



USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER
CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL
MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

Issue No. 1048, 08 March 2013

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Tehran Times – Iran

Iran Producing 3000 New-Generation Centrifuges: AEOI Director

Political Desk

March 3, 2013

TEHRAN – Iran is building 3000 new-generation centrifuges, Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Director Fereydoun Abbasi announced on Sunday.

Abbasi also said, “The final production line of these centrifuges has been completed, and the old generation of these centrifuges, which is less efficient, will be phased out.”

On February 11, Abbasi announced that Iran had started installing a new generation of centrifuges at the Natanz uranium enrichment facility.

On February 21, the International Atomic Energy Agency said 180 so-called IR-2m centrifuges and empty centrifuge casings had been put in place at the facility near the central town of Natanz.

Later, the AEOI director said that the number of advanced centrifuges that Iran planned to install at the Natanz nuclear facility was much more than the number that had been reported by Western media outlets.

“The advanced generation of centrifuges will not be 180 machines, and will be much more than it, and will be installed gradually because the required conditions for using them should be prepared,” he said.

<http://tehrantimes.com/politics/106123-iran-producing-3000-new-generation-centrifuges-aeoi-director>

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Daily Star – Lebanon

U.N. Nuclear Chief Presses Iran on Access to Military Base

March 04, 2013

By Fredrik Dahl

VIENNA: The U.N. nuclear watchdog raised pressure on Iran to finally address suspicions that it has sought to design an atomic bomb, calling for swift inspector access to a military base where relevant explosives tests are believed to have been carried out.

Airing frustration at the lack of progress in his agency's investigation, Yukiya Amano told its 35-nation governing board on Monday that negotiations with Iran must "proceed with a sense of urgency" and be focused on achieving concrete results soon.

Because Iran is not providing the necessary cooperation with inspectors, the International Atomic Energy Agency "cannot conclude that all nuclear material in Iran is in peaceful activities", said Amano, the IAEA's director-general.

His message that Iran must act now was echoed by the United States and its top Gulf ally Saudi Arabia. They declared on Monday that separate but related talks between Tehran and world powers on a wider diplomatic solution to the nuclear dispute could not go on indefinitely.

Israel, Iran's arch-enemy and convinced Tehran is secretly trying to develop a nuclear weapon, has grown impatient with the protracted talks and has threatened pre-emptive war against Tehran if it deems diplomacy ultimately futile.

"There is a finite amount of time," U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, in Riyadh, said of the talks between a group of six world powers and Tehran, Saudi Arabia's main regional adversary.

In Washington, Vice President Joe Biden told America's biggest pro-Israel lobbying group in a speech that President Barack Obama is "not bluffing" about U.S. determination to stop Iran from getting a nuclear weapon.

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"We're not looking for war. We're ready to negotiate peacefully. But all options including military force are on the table. While that window is closing, we believe there is still time and space (for diplomacy)," Biden said.

But Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, addressing the same gathering, said neither diplomacy nor sanctions had stopped Iran from pursuing its nuclear ambitions and a clear and credible military threat was now needed.

Iran was upbeat last week after talks with the powers in Kazakhstan about its nuclear work ended with an agreement to meet again. But Western officials said it had yet to take concrete steps to ease their fears about its atomic ambitions.

The United States, China, France, Russia, Britain and Germany offered modest relief from economic sanctions in return for Iran scaling back its most sensitive nuclear activity, but made clear that they expected no immediate breakthrough.

The IAEA has been trying separately for more than a year to persuade Iran to cooperate with a long-stalled agency investigation into suspected nuclear weapons research by Tehran, which denies any such activity.

The U.N. agency's priority is to be able to inspect Parchin, a sprawling military site southeast of the capital Tehran, where it believes Iran built an explosives chamber to carry out tests, possibly a decade ago. Iran denies this.

The IAEA has been asking for Parchin access for over a year.

Iran says it first needs to agree with the IAEA on how the inquiry is to be conducted before allowing any Parchin visit. But Amano underlined that access should be granted in any case, even before a deal on investigation ground rules was reached.

He told the IAEA governors that he was "once again unable to report any progress on the clarification of outstanding issues, including those relating to the possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear programme".

Some diplomats and analysts say Iran is using the meetings with the IAEA merely for leverage in its negotiations with world powers which, unlike the IAEA, have the power to ease sanctions that they have recently tightened on the major oil producer.

"Providing access to the Parchin site would be a positive step which would help to demonstrate Iran's willingness to engage with the agency on the substance of our concerns," Amano said, according to a copy of his speech.

Western officials accuse Iran of cleansing the Parchin site of any incriminating evidence of illicit nuclear-related activity, a charge the Islamic Republic has dismissed.

Citing satellite imagery, they say Iran now seems to be rebuilding the specific part of Parchin that inspectors want to see, after last year razing several smaller buildings there.

Amano also said Iran was continuing to construct a research reactor at Arak, which Western experts say could offer the Islamic state a second way of producing material for a nuclear bomb, if it decided to embark on such a course.

"Iran has stated that the reactor is expected to begin operating in the first quarter of 2014," Amano said.

Western worries about Iran are focused largely on uranium enrichment plants at Natanz and Fordow, as such material refined to a high level can provide the fissile core of an atomic bomb.

But experts say Arak could yield plutonium for bombs if the spent fuel is reprocessed, something Iran has said it has no intention of doing.

Iran, a leading oil producer, says its nuclear programme is entirely peaceful and aimed primarily at producing electricity.

But its refusal to curb atomic activity which can have both civilian and military purposes and its lack of full openness with U.N. inspectors have drawn increasingly tough Western sanctions targeting its lifeblood oil exports.



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<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/International/2013/Mar-04/208743-iran-new-amano-term-in-focus-at-iaea.ashx#axzz2McLkmwyJ>

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Bloomberg BusinessWeek

UN Cannot Guarantee all Iranian Nuke Work Peaceful

Associated Press

March 4, 2013

VIENNA (AP) — The head of the U.N. nuclear agency says he cannot guarantee that all of Iran's nuclear activities are peaceful unless Tehran provides more cooperation with his organization.

Yukiya Amano of the International Atomic Energy Agency is also urging Tehran to grant his inspectors access to a site where the IAEA thinks Tehran may have carried out experiments linked to nuclear weapons development.

Iran denies any work on, or interest in nuclear weapons. The agency has tried for more than a year to visit the Parchin site, to follow up suspicions that Tehran worked there on conventional explosives triggers for a nuclear weapon.

Amano told the 35-nation IAEA board Monday that without more Iranian cooperation, his agency "cannot conclude that all nuclear material in Iran is in peaceful activities."

<http://www.businessweek.com/ap/2013-03-04/un-cannot-guarantee-all-iranian-nuke-work-peaceful>

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Los Angeles Times

Biden: President Promises to Keep Iran from Getting Nuclear Weapons

By Christi Parsons and Michael A. Memoli

March 4, 2013,

WASHINGTON – President Obama is “not bluffing” when he vows that he will not allow Iran to get a nuclear weapon, Vice President Joe Biden said Monday in a speech that put a heavy emphasis on winning consensus on that view from the rest of the world.

Speaking to supporters of Israel, Biden reiterated that “all options, including military force” are on the table as the U.S. works to prevent Iran’s acquisition of nuclear weapons.

“We are not looking for war,” Biden told the American Israel Public Affairs Committee at a policy conference.

It is “critically important for the whole world to know we did everything in our power ... to avoid any confrontation,” he said. If it comes to that, he said, “it’s important that the rest of the world is with us.”

Biden didn’t change the stated policy of the United States, or even the administration’s talking points, in his morning remarks.

But his comments come as Obama plans a trip to Israel this month meant to reaffirm his commitment to Israel and, tacitly, to reassure the Israeli people and their leaders in the wake of his own reelection and that of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

“I learned it's never a good idea ... to steal the president's thunder,” the vice president joked, explaining the president would expand on Biden’s remarks during his visit.

In his comments, Biden hit the key policy points his audience wanted to hear, restating U.S. commitment to the Iron Dome defense program and opposition to unilateral efforts by the Palestinian Authority to gain affirmation for statehood status.

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He called on the world to treat Hezbollah as a “terrorist organization, period,” condemned efforts to de-legitimize Israel and backed the country’s right to impose a trade blockade.

Obama will be in Israel just before Passover and plans meetings both in Jerusalem and in Ramallah. He is expected to give one major address to the region, roughly four years after he began his outreach to the Muslim world in a trip to Cairo.

Obama is also likely to meet with young Israelis who are eager to hear directly from him in the wake of tense election-year relations between Obama and Netanyahu.

The vice president, who also spoke to the AIPAC conference in 2009 as the administration began its first term, downplayed any apparent tension.

“I’ve been around a long time. I’ve been there for a lot of prime ministers. We’ve always disagreed on tactics,” he said. “But ladies and gentlemen, we have never disagreed on the strategic imperative that Israel must be able to protect its own, must be able to do it on its own, and we must always stand with Israel to be sure that can happen.”

Netanyahu, who addressed the group via satellite after Biden’s address, largely welcomed the vice president’s remarks but made it clear his patience with the administration’s approach seeking a diplomatic solution was wearing thin.

“Diplomacy has not worked. Iran ignores all these offers. It’s running out the clock. It has used negotiations, including the most recent ones, to buy time to press ahead with its nuclear program,” he said. “It’s still not crossed the red line I drew at the United Nations last September, but Iran is getting closer to that red line, and it’s putting itself in a position to cross that line very quickly once it decides to do so. ... We must stop -- we have to stop its nuclear enrichment program before it’s too late.”

Biden also made similar allusions to his long career in public office, and what he described as his personal commitment to Israel and to the powerful political force of AIPAC.

“I did more fundraisers for AIPAC in the '70s and early '80s than -- just about as many -- as anybody,” he said.

He closed with a story about his first meeting as a senator with then-Prime Minister Golda Meir that affirmed that commitment, which drew a standing ovation from the audience.

“Our job is to make sure ... that there’s always an Israel, that there’s always a secure Israel, and there’s an Israel that can care for itself,” he said.

Biden was speaking to an audience wary of the administration’s position on Iran and the Middle East. Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) got hearty applause from the group when he criticized the administration for not being sufficiently pro-Israel.

“We need members of the national security team who are pro-Israel, not anti-Israel,” McCain said.

Staff writer Paul Richter contributed to this report.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/politics/la-pn-obama-iran-nuclear-weapon-20130304,0,4219698.story>

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Khaleej Times – U.A.E.

Call for Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone in ME

By Lily B. Libo-on

5 March 2013

DUBAI — The establishment of a Middle East Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (MENWFZ) is drawing support, with the possibility of holding a new round of talks by early spring in Helsinki, Finland this year, according to a leading nuclear diplomat.

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Dr Hans Blix, the world's leading expert on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) said the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone will strengthen the NPT, promote global disarmament and help the Middle East peace process.

"European countries are putting pressure to initiate a nuclear weapon free zone. Israel and Iran can simultaneously scale down their nuclear programmes if this conference will lead to a serious accord," Blix said.

An MENWFZ is favoured by all the Middle East countries and the only question remains is who among them will first take the initiative, Blix said: "The idea is being floated that the Gulf may initiate it. Last year, a survey in Israel resulted in about 64 per cent favouring the Middle East (for the) nuclear weapon free zone."

He discounted any possibility of Iran attacking Israel, and said no war will be authorised by the United Nations Security Council as a majority of its members are against it.

He said that after the Iraq war in 2003, and especially the UK discussion on the legality of the Iraq war, the UN economic sanctions, and that imposed by the US, are deemed a very strong deterrent to compel Iran to comply with the call to nuclear disarmament. "Iran cannot attack Israel, and declaring war against Iran is a violation of the UN Charter," he said.

"We believe that the sanctions have already hurt Iran as they have largely reduced Iran's revenues. Iran suspended 20 per cent of its uranium enrichment in November 2012 to have Western-imposed sanctions lifted, and it became a positive step from Iran," he said.

Blix said NPT is not falling apart, as nuclear weapon states such as USA, UK, France, Russia and China, which also compose the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, have been negotiating for nuclear disarmament and those who have no nuclear arsenals have committed not to go into it: "US and Russia have already taken steps to dismantle nuclear weapons. Only we do not know whether the time frame is realistic or not."

"There is 'boxing in the corners' right now as threats can underline diplomacy. Even US State Secretary John Kerry declared recently that 'wider opportunity cannot be opened forever' and urged nations to consider the nuclear free zone.

He also said big challenges ahead will drive nuclear disarmament today to positive result. "There is no major conflict between China, US and Russia. Oil and natural resources will play in role but disarmament will continue."

http://www.khaleejtimes.com/kt-article-display-1.asp?xfile=data/nationgeneral/2013/March/nationgeneral_March98.xml§ion=nationgeneral

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FARS News Agency – Iran

World Powers Accept Ayatollah Khamenei's Fatwa against N. Weapons as Criteria

Wednesday, 6 March 2013

TEHRAN (FNA)- The world powers accepted the Fatwa (religious decree) issued by Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei against the production and use of nuclear weapons as a confidence-building measure and criteria during their recent talks with Tehran in Kazakhstan, a senior MP said on Wednesday.

"(During the Kazakhstan talks last week) one of the issues discussed was the idea of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution on the haram (religiously forbidden) nature of the production of atomic weapons," member of the Iranian parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Commission Esmayeel Kowsari said in an interview with Iran-based Arabic-language al-Alam news channel.

