upon the new Iranian president by a Western press seemingly eager to adopt the narrative of the new, softer side of an Iran ostensibly bearing an olive branch.

Indeed, much has been made of Mr. Rouhani's "more moderate" approach. Despite all the decrees that Iran has begun a new era of reasoned discourse after a 30-year standoff, it would seem many of Iran's terrorist proxies have yet to receive the memo.

Consider the report published in The Washington Times on Sept. 23, nearly two months after Mr. Rouhani assumed the presidency in Iran. The report quoted senior members of the terrorist groups Hezbollah and Hamas announcing in the Lebanese press that they had "formed a stronger pact with Iran's government to watch out for one another's interests in the Middle East." Not the sort of thing one would expect to hear were the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism legitimately penitent.

These actions should not be surprising to anyone who has been paying attention to Iran for the past decade, or to anyone who is familiar with Mr. Rouhani's record, for that matter. In fact, prior to assuming the office to which he is supposed to bring a willingness to talk about ultimately dismantling his country's nuclear weapons capability, Mr. Rouhani was intimately involved in building up that very capability. He campaigned for the presidency on these specific credentials.

Speaking to Iranian state TV a month before the election, Mr. Rouhani said only "the illiterate" would believe the "lie" that the Iranian nuclear program had been suspended on his watch. Although during his tenure as Iran's chief nuclear negotiator from 2003 to 2005, Iran had promised "voluntarily to suspend all uranium enrichment and reprocessing activities," Mr. Rouhani revealed that these promises were never fulfilled and that Iran had, in fact, only slightly reduced the yield of 10 centrifuges (out of hundreds) at one enrichment facility. Defending his accomplishments to the interviewer, Mr. Rouhani then rattled off a list of the Iranian nuclear program's advances under his leadership, asking, "Do you know when we developed yellowcake? Winter 2004. Do you know when the number of centrifuges reached

Issue No. 1086, 18 October 2013

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3,000? Winter 2004.” Continuing to defend his own achievements, Mr. Rouhani boasted, “We halted the nuclear program? We were the ones to complete it. We completed the technology.”

This is the “moderate” who is supposed to bring about a more peaceful Iran less bent on obtaining a nuclear weapons capability. The same “moderate” whose idea of peaceful diplomatic outreach apparently includes his recent statement regarding Israel: “The Zionist regime is a wound that has sat on the body of the Muslim world for years and needs to be removed.” Anyone willing to scratch beneath the glossy, thin surface of Iran’s so-called “charm offensive” will find the hateful rhetoric and the violent ideology still very much intact. How quickly we are inclined to forget that Iran, the world’s largest state sponsor of terrorism, has not only called for the destruction of Israel and the West, but is actively — even as you read this — rushing headlong toward acquiring the means by which they might carry out its goal.

The popular tendency of late is to embrace Iran’s “openness” and to reward its supposed willingness to negotiate. We know too much to fall for this effort by Iran to buy the alarmingly small amount of time it needs to put the finishing touches on a functional nuclear weapons capability. We have seen International Atomic Energy Agency declarations go unanswered by this regime and know that past diplomatic efforts, including 10 rounds of negotiation since 2011, have borne no fruit. Decades have passed without a single concession from the world’s leading sponsor of terrorism.

Let us not forget that in 2005, we saw North Korea, another rogue nation, petition for “talks” about ending its nuclear weapons program and demanding U.S. concessions. How did that nation hold up its end of the bargain? It has since conducted three flagrant nuclear weapons tests. This, in spite of the fact that North Korea has been sanctioned into virtual starvation for a half-century.

As the Obama administration talks about making a deal with Iran, there is a legitimate risk that we could see an agreement reached with Iran that represents a grave national security threat to the United States. Consider that Mr. Rouhani promised during the Iranian elections that he would work to ease sanctions against Iran within the first 100 days of his term. The Obama administration, having trumpeted the “historic” nature of Iran’s willingness to come to the negotiating table, may well find itself tempted to make a deal for the sake of claiming a diplomatic victory — even a hollow and dangerous one.

The stakes are far too high for the United States to make a bad deal with Iran.

To that end, I have just introduced the U.S.-Iran Responsible Nuclear Agreement Act. This act outlines critical congressional priorities in any nuclear negotiations with Iran. A bad deal with Iran — one which does not definitively prevent a nuclear-weapons-capable Iran — is worse than no deal at all. The act would also strengthen the U.S. negotiating position in talks with Iran, which must be backed by a credible American military threat.

Whatever the cost may be of preventing a nuclear-armed Iran, it will pale in significance to the cost to our children and the entire human family of allowing the jihadist regime in Iran to gain nuclear weapons.

Trent Franks is a Republican member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Arizona.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/oct/17/franks-behind-irans-charm-offensive/>

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