USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER
CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL
MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

Issue No. 1,002, 11 May 2012

Articles & Other Documents:

Featured Article: Britain Must Keep Trident as Other Countries Increase Nuclear Capabilities, Says US Adviser

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Jerusalem Post – Israel

US Wants 'Urgent' Iranian Steps in Nuclear Talks

EU says Tehran must suspend sensitive atomic activities; major powers set to meet in Baghdad in coming weeks.

By REUTERS
May 07 2012

VIENNA - The United States called on Iran on Monday to take "urgent practical steps" to build confidence during nuclear talks with world powers, and the European Union said Tehran must suspend sensitive atomic activities.

Iran and the six powers resumed discussions in mid-April in Istanbul after a gap of more than a year - a chance to ease escalating tension and help to avert the threat of a new Middle East war.

The major powers - the United States, France, Britain, China, Russia and Germany - and Iran are to meet again on May 23 in Baghdad.

"We remain concerned by Iran's persistent failure to comply with its nonproliferation obligations," US envoy Robert Wood told an international nuclear conference in Vienna, attended also by Iran.

"We seek a sustained process that produces concrete results, and call on Iran to take urgent practical steps to build confidence and lead to compliance with all its international obligations," Wood added.

At the same meeting, the 27-nation European Union said in a joint statement that Iran "must suspend" its uranium enrichment activities - something Tehran has repeatedly refused to do.

The West says Iran's nuclear work is a cover for developing atomic bombs and wants verifiable assurances to the contrary from Tehran - for example, by accepting much more intrusive UN inspections and curbing its enrichment capacity.

Israel and the United States have not ruled out military action to prevent Iran from building nuclear weapons if diplomacy fails to resolve the long-running row.

Iran denies having a weapons agenda, saying it is enriching uranium solely for peaceful energy purposes, not for bombs.

The week before the broader political negotiations take place in Baghdad, the UN nuclear agency and Iran will hold a new round of discussions on May 14-15 in Vienna after two meetings earlier this year failed to make any headway.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) wants Iran to address questions raised in a report it issued last November detailing what it said were suspected Iranian research and development activities relevant to making nuclear weapons.

Iran has dismissed the allegations as fabricated.

Western diplomats say Iran appears to be stonewalling an IAEA request for access to a military site, Parchin, where it believes military-related nuclear research may have taken place.

The diplomats say they suspect Iran may be "sanitizing" the site southeast of Tehran of any incriminating evidence before UN inspectors can visit, a suspicion Tehran dismisses.

Wood said: "We are concerned that Iran has not agreed to grant the IAEA access to all relevant sites, information, documents and persons necessary to resolve questions about its nuclear program."

"We stress the urgent need for Iran to reach agreement with the IAEA on a structured approach ... to resolve all outstanding issues," Wood, acting head of the US mission to the Vienna-based IAEA, added.

http://www.jpost.com/IranianThreat/News/Article.aspx?id=268991

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Boston Globe

Mideast Nuclear Conference in Jeopardy

By GEORGE JAHN, Associated Press (AP)
May 8, 2012

VIENNA (AP) — Hopes dimmed Tuesday for staging major nuclear talks later this year between Israel and its Muslim rivals, as Iran and Arab countries at a 189-nation conference accused Israel of being the greatest threat to peace in the region and Egypt warned that Arab states might rethink their opposition to atomic arms.

Because Israel has not signed the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, it was not present at Tuesday's gathering of treaty members. But the United States defended its ally, warning that singling out Israel for criticism diminished chances of a planned meeting between it and its Muslim neighbors to explore the prospect of a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction.

The Mideast conference planned for later this year was a key plank of a monthlong 2010 high-level gathering of treaty signatories that convenes every five years to review the objectives of the 42-year-old treaty. Muslim nations have warned that failure to stage the Mideast meeting would call into question the overall achievements of the 2010 conference.

Egypt, speaking for nonaligned NPT signatory nations — the camp of developing countries — said Israel's nuclear capabilities constitute "a threat to international peace and security."

Later, in his separate capacity as Egypt's delegate, senior Foreign Ministry official Ahmed Fathalla warned that Arab nations might "revise their policies" regarding their opposition to having nuclear weapons if the planned Mideast conference failed to materialize.