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"Even other countries which possess atomic weapons and nuclear warheads should also be disarmed and should dismantle these weapons since we believe such weapons are illegal and against religion, and this issue was discussed in Almaty talks and was accepted by the Group5+1 (the five permanent UN Security Council members plus Germany)," he added.

On February 22, 2012, Ayatollah Khamenei said the Islamic Republic considers the pursuit and possession of nuclear weapons "a grave sin" from every logical, religious and theoretical standpoint.

In January, Iran's Foreign Ministry Spokesman Ramin Mehman-Parast said Ayatollah Khamenei's fatwa is binding for Iran, adding, "There is nothing more important in defining the framework for our nuclear activities than the Leader's fatwa."

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=9107150620>

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Seattle Times

Tuesday, March 5, 2013

Top U.S. Commander: Iran Sanctions Not Working

Gen. James Mattis, head of U.S. Central Command, said it still may be possible to use sanctions and other pressure to bring Tehran "to its senses" and keep it from gaining nuclear capabilities. But he also warned he believes Iran is using the ongoing negotiations to buy time.

By LOLITA C. BALDOR, Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Obama administration program of sanctions and diplomatic efforts to stop Iran from gaining nuclear capabilities is not working, the top U.S. commander in the Middle East told a Senate committee Tuesday, adding that Tehran has a history of denial and deceit and is "enriching uranium beyond any plausible peaceful purpose."

Gen. James Mattis, head of U.S. Central Command, said it still may be possible to use sanctions and other pressure to bring Tehran "to its senses." But he also warned he believes Iran is using the ongoing negotiations to buy time.

"That should not be in any way construed as we should not try to negotiate. I still support the direction we're taking," Mattis told the Senate Armed Services Committee. "I'm just — I'm paid to take a rather dim view of the Iranians, frankly."

His blunt assessment comes amid continuing international worries and uncertainty over the purpose of Iran's enrichment programs. Tehran denies any work on, or interest in, nuclear weapons, but international leaders believe its uranium enrichment is aimed at developing atomic weapons.

The head of the U.N. nuclear agency said Monday he can't guarantee that Iran's nuclear activities are peaceful unless Tehran is more cooperative and inspectors are allowed access to sites where they believe work on weapons development may be taking place.

Iran, meanwhile, has shown interest in suggestions that some sanctions might be lifted if it ships out its stockpile of material that can be turned quickly into the fissile core of a nuclear weapon and shutsters the plant producing it.

The Obama administration has not ruled out military action to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon. And, under questioning from senators, Mattis said the U.S. military has the ability to bring Iran to its knees.

"There are number of means to do that," he said, "perhaps even short of open conflict. But certainly that's one of the options that I have to have prepared for the president."

Sen. Kelly Ayotte, R-N.H., asked what the U.S. needs to do to prove that it is serious that it will not accept a nuclear-armed Iran.

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"I fear that if they (Iran) continue to use negotiations to delay, that we will be at a point where they have nuclear-weapons capability, and then it's too late," she said.

http://seattletimes.com/html/nationworld/2020491792_irannukesxml.html

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Japan Times – Japan
March 5, 2013

North Korea Expands Missile Launch Site

By Kyodo

SEOUL/WASHINGTON – North Korea is expanding a missile launch site in the country's northeast and has changed the shape of warheads to improve missile accuracy, a Seoul daily reported Tuesday.

"The North is building a new launch site designed for massive rockets in Musudan-ri," a South Korean missile expert was quoted as telling the Chosun Ilbo newspaper, referring to the Tonghae satellite launch site in North Hamgyong Province. "They're expanding the assembly facility there by 28 meters so that they can assemble two long-range missiles simultaneously."

South Korean authorities believe that the new launch facility on North Korea's east coast is bigger than its west coast missile test site in Tongchang-ri, North Pyongan Province, from which North Korea's space rocket was launched last year, the report said.

The expert said the accuracy of the North's missiles is likely to improve through the use of triconic instead of simple conic warheads, a change of shape that does not reduce the weight.

Triconic warheads were first used for the improved version of the Rodong missile in 2000 and are now also being used for medium- and long-range missiles, he said. Iran's Shahab missile, which is based on the North's Rodong missile, also has a triconic warhead, which shows connections between the two countries, the expert claimed.

In related news, the U.S. on Monday snubbed North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's reported desire to receive a phone call from President Barack Obama as having no meaning.

http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2013/03/05/world/north-korea-expands-missile-launch-site/#.UTdkE_F5mSN

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United Press International (UPI)

Expert: North Korea Producing Missiles

March 5, 2013

PYONGYANG, North Korea, March 5 (UPI) -- North Korea has been making about 100 missiles a year since the 1990s, a defense research agency expert said.

The unidentified expert told South Korea's Yonhap News Agency that North Korea's missile program has progressed from tactical artillery rockets to short-range and medium-range ballistic missiles.

North Korea also has been trying to make a nuclear warhead with a greater range but not much is known about it, he said.

"North Korea has produced about 100 missiles annually since the 1990s and its capacity is believed to have made progress. Among the missiles manufactured so far, up to 70 percent could attack South Korea," the expert told Yonhap.

The North's latest long-range Taepodong missiles evolved from its own versions of the Scud as well as medium-range Nodong missile, he said.



North Korea is estimated to have about 700 Scuds with a range of up to 310 miles, 300 Nodong missiles with a range of up to 807 miles and a small number of long-range missiles, such as Musudan, that can reach Japan and U.S. military bases in the Pacific, the expert said.

"Iran's Shahab missiles, which were developed based on the North's Nodong missile, also applied the triconic design to reduce the warhead's payload from (2,200 pounds to 1,540 pounds)," he said. "This leads to speculation that the two countries may have closely cooperated on missile technology."

The North launched a three-stage rocket in December and conducted its third nuclear test in February. However, the expert told Yonhap he doubts Pyongyang has mastered technology to develop a nuclear warhead that can be fitted on a long-range missile that can strike the U.S. mainland.

<http://www.upi.com/Top-News/2013/03/05/Expert-North-Korea-producing-missiles/UPI-60971362482560/>

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Korea Herald – South Korea

N. Korea Threatens Thermonuclear War as U.N. Moves to Impose Sanctions

March 7, 2013

North Korea warned Thursday that a thermonuclear war can take place as the United Nations moves to impose tough sanctions against the communist country for conducting its third atomic weapons test last month.

The Rodong Sinmun, an organ of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea (WPK), said in a commentary titled "independence is more important than life" that the military has become stronger and whether there is a nuclear conflict or a war involving more powerful weapons, North Korea has the potential to retaliate.

It didn't elaborate on the specific target of its nuclear attack.

The U.N. Security Council (UNSC) is expected to vote on fresh sanctions after Pyongyang, in defiance of international pressure, tested a nuclear weapon on Feb. 12. Before the latest test, it had detonated two atomic devices in 2006 and 2009.

"Even if Pyongyang or Washington pushed the nuclear weapons release button first, neither can legally be held accountable," the media outlet said, claiming that the country is in a heightened state of readiness and ready to strike at the heart of the enemy.

The newspaper said that with the Korean War armistice agreement having been nullified, it would not be strange if a thermonuclear war erupted.

Pyongyang announced Tuesday that it will nullify the 1953 armistice that halted the three-year-long war, while one of its diplomats said last month in Geneva that Seoul will face "final destruction" if it persists on its course to drum up support to impose sanctions on the North. Final destruction is surmised to mean a nuclear attack by Pyongyang against Seoul.

The daily also said in a separate editorial that the North can unleash an attack with the "push of a button" that would create a "sea of fire" and turn Washington and Seoul into "the final graves for aggressors."

The "sea of fire" threat against Washington marks the second day in a row that the isolationist country used the provocative words to threaten a strike against the U.S. capital. In the past, reference to Washington as a direct target was rare.

The Rodong Sinmun then said that the Key Resolve and Foal Eagle joint military exercises being conducted by South Korea and the United States are dangerous provocations and cannot be ignored (by the North).



Reflecting the militarist stance of the country in recent weeks, the paper carried a picture of the KN-08 long-range ballistic missile set up on a mobile launch vehicle on its front page.

The missile is estimated to have a range of about 5,000 kilometers, making it an intermediate-range ballistic missile that can attack targets as far away as Hawaii.

Meanwhile, North Korean watchers in Seoul said Pyongyang seems to be upping the ante in fueling tensions to help consolidate support for the leadership among the people.

Foreign media outlets said that besides warning of its ability to use nuclear weapons, the North has started using camouflage nets to break up the outlines of civilian vehicles operating in Pyongyang.

"Such measures are more extreme than actions taken in recent years and reminiscent of measures taken about 20 years ago when the country declared it is in a quasi-state of war," a North Korean escapee living in Seoul said.

Others like Kim Yong-hyun, a professor of North Korean studies at Dongguk University, said heightening military tensions to bolster loyalty of the people is a "classic" tactic used by Pyongyang to rule the country.

Such speculations come as North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, known to be in his late 20s or early 30s, has not had time to train for his top role. Kim was not well known before he took control of the country after the sudden death of his father Kim Jong-il in December 2011. Such lack of experience has raised speculations that he may not have the kind of control over the country as exercised by his late father.

Regarding the mounting tension, Seoul said that it is keeping close tabs on the possibility that the North will launch local attacks on South Korean territory to test the resolve of the new Park Geun-hye administration, and to show its displeasure at the UNSC's actions to condemn its nuclear test and rocket launch. Park took office as the country's first female chief executive on Feb. 25.

"Pyongyang made clear it plans to strike at the time and place of its choosing when it announced it is nullifying the armistice agreement," said a government official, who declined to be identified.

He speculated that the North may decide to target areas used by local civic groups who send anti-Pyongyang propaganda leaflets, or escalate tensions along the Northern Limit Line (NLL) that acts as the sea demarcation line between the two countries.

South and North Korea fought three bloody sea battles along the NLL since 1999, with inter-Korean relations coming to a halt after a South Korea warship was sunk by a North Korean torpedo in March 2010. Pyongyang also launched an artillery attack against Yeonpyeong Island in the Yellow Sea eight months after the vessel's sinking that left four people dead including two civilians.

Hong Hyun-ik, a director of securities strategy studies at the Sejong Institute, said the North could opt to launch short range missiles into the Yellow Sea or East Sea. In the past the North took such steps to show off its military prowess. (Yonhap News)

<http://nwww.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20130307000940>

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FoxNews.com

North Korea Vows Nuclear Attack on US, Saying Washington Will Be 'Engulfed in a Sea of Fire'

By Fox News

March 7, 2013



USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER
CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL
MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

North Korea amplified its threatening rhetoric as the U.N. Security Council approved new sweeping sanctions, vowing to launch a first-strike nuclear attack against the United States and threatening to engulf Washington in a "sea of fire."

An unidentified spokesman for Pyongyang's Foreign Ministry said the North will exercise its right for "a preemptive nuclear attack to destroy the strongholds of the aggressors" because Washington is pushing to start a nuclear war against the North.

At a mass rally in Pyongyang on Thursday, Army Gen. Kang Pyo Yong told the crowd that North Korea is ready to fire long-range nuclear-armed missiles at Washington.

"Intercontinental ballistic missiles and various other missiles, which have already set their striking targets, are now armed with lighter, smaller and diversified nuclear warheads and are placed on a standby status," Kang said. "When we shell (the missiles), Washington, which is the stronghold of evils, will be engulfed in a sea of fire."

U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Susan Rice reacted to the warnings Thursday, saying North Korea will "achieve nothing" with threats and provocations.

The U.N. Security Council unanimously endorsed a fourth round of sanctions against Pyongyang in a fresh attempt to rein in its nuclear and ballistic missile programs.

The vote Thursday by the U.N.'s most powerful body on a resolution drafted by North Korea's closest ally, China, and the United States sends a powerful message to North Korea that the international community condemns its ballistic missile and nuclear tests -- and its repeated violation of Security Council resolutions.

The new sanctions are aimed at making it more difficult for North Korea to finance and obtain material for its weapons programs.

North Korean threats have become more common as tensions have escalated following a rocket launch by Pyongyang in December and its third nuclear test on Feb. 12. Both acts defied three Security Council resolutions that bar North Korea from testing or using nuclear or ballistic missile technology and from importing or exporting material for these programs.

North Korea accused the U.S. of leading efforts to slap sanctions on North Korea. The statement said the new sanctions would only advance the timing for North Korea to fulfill previous vows to take "powerful second and third countermeasures" against its enemies.

The statement said North Korea "strongly warns the U.N. Security Council not to make another big blunder like the one in the past when it earned the inveterate grudge of the Korean nation by acting as a war servant for the U.S. in 1950."

North Korea demanded the U.N. Security Council immediately dismantle the American-led U.N. Command that's based in Seoul and move to end the state of war that exists on the Korean Peninsula, which continues six decades after fighting stopped because an armistice, not a peace treaty, ended the war.

In anticipation of the resolution's adoption, North Korea earlier in the week threatened to cancel the 1953 cease-fire that ended the Korean War.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

<http://www.foxnews.com/world/2013/03/07/north-korea-vows-nuclear-attack-on-us-ahead-un-sanctions-vote/>

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Atlanta Journal-Constitution
Thursday, March 7, 2013

White House: US Can Defend Against NKorea Attack

By JOSH LEDERMAN, Associated Press

Issue No. 1048, 08 March 2013

United States Air Force Counterproliferation Research & Education | Maxwell AFB, Montgomery AL
Phone: 334.953.7538 | Fax: 334.953.7530



WASHINGTON — The U.S. is fully capable of defending itself against a North Korean ballistic missile attack, the White House said Thursday, after Pyongyang threatened a pre-emptive nuclear strike on the United States.

The threat from the North Koreans came ahead of a unanimous vote in the U.N. Security Council approving its toughest sanctions yet on the North in response to an atomic test last month.

North Korea has escalated its bellicose statements this week as the tightening of U.N. sanctions loomed. It has also threatened to scrap the cease-fire that ended the 1950-53 Korean War.

"I can tell you that the United States is fully capable of defending against any North Korean ballistic missile attack," said White House spokesman Jay Carney.

North Korea has now conducted three nuclear tests. In the past year, it has made strides toward its goal of having a nuclear weapon that could threaten the U.S. although experts doubt it yet has the capability to hit the U.S. with a ballistic missile or miniaturize a nuclear device to mount on such a missile.

However, the North possesses hundreds of shorter-range missiles that could hit U.S. bases in Japan and South Korea, said Victor Cha, Korea chair at the Center for Strategic and International Studies think tank.

It is difficult to know how capable U.S. missile defense is, should it be required.

Carney alluded to the development of U.S. system designed to defend against long-range missiles. He said the U.S. is on a "good trajectory" after success in its return to testing of the Ground-Based Interceptor.

David Wright at the Union of Concerned Scientists said that system, deployed in the U.S., was initiated by the George W. Bush administration because of concern about the North Korean threat. Some of its previous tests of the system failed, and Wright said it is still in development.

In East Asia, the U.S. has deployed the land-based Patriot system and the sea-based Aegis systems, which are designed to intercept shorter-range missiles.

The top U.S. envoy on North Korea, Glyn Davies, cautioned Pyongyang not to miscalculate, saying the U.S. will take necessary steps to defend itself and its allies, including South Korea, where it bases nearly 30,000 U.S. forces.

"We take all North Korean threats seriously enough to ensure that we have the correct defense posture to deal with any contingencies that might arise," Davies told reporters after testifying before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Thursday's statement out of Pyongyang appeared to be the most specific open threat of a nuclear strike by any country against another, but the Senate panel's chairman, Sen. Robert Menendez, D-N.J., said the threat was "absurd" and one that if carried out would be suicide for North Korea.

Davies reiterated that the U.S. will not accept North Korea as a nuclear-armed state — although after conducting three nuclear tests it is already assumed to be capable of making at least a crude atomic bomb.

Davies, however, faced Republican skepticism about the effectiveness of Obama administration policy toward North Korea. In December, the North conducted its first successful launch of a three-stage, long-range rocket. Its Feb. 12 nuclear test could help it miniaturize a warhead.

The Foreign Relations Committee's top Republican, Sen. Bob Corker of Tennessee, drew a comparison to U.S. policy on Iran, where the U.S. has warned it could resort to military action to prevent Tehran from acquiring a nuclear weapon.

North Korea is "equally nutty" and with a worse human rights record, and "way past any red line we would accept in Iran," he said.

Corker concluded that Davies' hope that the dual-track U.S. policy of pressure and engagement would eventually work in getting Pyongyang to change its ways was a "highly aspirational statement that does not seem to be based on reality."



Sen. Marco Rubio, R-Fla., also drew a comparison with Iran and said he did not believe North Korea's leader, Kim Jong Un, could be persuaded to disarm. The best the U.S. could hope for was to delay the development of the North's weapons and its ability to strike the West, he said.

"They're convinced the only way they are ever going to accomplish what they want is by having a nuclear program and being able to hold the world hostage with it," Rubio told the hearing.

He also foresaw a danger of nuclear proliferation in Asia — to date alleviated through the "nuclear umbrella" security guarantee the U.S. provides to both South Korea and Japan, which do not have atomic weapons.

The new U.N. sanctions, which were drafted by the U.S. and the North's chief ally and benefactor, China, should make it more difficult for Pyongyang to finance and obtain material for its nuclear and ballistic missile programs, and for the reclusive nation's ruling elite to acquire luxury goods.

Davies said the growing international condemnation of North Korea's actions and the new U.N. sanctions showed "the world is beginning to wake up" to the problem the North poses. But he said for diplomacy to work, China has to "step up and play its full role in bringing home to Pyongyang the choices it faces."

U.S. lawmakers remain skeptical of Beijing's commitment to implementing the sanctions, which will be critical for their effectiveness since most of the companies and banks that North Korea is believed to work with are based in China.

Three individuals who were added Thursday to the U.N. sanctions list — including top officials at a company that is North Korea's primary arms dealer and main exporter of ballistic missile-related equipment — were also quickly added to a U.S. Treasury blacklist. Two other new entities on the U.N. list are already sanctioned by Washington.

<http://www.aic.com/ap/ap/top-news/white-house-us-can-defend-against-nkorea-attack/nWkXX/>

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Trend News Agency – Azerbaijan

North Korea Annuls Pacts with South

March 8, 2013

North Korea said Friday that it was severing its hotline and all non-aggression pacts with South Korea, a day after the UN Security Council imposed more sanctions on the communist country, [dpa](#) reported.

The communications channel set up in the border village of Panmunjom in the Demilitarized Zone would be cut, state media quoted the North's Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of Korea as saying.

Pyongyang "abrogates all agreements on non-aggressions reached between the North and the South," a committee statement said.

North Korea also declared several years ago that all agreements between it and its capitalist neighbour were void as tensions rose on the Korean Peninsula.

They have reached an even higher pitch since last month when North Korea conducted its third nuclear test, prompting further sanctions to be imposed Thursday by the Security Council.

<http://en.trend.az/regions/world/ocountries/2127438.html>

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Reuters – U.S.

North Korea Can't Hit America, but South Korea and Japan in Range

By Jack Kim

Friday, March 08, 2013



SEOUL (Reuters) - North Korea has plenty of military firepower even if its threat this week of a pre-emptive nuclear strike on the United States is a hollow one, with South Korea most at risk from the isolated regime's artillery and rockets.

Japan, separated by less than 1,000 km (625 miles) of water and a frequent target of North Korea's ire, is also in easy range of Pyongyang's short- and mid-range missiles.

In pure numbers, North Korea's military looks formidable, much larger than the more affluent South in both personnel and equipment. The North's 1.2 million soldiers face off against 640,000 South Korean troops who are backed up by 26,000 U.S. personnel stationed in the country.

However, Pyongyang's capabilities are not what the figures would suggest. Impoverished North Korea has all but abandoned running a conventional military that can engage in sustained battle because of scarce resources and has instead focused on nuclear weapons and ballistic missile technology, experts said.

"A conventional military is very costly, and overwhelmingly so for North Korea. It quickly becomes a money fight and North Korea cannot win that," said Shin In-kyun, head of the Korea Defence Network, an alliance of defence experts based in Seoul.

Nevertheless, a defence policy statement from South Korea in December noted that North Korea's frontline artillery pieces could launch a "sudden and massive" barrage on the capital Seoul, a mere 50 km (31 miles) from the Demilitarized Zone border that separates the two Koreas.

North Korea has around 12,000 artillery guns, many arrayed near the border. It also has an arsenal of intermediate range missiles in operational deployment, some of which can travel more than 3,000 km (1,875 miles). That puts South Korea and Japan in range as well as the U.S. territory of Guam.

"They have the capability to strike anywhere in the South and Japan," said Shin.

North Korea has also shown it has submarine capabilities.

In 2010, a North Korean submarine was widely believed to have sunk a South Korean naval vessel, killing 46 sailors. Pyongyang has denied it was behind the attack. In the same year, North Korea shelled a South Korean island in a disputed area, killing civilians.

One military expert said the North might be careful before launching another blatant attack, given Seoul has vowed to respond vigorously next time.

MAXIMUM CONFUSION

"The greatest realistic threat from North Korea is a type of attack that will create maximum confusion in the South but one that will be confusing as to who instigated it so that it will not invite immediate retaliation on Pyongyang," said Song Young-keun, a retired Army general who was once head of the intelligence arm of the South's military, the Defense Security Command.

Cyber warfare or a possible attack on the intricate communication and utility networks in the South could have just as much impact as any outright military action, Song said.

Outside its artillery and missiles, North Korea struggles to match the South.

Many of the soldiers that make North Korea the world's most heavily militarized state are poorly trained or even properly fed and are deployed in hard labor or farming to supplement the meager resources of their units.

The North's air force has more than 820 fighter jets, according to South Korea's Defence Ministry, but it does not have enough fuel to fly sorties or conduct needed drills to maintain combat effectiveness. South Korea has 460 jets.

North Korea has 4,200 tanks, according to South Korea, although Seoul's 2,400 are more modern and better maintained.



The question of North Korea's atomic capability was thrust to the headlines when Pyongyang on Thursday threatened the United States with a nuclear strike.

That came in the wake of accusations from Pyongyang that Washington was using military drills in South Korea as a launch pad for a nuclear war.

Experts say North Korea is years away from being able to hit continental America with a nuclear weapon despite a decades-long push toward an atomic capability.

The core of the North's unconventional military focus is a stockpile of fissile material that could be enough for six to eight nuclear weapons, and up to 5,000 metric tons of biological and chemical weapons that can wipe out a mid-size industrial city.

North Korea claims to have developed a miniaturized nuclear weapon while the launch of a long-range rocket in December that for the first time put an object into orbit indicated progress in its attempt to build an intercontinental nuclear missile.

"But for a weapons system to be viable, it has to be in production and deployed. I don't think we can say that about the Unha-3," Shin said, referring to the rocket launched on December 12.

Song said the general consensus was the North had yet to shrink a nuclear warhead to put on an intercontinental ballistic missile and more crucially there had been no tests to prove it has mastered the re-entry technology needed to bring a payload back into the atmosphere.

"It's hogwash, blackmail," Song said of Thursday's threat against the United States.

Editing by Dean Yates.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/03/08/us-korea-north-military-idUSBRE92709T20130308>

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Washington Free Beacon

Russians Conduct Huge Nuke Drill

Russian nuclear forces hold large exercise involving movement of strategic and tactical warheads

By Bill Gertz

March 5, 2013

Russian nuclear forces conducted a major exercise last month that tested the transport of both strategic and tactical nuclear weapons near Europe, according to United States officials.

The exercise raised concerns inside the Pentagon and with the U.S. European Command because it was the largest exercise of its kind in 20 years and involved heightened alert status of Russian nuclear forces.

The nuclear drills were part of other military maneuvers in Russia carried out between Feb. 17 and Feb. 21.

The exercises followed a recent surge in Russian strategic bomber flights that include a recent circling of the U.S. Pacific island of Guam by two Tu-95 Bear bomber and simulated bombing runs by Tu-95s against Alaska and California in June and July.

Pentagon spokesman Lt. Col. Wesley P. Miller sought to play down the nuclear exercise but declined to comment on the movement of nuclear weapons and whether nuclear forces went on a heightened state of alert. "We don't comment on intelligence matters," he said.

Miller said the nuclear forces maneuvers were "nothing to be concerned about because the Russians, like us, have routine exercises and inspections."



However, a U.S. official said the exercise was a concern within the U.S. national security community because of the scale of the exercise and the number of weapons being moved. "Certainly it's a concern when you have this kind of exercise going on," this official said.

The official said another worry is that Russia appears to be increasing the readiness of its nuclear forces at a time when the U.S. nuclear complex is in urgent need of upgrading and the military is facing sharp automatic defense cuts that could affect U.S. nuclear forces readiness in the future.

Contractors and employees of the National Nuclear Security Administration, which runs the nuclear weapons complex, were notified of possible furloughs under automatic spending cuts that went into effect March 1, the *Hill* reported Thursday.

Miller said the administration remains committed to a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent. "The administration will ensure continued focus on maintaining a strong nuclear deterrent as part of the president's comprehensive approach to nuclear security," under sequester, as the automatic spending cuts are called.

He quoted past Defense Secretary Leon Panetta as saying that no decisions on how cuts will be made but that "nothing will be off the table in our review of how best to proceed."

According to the officials, the exercise involved Russia's secretive 12th Main Directorate of the Defense Ministry, known by its acronym as 12th GUMO, the main military unit in charge of all nuclear weapons.

Details of the nuclear exercise are classified, but officials said the 12th GUMO transported a large number of nuclear arms from some of its nuclear munitions depots to storage sites during the exercises.

It could not be learned if the Russians provided advance notification of the strategic exercises.

Declassified U.S. intelligence reports have identified three large nuclear storage facilities near Europe, including one that is located miles from the intersection of the Russian, Latvian, and Belarusian borders. Two other nuclear storage complexes close to Europe are located at Zhukovka, near Belarus, and at Golovchino, near the Ukrainian city of Kharkiv.

The nuclear training coincided with the visit to Moscow by Rose Gottemoeller, acting undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, to discuss a new round of U.S.-Russian strategic arms talks.

The exercise did not come up during the meeting between Secretary of State John Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in Berlin Feb. 26.

Arms control experts say the Russians are required to notify the United States under the New START treaty of major strategic nuclear exercises that involve bomber flights.

It is not known whether the nuclear weapons were transported by air, rail, or truck during the 12th GUMO exercise.