Fathalla said he was citing a declaration from the March 29 Arab summit in Baghdad. But a senior U.S. official, who demanded anonymity because he was not authorized to comment to reporters, said it was the first time he had heard that threat.

The senior official also said he was not surprised by the verbal attacks on Israel, noting that outreach by Washington to individual Arab countries for moderation so as to not jeopardize the Mideast conference had been unsuccesful.

Israel is unlikely to attend any hostile Mideast meeting and its absence would strip the gathering of significance, leaving it as little more than a forum for Arab states to further criticize the Jewish state and its undeclared nuclear arsenal.

Israel has remained opaque on its nuclear capabilities but is commonly considered to posess atomic arms — a status that Muslim nations say make it the greatest threat to Mideast stability.

Western allies of Israel disagree, accusing Iran of violating the nonproliferation treaty by noncompliance with U.N. Security Council resolutions demanding it curb uranium enrichment and other activities with nonmilitary applications that could also be used in the manufacture of nuclear weapons. As such, they say, Iran most menaces Mideast stability.

Reacting to a harsh series of attacks on Israel, U.S. State Department envoy Thomas M. Countryman urged Muslim nations to ease their pressure at the Vienna meeting, convened to prepare for the next NPT summit in 2015, telling delegates: "continued efforts to single out Israel ... will make a (Mideast) conference less likely."

He also voiced "deep concern over Iran's persistent failure to comply with its nonproliferation obligations, including ... U.N. Security Council resolutions," and urged Tehran to reduce concerns about is nuclear program by coming to May 23 talks with six world powers in Baghdad "with the same serious and constructive attitude that the six partners bring."

Countryman also criticized Syria — found by the International Atomic Energy Agency to be "very likely" hiding a covert nuclear program — and urged it and Tehran to "return to full compliance" with their treaty obligations.

Iran insists that it has no intention of harnessing its expanding nuclear program into weapons making, a stance repeated Tuesday by Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Mahdi Akhondzadeh. He condemned the "hyprocitic and double standard approach of the United States and the EU member states for keeping "deadly silent on the Israel nuclear program (while) they express baseless concern about Iran's nuclear program."

http://www.boston.com/news/world/europe/articles/2012/05/08/mideast_nuclear_conference_in_jeopardy/?s_campaign=8315

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Jerusalem Post – Israel

Images Show Iran may be 'Washing' Military Site

US-based think tank says images taken of Parchin military complex appear to show items being cleansed outside building suspected to contain explosive chamber used to carry out nuclear weapons related experiments.

By Reuters
May 9, 2012

VIENNA (Reuters) - A U.S. security institute says commercial satellite imagery shows new activity at an Iranian military site which raises concern that the Islamic state may be "washing" a building the United Nations' nuclear agency wants to inspect.

Iran dismissed the report, as it has previously rejected allegations about the Parchin complex, where the United Nations' International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) suspects nuclear weapons-relevant research may have taken place.

"They are joking with our nation," Foreign Ministry spokesman Ramin Mehmanparast was quoted as saying by the Iranian Students' News Agency (ISNA). It is not possible to "wash" nuclear activities, he added.

Iran has yet to allow the IAEA to visit the facility southeast of Tehran, despite repeated requests.

IAEA chief Yukiya Amano reiterated last week that the agency had recently noticed some "activities" there. He gave no details but Western diplomats suspect Iran may be cleaning the site before any inspection. Tehran denies this.

The Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS), a Washington-based think-tank specializing in nuclear proliferation, said it had acquired commercial satellite imagery from April 9 which back up the IAEA's concern.

"The new activity seen in the satellite image occurred outside a building suspected to contain an explosive chamber used to carry out nuclear weapons related experiments," it said on its website in a May 8 report including the satellite image.

Iran's mission to the IAEA has previously dismissed allegations aired about Parchin as "childish" and "ridiculous".

The images showed items lined up outside a building and what appeared to be a stream of water, ISIS said.

"The items visible outside the building could be associated with the removal of equipment from the building or with cleansing it," it said.

US SEES IRANIAN OBSTRUCTION

"The stream of water that appears to emanate from the building raises concerns that Iran may have been washing inside the building, or perhaps washing the items outside the building," ISIS said.

Previous satellite images from recent months did not show any similar activity at the building, indicating it is not a regular occurrence, it added.