Chief of the Russian General Staff Gen. Valery Gerasimov mentioned the nuclear exercise Feb. 22 when he said a surprise inspection of both conventional and nuclear forces was held.

Gerasimov said the exercises involved the 12th GUMO and the Central and Southern military districts and that they were the largest maneuvers of its kind in 20 years.

The drills began with orders for forces to go to "higher states of combat readiness and carry out combat training missions," the website Russian Defense Policy reported. The exercises were also reported by the Voice of Russia and the Russian Defense Ministry website.

Several hundred pieces of equipment, 7,000 troops, and 48 aircraft took part, the general said.

The drills also involved moving forces to exercise areas far from normal deployment locations.



Gerasimov said the 98th Air-Assault Division at Ivanovo and the 4th Air Forces and Air Defense Command near Rostov performed well.

The troops were transported in IL-76 jets to an area near Chelyabinsk, which has large nuclear facilities, in difficult weather conditions.

Forces of a long-range aviation group and air defense also conducted bombing exercises and performed well, Gerasimov said.

The general did not say how the 12th GUMO fared in the exercises but said that overall “a number of systematic deficiencies in the state of combat readiness and level of personnel training” were uncovered.

A 2008 State Department cable described the 12th GUMO as one of several key military units with direct control over nuclear weapons. “An attack or exploitation of any one of these could leave elements of the arsenal vulnerable,” the cable said. “While the impact on the U.S. might not be immediate, the danger of such elements falling into terrorists’ or extremists’ hands could pose a serious threat to the national security of the United States.”

Another cable said nine 12th GUMO sites were being modernized in 2008.

<http://freebeacon.com/russians-conduct-huge-nuke-drill/>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency
Russian Press - Behind the Headlines, March 6
6 March 2013
Rossiiskaya Gazeta

Russia to Build World's Most Powerful Laser

The planned super laser, with an estimated cost of 1.16 billion euros (46.4 billion rubles), will help create high-density substances and extremely high temperatures like those found on the Sun and other stars. In the future, it may become possible to obtain energy using the principle of laser fusion and to conduct simulated thermonuclear tests. The new laser will compete with the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER), currently under construction in France.

The new laser unit will be as high as a ten-story building and as big as two football fields, Sergei Garanin, General Designer for Laser Systems at the Russian Research Institute for Experimental Physics of the Russian Federal Nuclear Center, told the paper.

Unlike similar US and French units, which generate a laser pulse of about two megajoules, the Russian system will generate a laser pulse of around 3 megajoules. This will make it possible to achieve additional objectives.

In 1963, Nobel Prize winner Nikolai Basov and Member of the Soviet Academy of Sciences Oleg Krokhin suggested simultaneously firing 192 laser beams at a beryllium target, which would heat up to 100 million degrees Celsius. This would create thermonuclear fusion, with hydrogen isotope nuclei forming helium nuclei. The obtained energy would be ten times greater than the energy generated by laser units.

A unique laser optical system with almost 13,000 powerful floodlights/flashes would pump energy inside about 3,500 special mirrors, which would generate the laser beams.

The new laser unit, due to start operating in 2020 in Sarov, Russia, faces some tough competition from the Tokamak (Toroidal Chamber with Axial Magnetic Field) reactor, which is scheduled to be launched in 2030-2040.

The Sarov laser unit will herald a new stage in the competition between laser fusion and Tokamak-type thermonuclear fusion.



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Laser fusion creates temperatures and pressures typical of nuclear explosions, and is a key element of the program to maintain nuclear arsenals. It will make it possible to study the performance characteristics of nuclear weapons without testing them in violation of international agreements.

RIA Novosti is not responsible for the content of outside sources.

<http://en.rian.ru/papers/20130306/179851582/Russian-Press---Behind-the-Headlines-March-6.html>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

Russia, US In For Serious Missile Defense Talks - Ambassador

8 March 2013

MOSCOW, March 8 (RIA Novosti) - US Ambassador to Russia Michael McFaul said in an interview with Ekho Moskv radio he expected the two countries to hold talks on missile defense issues this year.

"I expect serious talks [on the issue] this year," McFaul said. He spoke Russian during the interview on Thursday.

Russia and NATO initially agreed to cooperate on the so-called European missile defense system at the Lisbon summit in November 2010. However, further talks between Russia and the alliance have floundered over NATO's refusal to grant Russia legal guarantees that the system would not be aimed against Russia's strategic nuclear deterrent.

NATO and the United States insist the shield is designed to defend NATO members against missiles from emerging threat nations like North Korea and Iran, and would not be directed at Russia. The alliance has vowed to continue developing and deploying its missile defenses, regardless of the status of missile defense cooperation with Russia.

The final phase of the so-called European Phased Adaptive Approach envisions the deployment of US SM-3 Block IIB interceptors by 2020 "to help better cope with medium- and intermediate-range missiles and the potential future ICBM threat to the United States."

Russia has threatened a range of countermeasures against NATO's missile defenses, including tactical nuclear missile deployment in its Baltic exclave of Kaliningrad and improvements to its strategic nuclear missile arsenal.

Russia has invited US Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Martin Dempsey to Moscow for talks which will include the missile defense issue, his Russian counterpart Army General Valery Gerasimov said Wednesday.

http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20130308/179885854/Russia-US-In-For-Serious-Missile-Defense-Talks---Ambassador---.html

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France 24.com

Brazil to Get Its First Nuclear Subs

Agence France-Presse (AFP)

01 March 2013

AFP - Brazil is set to join the select group of countries that have nuclear-powered submarines, President Dilma Rousseff said Friday.

Rousseff stressed Brazil was committed to peace but also needed its defense deterrent, as she inaugurated a naval shipyard in Rio de Janeiro state where the country's first nuclear-powered sub is set to be built in partnership with France.

"We can say that with these installations we are entering the select club of countries with nuclear submarines: The United States, Russia, France, Britain and China," said Rousseff.

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Known as the Metallic Structures Construction Unit, the factory in the city of Itaguaí near Rio de Janeiro is part of the ambitious ProSub program launched in 2008.

Under the scheme, France will supply Brazil with four conventional submarines and help develop the non-nuclear components of the South American powerhouse's first nuclear-powered attack submarine.

Brazil already has the uranium enrichment technology required for producing nuclear fuel and wants to use it to power the submarine.

The 7.8 billion reais (\$3.95 billion) ProSub program aims to protect the country's 8,500-kilometer (5,280-mile) coastline and huge deep-water oil reserves.

The defense ministry said the first of the four conventional Scorpene-class subs will be delivered to the Brazilian Navy in 2017, while the nuclear-powered vessel will be commissioned in 2023.

"This alliance (with France) must be carefully watched by all those who are taking part because our mission is to ensure that this technology is transferred to us in line with the contract," Rousseff said.

The 75-meter-long (246-foot) Scorpene is a diesel-electric attack submarine built by France's DCNS naval defense firm for a variety of missions, including anti-submarine warfare, special operations and intelligence collection.

France is also vying to win a contract valued at between \$4 and \$7 billion for 36 multi-purpose combat aircraft to modernize the Brazilian air force.

The Rafale fighter, built by French firm Dassault Aviation, is up against US aviation giant Boeing's F/A-18 Super Hornet and Swedish manufacturer Saab's Gripen.

<http://www.france24.com/en/20130301-brazil-get-its-first-nuclear-subs-0>

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Air Force Times

STRATCOM: Sequester Threatens Nukes Mission

By Brian Everstine, Staff writer

Tuesday, March 5, 2013

The nation's nuclear mission will slowly erode if the Air Force is left with no choice but to reduce flying hours and ration maintenance as a result of sequestration, U.S. Strategic Command's Gen. Robert Kehler said Tuesday.

The Air Force's bomber pilots would lack the training hours needed to maintain readiness if the service eliminates all non-critical flying and maintenance — a worst-case scenario if the \$46 million in Defense Department cuts continue through the fiscal year.

So far, Strategic Command has not felt the immediate effects of sequestration, Kehler said.

"What will happen, as the service chiefs have struggled with how to apply these various financial rules that they have been given, they have had to go to some places to take cuts that eventually are going to impact us," he said.

The budget uncertainty also could interfere with space operations. The curtailment of sensor operations could leave a huge gap in the command's ability to monitor space for threats, such as asteroids, and debris that could disrupt the nation's navigation and communications satellites.

Moving forward, the command is committed to new advancements in program such as a replacement for the Ohio-class missile submarine, the Air Force's new long-range strike bomber, a replacement for the Minuteman intercontinental ballistic missile and modernization of the arsenal. However, all of STRATCOM's portfolio will be on the table for long-term cuts.

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"We are going to have to make some tough choices," Kehler said.

<http://www.airforcetimes.com/news/2013/03/air-force-stratcom-030513/>

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Business Insider

Pentagon Report: Cyber Attack Could Turn US Weapons against America

By Geoffrey Ingersoll

March 6, 2013

When former Defense Secretary Leon Panetta referred to Pearl Harbor in terms of Cyber Attacks on U.S. soil, he was being a master of understatement.

A report from the Defense Science Board bluntly tells the Pentagon that it's incredibly ill-prepared to handle a full scale cyber assault.

The most terrifying detail:

The benefits to an attacker using cyber exploits are potentially spectacular ... kinetic and related non-kinetic attacks at all altitudes from underwater to space. **U.S. guns, missiles, and bombs may not fire, or may be directed against our own troops.**

Or how about just at Americans in general?

The report then gets into potential domestic targets:

If an attacks effects cause physical damage to control systems, pumps, engines, generators, controllers, etc., **the unavailability of parts and manufacturing capacity could mean months to years are required to rebuild and reestablish basic infrastructure operation.**

They pull short of referring to a potentially catastrophic cyber attack as a "Weapon of Mass Destruction," preferring instead to refer to it as an "**Existential Cyber Attack.**"

The term appears eight times within the text, only once with a definition:

Existential Cyber Attack is defined as an attack that is capable of **causing sufficient wide scale damage for the government potentially to lose control of the country**, including loss or damage to significant portions of military and critical infrastructure: power generation, communications, fuel and transportation, emergency services, financial services, etc.

The other seven times the term appears come in the sentence "Protect the Nuclear Strike as a Deterrent (for existing nuclear armed states **and** existential cyber attack)."

Matter of fact, **that is the first**, and conceivably the top, recommendation the DSB put forth. The reasons why are obvious if one continues reading:

Our nuclear deterrent is regularly evaluated for reliability and readiness. However most of the systems have not been assessed (end-to-end) against a Tier V-VI cyber attack to understand possible weak spots.

(Tier V-VI cyber attacks are like Flame and Stuxnet, and require hardware modification — possibly a compromised thumb drive or cell phone.)

Again, the recommendation coming from the DSB is dual pronged: protect nukes because we'll need to use them if there's an existential cyber attack, and protect them because we don't want them "directed against" Americans.

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The report hedges the horror though, stating that offensive cyber attacks are not necessarily easy to do. Hackers need to first gain access, then increase permissions, then set up camp and stay inside the system until other, coordinated efforts catch up.

Researchers at the DSB say this is tough because software is often updated and hardware replaced.

Yet, as the Mandiant Report pointed out, some private systems were exploited for multiple consecutive years.

And the problem with replacing hardware is that large portions of it are manufactured overseas:

Recent DoD and U.S. interest in counterfeit parts has resulted in the identification of widespread introduction of counterfeit parts into DoD systems ... Since many systems use the same processors and those processors are typically built overseas in untrustworthy environments, the challenge to supply chain management in a cyber contested environment is significant.

So this is the result of outsourcing and the death of American manufacturing. Spectacular.

The problems get even worse — Defense Department "Red Teams" can exploit most DoD systems using the lowest level exploits — so we'll summarize a bit.

The list boils down to just a few things:

- State actors are a concern, but non-state actors are more of a concern, especially when they are employed as proxies by state actors.
- Nuclear deterrence and good attribution (locating the attacker) are about the only deterrence we have, so keeping the nuclear triad secure is the most important strategy.
- Systems that run infrastructure are easy to penetrate and control.
- The Department of Defense **is years away** from catching up to the threat.
- Reciprocal offensive capabilities need to be developed in kind.

<http://www.businessinsider.com/cyber-exploits-turn-weapons-on-us-2013-3>

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Los Angeles Times

U.S. Arrests Osama bin Laden Son-in-Law on Terrorism Charges

Sulaiman abu Ghaith has been flown to New York. Officials say he assisted Bin Laden from May 2001 through part of 2002 and appeared on videos to praise the Sept. 11 attacks.

By Ken Dilanian and Richard A. Serrano, *Los Angeles Times*

March 7, 2013,

WASHINGTON — The FBI and CIA helped capture an alleged Al Qaeda spokesman who was Osama bin Laden's son-in-law and have flown him to New York City to face numerous terrorism-related charges, according to U.S. officials.

Sulaiman abu Ghaith was taken into U.S. custody in Jordan, where he was stopped while being deported from Turkey to Kuwait, his native country, under a scheme orchestrated by U.S. authorities. He is believed to have spent most of the last decade in Iran.

He has been providing information to U.S. interrogators since his arrest, said a former U.S. official who was briefed on the case.

A federal indictment unsealed Thursday accuses Abu Ghaith of conspiracy to kill Americans, among other charges. It alleges that he "served alongside" Bin Laden from May 2001 through part of 2002 and appeared on videos to praise the Sept. 11 attacks and threaten further assaults.



"This arrest sends an unmistakable message: There is no corner of the world where you can escape from justice," Atty. Gen. Eric H. Holder Jr. said in announcing the indictment.

Abu Ghaith is scheduled to be arraigned Friday before U.S. District Judge Lewis A. Kaplan in New York. If convicted, he faces a maximum sentence of life in prison without parole.

His case is notable because he is only the second suspected Al Qaeda militant known to be captured overseas and brought to the United States for trial under the Obama administration, rather than be killed by a CIA or military drone. The first, a Somali, was interrogated for two months aboard a U.S. Navy ship off the coast of Africa before he was imprisoned in New York in July 2011 to await trial.

Abu Ghaith, 48, has not played a significant role in Al Qaeda in years, a U.S. official said.

In May 2001, according to the indictment, Abu Ghaith urged individuals at a guest house in Kandahar, Afghanistan, to swear *bayat*, or allegiance, to Bin Laden. After the Sept. 11 attacks, he was allegedly summoned by Bin Laden and agreed to provide further assistance. The next morning, the indictment says, he appeared with Bin Laden and others in a video and spoke on behalf of Al Qaeda.

He allegedly warned the U.S. that a "great army is gathering upon you" and that the "nation of Islam" would fight "the Jews, the Christians and the Americans."

In another video, which appeared Oct. 10, 2001, he allegedly praised the Sept. 11 attackers and vowed that more would follow. "Americans should know the storm of the planes will not stop," he allegedly said. "There are thousands of the Islamic nation's youths who are eager to die, just as the Americans are eager to live."

Such statements, plus his membership in Al Qaeda, are enough to establish involvement in a conspiracy under U.S. law, said Ali Soufan, a former senior FBI agent who worked on terrorism cases.

"He's a senior Al Qaeda figure, there's no question about that," said Seth Jones, a counter-terrorism analyst at the Rand Corp., a nonpartisan think tank. He was a member of the terrorist network's management council, Jones said.

The Kuwaiti government stripped Abu Ghaith of his citizenship after the videos appeared. He later spent years under a form of house arrest in Iran, a U.S. official said.

Turkish news media reported that Abu Ghaith entered Turkey in January and was detained at the request of U.S. authorities, but was then set free because he had committed no crime in Turkey. He was later rearrested at a luxury hotel in Ankara for deportation, the reports said.

The case provided fresh fodder for a long-running debate in Washington on how suspected terrorists should be treated, where they should be held and how their cases should be adjudicated.

"We should treat enemy combatants like the enemy — the U.S. court system is not the appropriate venue," Rep. Mike Rogers (R-Mich.), chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, said in a statement. "The president needs to send any captured Al Qaeda members to Guantanamo."

Human rights activists strongly disagreed. "Our nation's track record of successfully prosecuting alleged terrorists in federal court is second to none," said Raha Wala, a lawyer at Human Rights First.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-bin-laden-kin-20130308,0,1034832.story>

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Wall Street Journal
OPINION/Weekend Interview
March 2, 2013
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How Iran Went Nuclear

Veteran weapons inspector Olli Heinonen on how the U.N.'s 'Stockholm Syndrome' has aided Tehran's drive for the bomb—and why an unsettling secret may be lurking in the Iranian desert.

By DAVID FEITH

Cambridge, Mass.

It has been more than three years since President Obama revealed the existence of the secret Iranian nuclear facility at Fordo—a uranium-enrichment plant buried deep inside a mountain and surrounded by missile silos and anti-aircraft batteries. Is the world due for another surprise soon?

If anyone has standing to speculate, it is Olli Heinonen, who says he first "got a whiff" of Fordo six years before Mr. Obama acknowledged it. In the fall of 2003, Mr. Heinonen was in his office at the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna when a man appeared unannounced. The "walk-in"—whom Mr. Heinonen hasn't previously discussed, and whose nationality he won't disclose—claimed that Iran was replicating its existing uranium-enrichment facility in an underground site near the holy city of Qum. And so it was, as the IAEA and Western spy agencies later confirmed.

But that isn't all the walk-in shared in 2003. Also under construction in Iran, he said, was a duplicate of the Arak heavy-water facility designed to produce plutonium. In other words, the walk-in said that Iran had at least two secret sites, and he was correct on the first. What about the second—is there a plutonium facility that remains secret today?

Mr. Heinonen can't say as we sit in his office at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, where he has been a senior fellow since retiring as IAEA deputy director-general in 2010. Yet he offers a warning based on his 27 years of IAEA nuclear-inspection work in Iran, North Korea, Iraq, Syria and elsewhere:

"People talk a lot about how intelligence has penetrated all this," he says of Iran's weapons program, "but if you go back to the nuclear programs which have been revealed [elsewhere], they all came with a surprise. If there is no undeclared installation today . . . it will be the first time in 20 years that Iran doesn't have one."

A native of Finland, Mr. Heinonen speaks in upbeat, accented English, though his message is a grim one for a grim time. In February alone, North Korea conducted its third and most successful nuclear test; Iran announced plans to install advanced centrifuges that could speed its uranium enrichment by 200%; satellite photos published in Britain's Telegraph newspaper suggested that some operations have begun at the Arak facility; multilateral talks with Iran mostly yielded plans for more talks (again); Iran rebuffed America's offer of direct talks (again); and the Senate confirmed as defense secretary a man who couldn't articulate whether the U.S. intends to prevent an Iranian bomb or live with it.

Mr. Heinonen is emphatic that the IAEA is in the prevention business, yet he also explains that Iran might be past the nuclear point of no return—and that years of IAEA missteps are partly to blame.

Even assuming that Iran's regime has no secret facilities, it could go the North Korea route—defined by Mr. Heinonen as deciding "Enough is enough, to heck with this, we'll build a nuclear weapon"—in "a month or two," he says. The precise timing would depend on how (and how well) Iranian engineers go about enriching their uranium stocks to weapons-grade purity. But in any case, Mr. Heinonen notes, Iran's breakout would likely outpace the ability of the "international community" to respond.

First, IAEA inspectors would have to detect the breakout. This could take up to two weeks because they visit Iran's major uranium-enrichment facility about 24 times a year. (Roughly half of the visits are announced, meaning inspectors give the Iranians 10 days' notice, and the rest are unannounced, meaning about two hours' notice at any time of day.) Once inside, inspectors would quickly recognize from the enrichment machinery that Iran was dashing to a bomb, says Mr. Heinonen, but that would hardly be the end of the story.

The inspectors would formally alert the IAEA board, which takes "a few days' time." The board would meet and pass a resolution (which "needs a few days") and then engage the United Nations Security Council ("also not an overnight decision"). "In reality," he says, "one month is gone. Well, during that one month [Iran] may have achieved their goal,



at least to have enough high-enriched uranium for a nuclear weapon. What next?" Iran would have become the world's ninth confirmed nuclear state.

Mr. Heinonen's implication is that an Iranian bomb is now simply a matter of Tehran's will, not capability—despite two decades of international effort to prevent it. How did this happen?

Short of military force, there is only so much that outsiders can do to stop a determined regime. But in Iran's case, Mr. Heinonen says, matters weren't helped when the IAEA developed "Stockholm Syndrome," akin to hostages who identify with their kidnappers. Though he praises the professionalism of the IAEA's world-wide efforts on nuclear safety, Mr. Heinonen is mystified by parts of its record on Iran.

Mohamed ElBaradei's tenure as the IAEA's director-general from 1997-2009 wasn't distinguished by its vigilance regarding Iran. He constantly downplayed suspicions (both from Western governments and within his own agency) about Iranian activity, and in 2008 he blessed almost all of Iran's claims about its nuclear program as "consistent" with IAEA findings. He also wrote articles criticizing international nonproliferation policies for favoring nuclear haves over have-nots.

Mr. ElBaradei's willingness to give rogue regimes the benefit of the doubt extended to Syria: After Israel bombed a site in the Syrian desert in 2007, he told the *New Yorker* magazine that it was "unlikely that this building was a nuclear facility." In fact it was—supplied by North Korea, no less.

Of Mr. ElBaradei, Mr. Heinonen says, "We had our differences." He praises his former boss for raising concern about the possible military dimension of Iran's nuclear program in 2004, but he notes that two events seemed to affect Mr. ElBaradei's determination.

One was the U.S.-led war in Iraq, which Mr. ElBaradei "felt was unjust," Mr. Heinonen says, and was launched on what Mr. ElBaradei regarded as "a pretext" that the Bush administration might also invoke to attack Iran. The other was the Nobel Peace Prize awarded in 2005 to Mr. ElBaradei and the IAEA. "It had an impact"—a softening one—"on the way we dealt with [Iran]," Mr. Heinonen says.

The main problem, however, was an entrenched practice of credulous diplomacy, says Mr. Heinonen. "If you ask whether things went wrong in 2003 and 2004, actually I would say it went wrong much earlier. It went wrong at the time of Hans Blix"—the IAEA chief at the time—"in 1993 and 1994."

That is when IAEA officials conducted "transparency visits" in Iran, prompted by various concerns, including that China had secretly diverted two tons of uranium to the Islamic Republic. As Mr. Heinonen tells it, inspectors declared "Everything is OK, we saw nothing." Actually, he notes, "there were two laboratories which were undeclared and became obvious during this visit."

Yet the IAEA stayed mum and remained so for three years while Iran delayed putting the facilities under agency safeguards. "This was never mentioned in public," says Mr. Heinonen, adding that as he rose through the agency he learned of other such nondisclosures by Vienna's supposed enforcers of transparency.

"I cannot understand logically why you would behave like that," he says, though he notes that the "Iranians are very good negotiators."

To this day, Iranian negotiators manage to dampen IAEA criticism despite Tehran's continued obstructionism. Inspectors have been blocked for years from the suspicious Parchin complex and from Arak, too, for the past 18 months. But by making promising public statements—like those this week announcing further negotiations in March and April—the Iranians "build a kind of hope, and the diplomats buy it," Mr. Heinonen says.

Speaking of hope, the former inspector says that he still sees a chance for a U.S.-Iran grand bargain. In his view, the Iranian regime isn't a "homogenous" revolutionary group bent on getting the bomb. "If you look," some members of the Tehran establishment may be "pretty hardline" but "are more oriented on having business relations with the outside world."



Such figures, he says, can exert a moderating influence on Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Here Mr. Heinonen cites a 2003 episode in which former Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani helped convince the supreme leader to reverse his public position against signing an additional-protocol agreement with the IAEA.

Then again, as Mr. Heinonen confirms, Iran cheated on that agreement and terminated its implementation after two years, so it doesn't inspire much confidence. If a grand—and honest—bargain can't be struck, and Iran is recognized as a de facto or overt nuclear power, then what? Will the Middle East see a nuclear-arms race as rival nations try to catch up?

"Yes, it might, but not overnight," Mr. Heinonen says. Saudi Arabia, Egypt and others would need five to 10 years to build a bomb "even in a crash course."

Yet that is only if the countries are "starting from zero," he notes. Saudi Arabia may already be on the move.

In 2011, the kingdom announced plans to build 16 nuclear power reactors by 2030. "That's actually a funny number," Mr. Heinonen says—just what a country would need to justify developing domestic fuel-cycle capabilities that could have both civilian and military uses. "If you want to maintain your own uranium enrichment, that's the right number. . . . It's a perfect match." He adds: "Remember, there was no one military program which took place without civilian. It's always under the civilian umbrella."

For now, Mr. Heinonen is most concerned about Pakistan. The country is unstable, its nuclear arsenal huge, and "they are building these tactical nuclear weapons, which means that they need to move them around. . . . So how do you maintain the control?"

Any warehouse or convoy poses a proliferation risk. "Look at what happened with A.Q. Khan," he says, referring to the godfather of the Pakistani bomb who sold nuclear secrets to Iran, North Korea and Libya. "Either the military was entirely incompetent, or they knew what Khan was doing. . . . I think they all knew about it, and some of them got their own kickbacks."

An afternoon with Mr. Heinonen provides a sobering counterpoint to happy talk from the Obama administration about "a world without nuclear weapons." Mr. Heinonen, in his engineer's uniform of tie and short-sleeve button-down shirt, maintains a certain equanimity about world affairs. Yet the parade of horrors rolls on.

Mr. Feith is an assistant editorial features editor at the Journal.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323978104578329890771686954.html>

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The London Daily Telegraph – U.K.
OPINION/Editorial

Keeping Britain Safe

Telegraph View: With his comments about Trident, Vince Cable has forgotten the first duty of a minister of the Crown

By Telegraph View

03 March 2013

The first duty of any government is to safeguard the nation against overseas threats. That should be a statement of the obvious, but Vince Cable's misguided remarks about Trident yesterday suggest that he needs to be reminded of his central responsibility as a minister of the crown.

In a dangerous world, where North Korea has already conducted three nuclear tests and Iran could soon possess an arsenal of its own, the only safe prediction is that unforeseen threats are bound to emerge. No one can predict the future of Russia or China – let alone Pakistan, another nuclear power – in the decades ahead. Against this background, it would be folly to sacrifice Britain's nuclear deterrent.



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Our ability to keep one submarine armed with Trident D5 missiles on permanent patrol amounts to an indispensable national insurance policy. Once cast aside, it could never be regained. If, in the future, a disarmed Britain were to face a nuclear-armed enemy, the politicians who sacrificed the ultimate guarantee of national safety would rightly inherit the mantle of Neville Chamberlain.

Mr Cable seems to think that guaranteeing Britain's security for decades to come is not worth the cost. But his words betrayed a shaky grasp of the subject. By urging the Ministry of Defence to "scrap Trident", Mr Cable seemed to call for immediate and unilateral nuclear disarmament, which is not Liberal Democrat policy. The Business Secretary probably meant to say that Trident's replacement programme should be abolished, but the fact that he appears not to understand the difference is remarkable, particularly as he sits on the National Security Council.

The cost of replacing Trident will be spread over 30 years. In return, Britain will be insured against nuclear attack. By any measure, that is a good bargain.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/defence/9906504/Keeping-Britain-safe.html>

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Washington Times
OPINION/Commentary

MONROE: The Antiquation of America's Nuclear Weapons

Disarming while the world gears up a dangerous strategy

By Robert R. Monroe

Monday, March 4, 2013

America is moving down a slippery slope, about to pass the point of no return. Our nuclear weapons capability is disintegrating. Here's a quick assessment.

President Obama's national goal — a world without nuclear weapons — is impossible and undesirable. Yet his administration is trying to lead the way into this fantasyland by making unilateral prohibitions, reductions, delays and cutbacks of all kinds. Today's nuclear weapons policies — established by the Obama team in the Nuclear Posture Review — lead to nuclear weakness, rather than the nuclear strength that has kept us safe for over half a century.

We have no coherent nuclear weapons strategy, and strategic deterrence no longer exists in our foreign policy. Our nonproliferation policies are so ill-conceived that we are about to trigger a global cascade of proliferation, leading to a world of nuclear horror and chaos. Our U.S. stockpile is composed of weapons well past the end of their design life and irrelevant to most of today's principal threats. Their condition ranges somewhere between deteriorated and unknown. Our two-decade nuclear freeze, our deplorable no-testing policy and our prohibition on design and production of new nuclear weapons have brought the technical expertise of our scientists, engineers and designers (and of our production and testing teams) into extreme circumstances. Key facilities in our nuclear research and production infrastructure are either seriously antiquated or non-existent, and their agreed-to modernization funding is being slashed.

While all this is happening here, nuclear weapons threats are increasing apace throughout the world. Every other nuclear weapons state is modernizing (and in many cases expanding) its nuclear arsenal. Russia has a robust development and production program for advanced nuclear weapons, and Kremlin strategy now calls for their early use in all conflicts. China, newly belligerent, is in the midst of an immense strategic modernization program, and the growing size of their improved, longer-range nuclear arsenal is cloaked in secrecy. Pakistan is rapidly increasing its nuclear stockpile, and India is responding with theirs. North Korea's tests of nuclear weapons and long-range missiles are in the news daily, as is Iran's absolute determination to achieve full nuclear weapons status. Mr. Obama, after four years' nuclear disarmament effort, hasn't a single nation-state follower.

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Isn't there a disconnect here? Doesn't it seem reasonable to bring common sense and prudence to bear on America's security before we lose everything? Our misguided policies are actively inviting multiple types of nuclear catastrophes. We should have learned that a nation which turns a deaf ear to the urgent needs of such an important and complex enterprise will pay a serious price.

The nuclear era began 70 years ago. The 12 presidents (six Democrats, six Republicans) who led us for the first 66 of those years proclaimed nuclear weapons to be the cornerstone of our national security, our country's highest priority. Four years ago Mr. Obama reversed this proven policy. He devalued nuclear weapons, declaring them an evil to be eliminated. In a world of awesome dangers, he launched us on the slippery slope. Ronald Reagan's statement should be remembered: "Of the four wars in my lifetime, none came about because the U.S. was too strong." Common sense would have us return to a policy of nuclear strength, not weakness.

Focus now on the future. What new nuclear threats will America face in five years, 10 or 20? The answers are unknown — and unknowable. If we start today, it will take us about five years to research and design a single advanced weapon appropriate for deterring today's nuclear threats. About five more years will be needed to test and produce the first prototype weapon. America has no pit production facility (for nuclear weapon triggers), and about 15 years will be required to design and build one. So it will be about 20 years before we'll be able to start production of our first modern nuclear weapon. It will be about 30 years before we're well into stockpile replacement. This is not a prudent risk, and common sense counsels immediate action to stop the downward slide.

Consider the human capital situation. For two generations, our nuclear weapons enterprise attracted the foremost scientists and engineers in the nation, and they worked miracles in making us No. 1 in the world. Today we have virtually no weapons designers who have ever seen a weapon tested, and testing is the only path to true mastery of this art and science. Moreover, where will tomorrow's nuclear weapons scientists and engineers come from? World-class college graduates are not attracted to a career as curators in a nuclear museum. Common sense, again, demands recovery.

America is at a turning point in history. It's time we had a national debate on nuclear strength versus nuclear weakness. This is the way democracies resolve issues of national survival.

Retired Vice Adm. Robert R. Monroe is former director of the Defense Nuclear Agency.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/mar/4/the-antiquation-of-americas-nuclear-weapons/>

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Nukes of Hazard
OPINION/Commentary

Beyond March Madness: The Nuclear Weapons Budget after Sequestration

By Usha Sahay
March 04, 2013

In elementary school, they taught us that March comes in like a lion, and this year, it's especially true — and not just for basketball fans. This March 1st brought with it the dreaded budget sequester — the automatic, across-the-board federal budget cuts that have prompted doomsday predictions about the government not being able to function, as well as a lot of slideshows of cute animals.

So now that March 1st has rolled around and the Pentagon hasn't yet been downsized to a square, what exactly is going on with the defense budget? The main thing you need to know is the sequester cuts approximately \$48 billion from national defense (specifically the "050" budget function, covering the Department of Defense, the nuclear weapons-related spending at the Department of Energy, and a few other areas) over the next seven months. This is

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actually the sum total of two sequesters – one that already happened on March 1, and a smaller one set to occur on March 27, 2013.

Technically, approximately \$500 billion must come out of the 050 budget function over the next ten years, or until Congress and the White House devise a replacement budget that reduces the deficit by the amounts mandated by the Budget Control Act. Alternatively, Congress could adjust or even eliminate the sequester as part of negotiations to replace the current continuing resolution set to expire on March 26. March Madness indeed.

Hopefully it won't take ten years to come up with a bipartisan budget agreement that cuts spending in a more sensible way than the "meat-cleaver" approach of sequestration. And that brings us to the important question: as Congress looks to stop the madness and devise a workable budget, what can be cut from the Pentagon budget without compromising national security?

We've argued in this space and elsewhere that the nuclear weapons budget is an ideal place to look for savings. Over the next ten years, nuclear weapons and related programs will cost roughly \$640 billion. Compare that to the \$500 billion in savings (over the same amount of time) that we need to find to replace the automatic cuts, and it starts to seem like we could save some money on nuclear weapons.

By one estimate, maintaining and upgrading our current nuclear arsenal costs the Pentagon over \$30 billion a year. In this budget climate, it makes sense to ask whether expensive nuclear weapons programs are the right place to be spending scarce defense dollars.

Consider some examples: the Navy's plan to build a whole new fleet of ballistic missile submarines will cost about \$100 billion. By reducing the size of the fleet, we could save \$18 billion over the next ten years – without having to reduce the number of nuclear warheads that the submarines carry. Another \$18 billion in savings could come from delaying development of a new strategic bomber – an option recommended by Republican Senator Tom Coburn in a deficit reduction plan called "Back in Black." And we'll spend another \$10 billion alone to modernize the B61 gravity bomb, a 1950s-era weapon that numerous military officials have described as having "no military value." The examples go on and on.

Of course, this is far from the only area where the Pentagon spends a lot. What's doubly doable about cutting the nuclear budget is that it makes *fiscal sense as well as strategic sense* – as strategist Bernard Brodie famously put it, "strategy wears a dollar sign." True, trimming the arsenal will save money, but its primary benefit is to increase U.S. national security. Nuclear reductions with Russia could promote more stable US-Russia relations and help bring more countries into the disarmament process.

I've digressed from the discussion of sequestration and the budget – but in some ways, that's the point. From a strategic point of view, nuclear reductions would make sense even if they didn't free up billions of dollars for more useful defense programs. But they do that too. And that's why nuclear spending at Cold War levels must be on the table in the ensuing search for budget savings.

The budget crisis in general, and the sequester specifically, will force government agencies to make tough choices about what they can and can't afford. But targeting the bloated nuclear weapons budget shouldn't be a difficult call: in fact, given the financial and strategic benefits, it should be a no-brainer.

Usha Sahay is a Herbert Scoville, Jr. Peace Fellow at the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, where her work focuses on Iran, Afghanistan, the nuclear weapons budget, and military spending.

<http://www.nukesofhazardblog.com/story/2013/3/4/162655/3334>

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LYONS: Obama's Dangerous Anti-Nuclear Obsession

Diminished U.S. deterrence means a more unstable world

By James A. Lyons

Tuesday, March 5, 2013

Potential U.S. adversaries have been flexing their military muscles of late, taking provocative action that is specifically directed against the United States and our allies. These actions have important strategic significance. In light of our unilateral disarmament, our potential adversaries are clearly testing our resolve and our military readiness to respond, as well as the Obama administration's reaction.

On Feb. 15, investigative journalist Bill Gertz reported that two Russian Bear-H Tu-95 strategic strike bombers equipped with nuclear-tipped cruise missiles circumnavigated Guam on Feb. 12 in what can only be categorized as a reconnaissance-simulated strike mission. At some point, they were intercepted by U.S. Air Force F15s operating out of Guam.

It appears to be more than mere coincidence that this provocative mission occurred just "hours" before President Obama's State of the Union address. Further, it cannot be ignored that this first-of-a-kind mission over vast ocean areas occurred on the same day that North Korea detonated its third underground nuclear device.

Clearly, the Russian strategic bomber flights cannot be viewed as an isolated event. Last summer, Russia sent an Akula class cruise-missile attack submarine to the Gulf of Mexico and operated undetected for an unspecified period of time. We did not find out it was there until after it departed. With Iran's missile base in Venezuela now operational, according to former ambassador Roger Noriega, the Akula deployment takes on added significance.

Prior to this deployment last June, Russia conducted an exercise of its strategic strike bombers and support aircraft in the Arctic, simulating strikes against our anti-ballistic missile bases in Alaska. Then, in July, a Russian Bear-H TU-95 strategic strike bomber flew into the Gulf of Alaska, most likely simulating strikes against our anti-ballistic bases in California. These Bear-H missions were intercepted by our Air Force and Canadian fighters, hopefully before they reached their simulated missile-launch position.

According to Mr. Gertz, our former United Nations Ambassador John R. Bolton stated that the Russian bomber flights appeared to be part of an increasingly threatening strategic posture in response to the Obama administration's anti-nuclear policies. He further stated, "Every day brings new evidence that Obama's ideological obsession with dismantling our nuclear deterrent is dangerous." I believe it could lead us down a path of strategic instability.

In an article dated Feb. 17, Xinhua reported that Russia plans to strengthen its relationship with China. It was reported that Russian President Vladimir Putin approved a new foreign-policy framework that centers on strengthening the "comprehensive strategic partnerships with China." This new policy also stated that Russia intends to cooperate with the United States, provided we do not interfere with other nations' internal affairs.

Russia's new assertiveness in the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific could also be an asymmetrical response to our facilitating arms transfer from Libya to al Qaeda-affiliated militias and rebels fighting Russia's Syrian ally, President Bashar Assad.

Clearly, under Mr. Putin, Russia is reasserting itself in areas where it has had a strategic interest in the past. For example, on Feb. 7, Russian SU-27 jets triggered intercepts by Japanese fighter jets near Japan's Hokkaido Island. The intercept took place near disputed territory claimed by both countries since the end of World War II.

For more than the past two decades, China has been flexing its military muscle and using bullying tactics to enforce its disputed claims in the South and East China Seas. Fifty-five percent of the world's maritime traffic transits this key strategic ocean area, which is also thought to hold vast gas and oil resources. The Philippines, Indonesia, Taiwan, Singapore, Japan, Vietnam and Brunei all have claims in this disputed area.

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Japan has been involved in an ongoing confrontation with China over the Senkaku Islands. Recently a Chinese frigate used its targeting radar to lock on a Japanese destroyer patrolling in the Senkakus. On Feb. 24, close on the heels of Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's Washington visit, the South China Morning Post reported that three Chinese government surveillance ships entered territorial waters off one of the Senkaku's disputed islands in the East China Sea. Hours before, one of China's fishery patrol boats deliberately sailed into the disputed zone.

For the record, Japan was given administration over the island as part of the peace treaty signed in San Francisco in 1946. In any confrontation with China over the disputed islands, Japan will look to the United States to invoke the U.S.-Japan Mutual Defense Treaty.

The Obama administration's reaction to these provocations appears to be one of indifference. The "reset" button with Russia has not altered Mr. Putin's increasingly hostile trajectory. The disastrous impact of sequestration on our national security will only encourage our potential enemies to take more brazen action and must be reversed. We must not only be perceived as able to meet our global commitments, we must in fact be capable of doing so if we are to deter more aggressive challenges from Russia, China, Iran and North Korea

Retired Adm. James A. Lyons was commander in chief of the U.S. Pacific Fleet and senior U.S. military representative to the United Nations.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/mar/5/obamas-dangerous-anti-nuclear-obsession/>

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OPINION

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Next Steps in Reducing Nuclear Risks

The pace of nonproliferation work today doesn't match the urgency of the threat.

By GEORGE P. SHULTZ, WILLIAM J. PERRY, HENRY A. KISSINGER AND SAM NUNN

Every American president since the end of World War II has sought to come to grips with the unique security risks and challenges associated with nuclear weapons. The specter of a nuclear war, accident, proliferation or terrorism has led to serious and sustained efforts to control, reduce and eliminate nuclear risks. Over the decades, progress has been made in reducing nuclear weapons, and bringing about international agreements on nonproliferation.

Recently, the four of us have supported two major policy initiatives: the 2010 New Start Treaty with Russia, which verifiably reduced bilateral nuclear stockpiles; and the Nuclear Security Summits of 2010 and 2012, which have energized global efforts to secure nuclear weapons and materials. Both initiatives are significant and hopeful steps that add to a solid foundation of bipartisan accomplishment over many decades. Most notably, the number of nuclear weapons in the world today is less than one-third of the total in 1986 at the time of the Reagan-Gorbachev Reykjavik summit.

Despite these considerable efforts, nuclear dangers remain all too real. Technological progress and the proliferation of nuclear weapons to additional states are compounded by dangerous complacency. Bilateral relations between the two largest nuclear powers, the United States and Russia, are frayed, and there are continuing difficulties in effectively addressing emerging nuclear threats in North Korea and Iran, punctuated recently by a test explosion in North Korea. Combined with the dangers of suicidal terrorist groups, the growing number of nations with nuclear arms and differing motives, aims and ambitions poses very high and unpredictable risks.

It is far from certain that today's world can successfully replicate the Cold War Soviet-American deterrence by "mutually assured destruction"—the threat of imposing unacceptable damage on the adversary. That was based essentially on a bipolar world. But when a large and growing number of nuclear adversaries confront multiple

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perceived threats, the relative restraint of the Cold War will be difficult to sustain. The risk that deterrence will fail and that nuclear weapons will be used increases dramatically.

Global leaders owe it to their publics to reduce, and eventually to eliminate, these risks. Even during the Cold War, the leaders of the two superpowers sought to reduce the risk of nuclear war. What was possible among declared enemies is imperative in a world of increasing nuclear stockpiles in some nations, multiple nuclear military powers and growing diffusion of nuclear energy. A global effort is needed to reduce reliance on nuclear weapons, prevent their spread, and ultimately end them as a threat to the world. It will take leadership, creative approaches and thoughtful understanding of the perils of inaction. Near-term results would lay the foundation for transforming global security policies over the medium and long term. We suggest four areas requiring urgent consideration:

1. *Securing nuclear materials to prevent catastrophic nuclear terrorism.* Materials necessary for building a nuclear bomb today are stored at hundreds of sites in 28 countries—down from over 40 countries just 10 years ago. But many of these sites aren't well secured, leaving the materials vulnerable to theft or sale on the black market. Important commitments were undertaken to secure nuclear materials and improve cooperation during the 2010 and 2012 Nuclear Security Summits. These could improve security for generations to come. Yet no global system is in place for tracking, accounting for, managing and securing all weapons-usable nuclear materials.

At the next Nuclear Security Summit, planned for 2014 in the Netherlands, world leaders should commit to develop a comprehensive global materials security system—including procedures for international assurances—to ensure that all weapons-usable nuclear materials are secure from unauthorized access and theft.

2. *Changes in the deployment patterns of the two largest nuclear powers to increase decision time for leaders.* In the 2008 campaign, then-Sen. Obama said: "Keeping nuclear weapons ready to launch on a moment's notice is a dangerous relic of the Cold War. Such policies increase the risk of catastrophic accidents or miscalculation. I will work with Russia to end such outdated Cold War policies in a mutual and verifiable way." The U.S. should work with nuclear-armed nations world-wide to remove all nuclear weapons from the prompt-launch status in which nuclear-armed ballistic missiles are deployed to be launched in minutes. To jump-start this initiative, the U.S. and Russia should agree to take a percentage of their nuclear warheads off prompt-launch status—remembering Ronald Reagan's admonition to "trust but verify."

3. *Actions following New Start. The progress in the strategic field has been considerable.* Washington should carefully examine going below New Start levels of warheads and launchers, including the possibility of coordinated mutual actions. Such a course has the following prerequisites:

a) strict reciprocity; b) demonstrable verification; and c) providing adequate and stable funding for the long-term investments required to maintain high confidence in our nuclear arsenal.

Consolidating and reducing U.S. and Russian tactical nuclear weapons not covered under New Start should also be a high priority. It must be recognized that as some other nuclear-armed states are building up their inventories, or if new nuclear powers emerge, U.S. and Russian nuclear reductions face an inherent limit. The nuclear programs of North Korea and Iran undermine the Non-Proliferation Treaty and pose a direct threat to regional and global stability. Unless these two states are brought into compliance with their international obligations, their continued nuclear programs will erode support for nonproliferation and further nuclear reductions.

4. *Without verification and transparency, nuclear-security agreements cannot be completed with confidence.* The U.S. should launch a "verification initiative" that involves the U.S. nuclear weapons laboratories and global scientific experts in developing essential technologies and innovations for reducing and controlling nuclear weapons and materials. The principle of enhanced transparency could also be applied to missile defense so long as it doesn't risk capabilities. Taking the lead in fostering greater transparency sets an important base line for all nations and can facilitate future verification of nuclear materials and weapons.

This strategy focused on immediate steps would give leaders greater confidence to take measures to improve security in the near-term. It would boost prospects for support by legislatures. Close consultations with Congress are crucial.



We also need a new dialogue. In our January 2007 op-ed on these pages, we identified practical steps toward the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. These steps will involve many nations, not just those currently in possession of nuclear weapons. Progress will require greater cooperation. The U.S. must work with other key states to establish a joint enterprise with common objectives to achieve near-term results. Russia and the U.S., with the largest nuclear stockpiles, have a special responsibility in this regard.

- *A coalition of the willing.* The Nuclear Security Summits could provide a model for leaders working together to create a joint enterprise that would generate a coalition of willing states to establish priorities and achieve progress on specific steps. Essential subjects should be identified in which many nations have a stake, and to which many must make a contribution. A timetable for meetings between heads of government would help build a diplomatic structure for engagement, within which foreign ministers, defense ministers and others can work together between the meetings of government leaders.
- *Regional dialogues.* Such a joint enterprise should include and be reinforced by regional dialogues. Top political, defense and military leaders should explore with their counterparts a range of practical steps on core security issues. The Euro-Atlantic region—an area that includes Europe, Russia and the U.S., four nuclear weapon states and over 90% of global nuclear inventories—will need to play a central role. China and other key states will need to be engaged both on multilateral issues and within their own regions.

The continuing risk posed by nuclear weapons remains an overarching strategic problem, but the pace of work doesn't now match the urgency of the threat. The consequences of inaction are potentially catastrophic, and we must continue to ask: How will citizens react to the chaos and suffering of a nuclear attack? Won't they demand to know what could have been done to prevent this? Our age has stolen fire from the gods. Can we confine this awesome power to peaceful purposes before it consumes us?

Mr. Shultz was secretary of state from 1982-89. Mr. Perry was secretary of defense from 1994-97. Mr. Kissinger was secretary of state from 1973-77. Mr. Nunn is a former chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee and chief executive officer of the Nuclear Threat Initiative. All are distinguished fellows or visiting distinguished fellows at Stanford University's Hoover Institution.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324338604578325912939001772.html>

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Foreign Affairs

Obama's Nuclear Future

The Battle to Reduce the U.S. Nuclear Stockpile Begins

By Joseph Cirincione

March 6, 2013

After two years of making steady progress in reducing the nuclear risks to the United States, President Barack Obama stalled in those efforts in the second half of his first term. Recent speeches and press reports indicate, however, that he is trying to revive the endeavor. With a new national security team in place, an emerging consensus forming around the need to reshape the nuclear arsenal, and budget realities forcing a reassessment of the size of the U.S. stockpile, Obama may well be positioned for success.

When Obama came into office in 2009, he was ready to move beyond the United States' Cold War nuclear posture, which calls for stockpiles that “are much larger than required for deterrence today and that have scant efficacy in dealing with the main contemporary threats to U.S. and global security,” as a 2012 report from Global Zero put it. His first nuclear policy review, finalized in April 2009, thus focused on preventing nuclear proliferation, securing all existing stockpiles (to prevent them from falling into the hands of terrorists and other nonstate actors), and reducing global arsenals. Each element of the policy was designed to reinforce the others: drawing down obsolete arsenals would help foster international cooperation, which the current nuclear powers needed to stand united against new nuclear states



and to secure existing bomb materials. These developments, in turn, would promote a security environment comfortable enough for the current nuclear states to continue reducing their stockpiles.

At first, the new policy seemed to work. In his first two years, Obama negotiated an arms reduction treaty with Russia (New START), spearheaded several UN Security Council resolutions on nuclear weapons, and gathered 50 world leaders in Washington for a Nuclear Security Summit that forged an action plan for securing nuclear stockpiles. In doing this, he rebuilt U.S. credibility and leadership on nuclear issues. In April 2010, *Washington Post* columnist Jim Hoagland wrote that "President Obama has turned the once utopian-sounding idea of global nuclear disarmament into a useful tool for U.S. foreign policy."

But then, toward the end of 2010, Obama's plans stalled as Republicans waged a fierce battle against ratifying New START. The pact was eventually approved, but not until the last day of the Senate's session that December. His staff, complaining about arms control fatigue, urged the president to devote his energies in the next year to other issues, including his own re-election.

As a result, the United States made scant progress on nuclear policy in 2011 and 2012. Even the task of producing presidential guidance to implement the Nuclear Posture Review lagged. (This is the set of instructions the president gives the military to guide it in preparing nuclear war plans and forces. Even small changes in the instructions can result in swings of thousands of warheads in the arsenal.) The drafting dragged on for nearly two years, even though it was supposed to take six months. The Defense Department led the interagency team that finally finished the guidance in the summer of 2012, but the president never signed it. Today, therefore, U.S. nuclear forces are still sized to fight a Soviet foe that disappeared two decades ago.

Now, with re-election behind him, Obama appears determined to finish the job he started. In December, he devoted his first national security speech after the election to nuclear policy. In his remarks, which coincided with the twentieth anniversary of the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program (projects that have led to the disposal of thousands of nuclear weapons and hundreds of tons of bomb materials in former Soviet states), Obama honored the two legislative founders of the initiative, former U.S. Senators Sam Nunn (D-Ga.) and Richard Lugar (R-Ind.). "Missile by missile, warhead by warhead, shell by shell, we're putting a bygone era behind us," Obama promised. "We're moving closer to the future we seek."

To help him in that task, Obama has now forged an experienced nuclear policy team. In December, he tapped former Massachusetts Senator John Kerry to be his next secretary of state. During his years in the Senate, Kerry proved a formidable advocate of nuclear security initiatives, serving, most recently, as an outspoken supporter of New START. Former Nebraska Senator Chuck Hagel -- whom Obama installed as secretary of defense -- also has a notable nuclear policy record: in 2007, he co-authored sweeping nonproliferation legislation with then Senator Obama, and has since led several major reviews of Iran policy and nuclear posture, including the Global Zero study. Vice President Joe Biden, meanwhile, is a master of nuclear treaties and programs from his years on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Finally, if Obama nominates Rose Gottemoeller to stay on as undersecretary for arms control and international security, he will send a crucial signal about his seriousness on new reductions. Gottemoeller negotiated the New START treaty and has already traveled to Moscow to explore a new round of talks.

In the next few months, it is very likely that Obama will deliver another major speech on nuclear policy, perhaps timed to mark the fourth anniversary of his April 2009 Prague address or the 50th of President John F. Kennedy's famous plea for nuclear disarmament in June 1963. That speech will fully articulate Obama's new nuclear strategy, which could, according to reliable press reports, include reductions in deployed strategic warheads from the current 1,720 counted under New START to perhaps 1,000 (a one-third cut below the New START ceiling of 1,550 that goes into effect in 2018). It could also include cutting the number of tactical and reserve weapons by half, from roughly 3,000 to about 1,500. Kerry and Hagel, once firmly in office, may also weigh in with additional recommendations for the address and guidance.



Even after the speech, of course, questions would remain on how to meet these goals: by negotiating a new treaty, by agreeing to reciprocal cuts with Russia, or simply by using executive authority to enact long-overdue adjustments to the U.S. nuclear force. For Obama, the third approach may be the most attractive option. Although the aging Russian strategic arsenal is now smaller than that of the United States (and will fall even further by the end of this decade), Russian officials have balked at new arms talks. They have a long list of concerns that they want the United States to address beforehand, including limitations on U.S. anti-missile programs and NATO's conventional forces. Meanwhile, in Washington, ideological infighting has crippled the Republican Party as a reliable partner in national security discussions and ground government business to a halt. A party split between budget hawks and defense hawks and fueled by a base suspicious of any treaty that might compromise American "sovereignty" has fallen back on blocking proposals rather than shaping policy.

No president should allow another country or a handful of senators to force the United States to keep weapons it does not need and cannot afford. In 1991, President George H.W. Bush cut thousands of nuclear weapons unilaterally, without treaties or agreements of any kind. "The President wanted to take the initiative in arms control," explained Brent Scowcroft, then national security adviser. "He saw intuitively that there was a new world forming, and didn't want to be behind the power curve and be driven either by the Congress and the budget, or by the Pentagon's resistance." President George W. Bush also cut thousands of nuclear weapons unilaterally, including by quietly withdrawing hundreds of tactical weapons from Europe without Russian quid pro quo.

Similarly, Obama could implement the reductions required by New START now, rather than wait until 2018, cutting several hundred from the deployed arsenal. He could also announce that 1,000 strategic warheads are more than enough for a reliable nuclear deterrent, regardless of the size of the Russian force, and delay or cancel plans for new warheads and delivery systems. After all, as the Department of Defense explained in a classified report to Congress last year, Russia "would not be able to achieve a militarily significant advantage by any plausible expansion of its strategic nuclear forces, even in a cheating or breakout scenario."

Even if Obama is more politically cautious than expected, and decides to look for bipartisan consensus on cutting the nuclear stockpile, budget pressures might force the issue. Current plans and programs would require the government to spend hundreds of billions of dollars over the next ten years and every decade thereafter to overhaul its entire nuclear arsenal -- submarines, bombers, missiles, and warheads -- while simultaneously slashing the defense budget. Conventional forces would suffer. As the reality of defense budget cuts sinks in, Congress could lose its appetite for costly nuclear modernization programs. Support for reshaping and reducing the arsenal will thus likely grow.

Democratic leaders in Congress are already there: Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Carl Levin (D-Mich.) has said that the nuclear budget "is ripe for cuts." Representative Adam Smith (D-Wash.), the ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee, said after the president's recent address, "We can reduce the size of our nuclear arsenal, potentially saving billions of dollars and strengthening national security." Now Republican budget hawks have also shown themselves willing to allow the sequester to bite into the defense budget, despite the pleas of their defense-minded colleagues. The libertarian Cato Institute has identified cuts to the nuclear budget that could save almost \$90 billion over the next ten years. Conservative columnist David Brooks notes, "Support for high defense spending is probably decreasing in the Republican Party."

To be sure, major obstacles lie ahead, including recalcitrant regimes in Iran and North Korea, an entrenched nuclear bureaucracy, and fierce Republican opposition. But all the gears are in motion for the development of a sensible, modern nuclear policy, and Obama has the backing of the Joint Chiefs and much of the American security establishment to achieve it. If he succeeds in finally breaking the grip of Cold War thinking on this central pillar of national security, he will leave a legacy that few presidents have matched.

Joseph Cirincione is President of Ploughshares Fund and the author of Bomb Scare: The History and Future of Nuclear Weapons.

<http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/139037/joseph-cirincione/obamas-nuclear-future?page=show>



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Bulletin of the Nuclear Scientists

OPINION

Nuclear Weapons Cuts Will Make the United States Safer

By Kingston Reif

6 March 2013

Nuclear arms control is back. After paying little public attention to the issue over the long course of his reelection campaign, President Obama said in his February State of the Union address that the United States "will engage Russia to seek further reductions in our nuclear arsenals." A recent report by the Center for Public Integrity revealed that senior Obama administration officials believe the United States can reduce its arsenal of deployed strategic warheads to between 1,000 and 1,100 without harming national security. Those numbers would put the total below levels called for by New START, the treaty that limits the United States and Russia to 1,550 deployed warheads apiece. Meanwhile, numerous high-ranking administration officials have met with their Russian counterparts this year. Further arms control measures were likely on the agenda.

Not surprisingly, many congressional Republicans have expressed opposition to further nuclear reductions. They argue that additional cuts would undermine US security and worry that the Obama administration could reduce the national arsenal outside the auspices of a formal treaty approved by the US Senate.

These concerns are misplaced: Further nuclear weapons reductions are squarely in the national interest.

First, as President Obama said in March 2012, "we have more nuclear weapons than we need." Even after New START, he pointed out, the United States would have more than 1,500 deployed nuclear weapons and some 5,000 warheads. Such a large arsenal greatly exceeds any conceivable deterrence requirement and provides Russia with an incentive to maintain a similarly bloated force.

Bilateral reductions below the New START levels would reduce the number of Russian nuclear weapons pointed at the United States. Reductions could also strengthen stability by providing Russian defense planners with less reason to engage in costly worst-case estimates about force requirements. For example, lower US deployed force levels could dissuade Moscow from moving forward with destabilizing nuclear modernization programs -- such as the development of a new heavy intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM). Verifiable limits on reserve warheads and nonstrategic arms would further enhance stability by addressing Russia's large stockpile of such weapons and ensuring that nuclear warheads are actually eliminated as opposed to merely placed in storage.

Maintaining a nuclear posture and force levels that are still largely based on Cold War-era conditions has many costs. As nuclear security and non-proliferation specialist James Doyle has written, "Given the generally positive nature of the US-Russian relationship, the continued competitive mutual nuclear entanglement hinders the development of truly normalised relations." Keeping an excessive arsenal also costs money; \$31 billion per year according to a 2012 study by the Stimson Center. The Pentagon and Energy Department are planning to spend hundreds of billions of dollars over the next decade to build new nuclear delivery systems and warhead-production facilities. Reductions would stem the need for a significant amount of this spending.

Some of those opposed to US nuclear weapons cuts argue that they are irresponsible in light of North Korea's recent missile and nuclear tests and Iran's continued enrichment of uranium. But reducing its number of deployed strategic warheads to 1,000 would leave the United States with far more than enough weapons to deter North Korea, which is believed to possess a total of about 10 nuclear weapons, and Iran, which doesn't have any.

One of the most-repeated arguments against a new round of cuts involves the US nuclear umbrella: Some fear that reducing the American arsenal could cause allies to doubt the US commitment to their defense, thereby tempting them to acquire their own nuclear weapons. However, the continued US maintenance of thousands of nuclear

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weapons is not necessary to deter the nuclear threats our allies face today. Moreover, further arms control could actually benefit US partners: A US-Russia arms control process that addresses Russian nonstrategic nuclear weapons could reduce the threat posed by these weapons to America's Central European and Baltic allies. Likewise, further reductions in the number of US and Russian nuclear weapons could pave the way for future Chinese participation in the arms control process, which in turn would reduce the Chinese nuclear threat to America's East Asian allies.

Another criticism of further arms control contends that it is dangerous, because Russia likely will not come along unless the United States agrees to limitations on missile defense. It is true that Russia has not yet showed much interest in further nuclear weapons reductions, and that, at least publicly, it has linked further cuts to resolution of its concerns about US missile defenses and high-precision conventional strike capabilities.

But Moscow may still have good reasons to engage. As Brookings Institution arms control experts Steve Pifer and Michael O'Hanlon point out, "The US military can with its current force structure easily stay at the New START limits, while the Russian military must build new missiles to do so. Lowering the limits would offer Moscow a chance to save money. Also of interest to the Russians: Putting all weapons on the table would mean constraining reserve strategic warheads, where the U.S. military has a significant numerical advantage."

In an ideal world, the United States and Russia would pursue a new round of nuclear reductions via a treaty that limits not only deployed strategic forces, but also non-deployed and nonstrategic nuclear warheads, which aren't currently limited by any accord. However, the negotiation of such a treaty will be far more time-consuming and complex than the New START negotiations, which lasted about a year. In the meantime, Russia could deploy a new heavy ICBM, the momentum for further cuts could stall, and the two sides could make down payments on modernization plans that lock in excessively high force levels for decades to come.

To avoid these outcomes, the United States could jump start the process by declaring itself willing to reduce its deployed arsenal below the levels in New START if Moscow is willing to reciprocate. It's a step that could save money, reduce Russia's incentive to build a heavy ICBM, and pave the way for formal negotiations on a new treaty that limits all nuclear warheads. Non-treaty-based reductions have been a long-standing feature of US defense policy under both Republican and Democratic presidents.

As they pursue further weapons reductions, the United States and Russia should also pursue confidence-building and transparency measures that establish mutual trust and could be incorporated in future negotiations. Of particular importance are initiatives that address US concerns about Russia's large stockpile of non-strategic weapons and Russia's concerns about US missile defense and high-precision conventional weapons. Projects that might have that effect would include information sharing, joint experiments and studies, and enhanced dialogue.

The pursuit of further nuclear reductions will not be without significant challenges. Russia's willingness to participate remains uncertain and Republican opposition is congealing. Nonetheless, President Obama should make the push he promised in the State of the Union. If he doesn't, he'll pass up a chance to significantly enhance US security.

Kingston Reif is the director of nuclear nonproliferation at the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation. He blogs about nuclear weapons policy at Nukes of Hazard.

<http://www.thebulletin.org/web-edition/columnists/kingston-reif/nuclear-weapons-cuts-will-make-the-united-states-safer>

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The London Daily Telegraph – U.K.

OPINION/Commentary

History Will Never Forgive Us if We Allow Iran to Get Nuclear Weapons. We Must Not Rule Out the Use of Force

Don't listen to Jack Straw: we must keep the military option firmly on the table when it comes to Iran



By James Morris
08 March 2013

Former Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, in his misguided commentary last week, on the latest instalment of negotiations with Iran, claims he has "never been complacent about a nuclear armed Iran". Not only did Mr Straw fail to arrest Iranian progress towards such a dangerous outcome during his tenure, as shown by yet another round of Groundhog Day talks, but his whole argument suggests just such a dangerous complacency; a complacency which has afflicted the British foreign policy establishment for too long.

The ill-timed implication of Mr Straw's piece is that, somehow, Britain is to blame for the obstructiveness of the Iranian regime and their diplomatic posturing. This sort of self-flagellating nonsense has led to other historical mistakes which have ended up as grave threats to Britain's security, such as the policy of appeasement of the 1930s, which failed to recognise the growing threat of Nazi Germany. The comparison is in no way hyperbole. An Islamic regime armed with nuclear weapons in Tehran would be a calamity for the security and interests of the United Kingdom. The Government understands this and, together with our international allies, William Hague, the Foreign Secretary, is leading the search for a diplomatic way to avoid this outcome.

While diplomacy has to be the preferred path, the other argument advanced by Mr Straw and a dwindling number of apologists for Iran is that we should not consider a military option with regards to the Iranian nuclear programme and that, even if they do obtain a nuclear weapon, we should attempt a policy of containment. This is dangerous nonsense, as emphasised by virtually every responsible world leader – including our own Prime Minister and US President Obama.

Containment of a nuclear-armed Iran implies a de facto US nuclear guarantee protecting other countries in the Middle East from attack. To be credible, such a guarantee would require the huge deployment of US – and potentially our own – nuclear firepower to create a deterrent umbrella in the Middle East which would need to be sustained at great cost over a long period of time.

Indeed, a policy of containment would create a dangerous nuclear standoff in the region that has seen the highest number of wars since World War II. Which US or UK citizen would like to see us in a stand-off with Tehran the next time they decide that some tiny Island in the Gulf is rightfully theirs? It is as preposterous as it is gravely dangerous to present it as a responsible policy.

Mr Straw's glib accusations against Israel's prime minister reveal that he underestimates the threat to that country. Benjamin Netanyahu is rightly afraid of an existential threat to his nation. The belittlement, in certain sections of our commentariat, of Iran's threats against Israel is matched only by the faux outrage over Mr Netanyahu's understandable efforts to stand up against them.

With Iranian proxies in Gaza and Lebanon already fighting a campaign of terror against Israel, it is important that the international community recognises Israel's legitimate concerns. For our own sake – and not just because innocent Israeli civilians are now being blown up while on holiday in EU territory – we also need to continue, as this government has done, to pressure our European allies to ban Hizbollah, a powerful terrorist ally of Tehran.

It is probably true that Israel acting alone would only be able to set back Iran's nuclear programme. But capability aside, the geopolitical implications of Israel acting alone are dangerous. A wave of US strikes, however, would almost certainly achieve the objective of halting the programme.

Above all, it would be irresponsible to signal that we will rule out such an option. One can virtually plot Tehran's game of dissimulation during the negotiations process over the last 10 years on a graph. They only come to the table when they know we are serious. The most odious lie told by Tehran – and swallowed by people like Mr Straw – is that the West chose to forgo a grand bargain offered by a gentle, kind Islamic regime interested only in stability in 2003. In reality, of course, here was a regime worried about its very survival because of the overwhelming display of force it had just witnessed next door in Iraq.



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People do not have to be foreign-policy experts to understand that a credible military option focuses minds, and – unlike the dangerous option of containment – decreases the likelihood of military action being necessary. Sometimes a dose of common sense helps even in international affairs.

It goes without saying that a negotiated settlement would be preferable, but it is still unclear what the end-game is, and whether or not the Iranians are interested in one. As such, it is vital that we continue to pressure the Iranian regime through tough and sustained sanctions – and leave the possibility of a military option firmly on the table. The Iranian regime must be under no illusions about our determination and resolve in preventing them from achieving their objective of developing a nuclear weapons capability.

Those of us who understand the grave danger a nuclear Iran would pose – and there are many – should not hesitate to make these sentiments absolutely explicit. History will – eventually – be kind once again to Iran's long-suffering, oppressed people. It will not be so kind to those who should be so foolish to offer their oppressors comfort. But above all it will never forgive those that allowed this most vicious of regimes to arm itself with nuclear weapons.

James Morris is the Conservative Member of Parliament for Halesowen and Rowley Regis.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iran/9917729/History-will-never-forgive-us-if-we-allow-Iran-to-get-nuclear-weapons.-We-must-not-rule-out-the-use-of-force.html>

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