The IAEA has said that gaining access to Parchin is a priority when it holds a new round of talks with Iran in Vienna next week after two previous meetings in Tehran failed to make any notable progress.

But Western diplomats said they would be surprised if Tehran granted the request. Iran has suggested a broader agreement on future cooperation with the IAEA must be reached before it will consider letting inspectors into the site.

Western powers suspect Iran is seeking to develop the capability to make nuclear bombs. Iran, one of the world's largest oil producers, says its program is peaceful.

An IAEA report late last year revealed a trove of intelligence pointing to research activities in Iran of use in developing the means and technologies needed to assemble nuclear weapons, should it decide to do so.

One finding in the report was information that Iran in 2000 had built a large containment chamber at Parchin in which to conduct high-explosives tests that the IAEA said are "strong indicators of possible weapon development".

A senior U.S. official said on Tuesday that Iran must cooperate with the IAEA's investigation and provide access to relevant sites, personnel and documents.

"Iran continues to delay and obstruct that process," Thomas Countryman, assistant secretary for international security and nonproliferation, told a meeting in Vienna.

http://www.jpost.com/IranianThreat/News/Article.aspx?id=269289

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Bloomberg News

Iran Working on Nuclear Warhead, Opposition Group Tells Die Welt

By Tony Czuczka
May 11, 2012

Iran is pursuing work on a nuclear warhead, Die Welt said, citing a report by the People's Mujahadeen and a member of the opposition group.

Scientists are carrying out research in a five-floor building in Tehran's Pars neighborhood and conducting testing at Iran's Parchin site, the group said in a report it says is based on information obtained from people within the Iranian government and military, the Berlin-based newspaper said today.

http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-05-11/iran-working-on-nuclear-warhead-opposition-group-tells-die-welt.html

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Yonhap News Agency – South Korea
May 6, 2012

N. Korea Vows to Push Forward with Nuclear, Rocket Programs

SEOUL, May 6 (Yonhap) -- North Korea vowed Sunday to continue to push strongly forward with its nuclear and rocket programs, rejecting an appeal from the five permanent U.N. Security Council members that Pyongyang refrain from any acts escalating tensions.

The council members -- the United States, Britain, China, Russia and France -- issued the joint statement during a nuclear meeting in Vienna last week, urging Pyongyang to "refrain from further actions which may cause grave security concerns in the region, including any nuclear tests."

They also expressed "serious concern" over the North's rocket launch last month.

On Sunday, the North's Foreign Ministry rejected the statement as "a grave illegal action of violating the sovereignty of the DPRK and its right to use space and nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, pursuant to the U.S. hostile policy toward the DPRK."

DPRK is the acronym for the North's official name, Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The ministry also said that the five council members have conducted more nuclear tests and stockpiled more nukes than other countries in the world.

"The DPRK, depending on its nuclear deterrence for self-defense, will firmly protect its sovereignty and dynamically push forward the development of space for peaceful purposes and the industry of nuclear energy and proudly build a thriving nation where its people will fully enjoy prosperity under socialism," it said.

North Korea has long used the term, "nuclear deterrent," to refer to its nuclear arsenal.

yongyang claims its long-range rocket launch was an attempt to put a satellite into orbit, but the liftoff, though a failure, was widely condemned as an attempt to test its ballistic missile technology.

The U.N. Security Council adopted a presidential statement condemning the launch last month.

After the North's failed rocket launch on April 13, concerns have grown that the communist regime could stage additional provocations. Experts have talked of the possibility of a nuclear test, which will be the North's third, as well as more missile tests and border clashes.

In Seoul, Rep. Chung Mong-joon of the ruling Saenuri Party, who has declared his presidential bid, said that he believes there are high chances of fresh armed provocations by North Korea, including a nuclear test, and urged the government to take the situation more seriously.

"North Korea specifically signaled new types of provocations through mass rallies," Chung told a news conference. The North is expected "to carry out its third nuclear test at any time."

http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2012/05/06/60/0301000000AEN20120506002000315F.HTML

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Korea Herald – South Korea

N.K. May Have Aborted Rocket Launch: Expert

May 07, 2012
By Choi He-suk

The flight of North Korea's long-range rocket that failed on April 13 may have been terminated intentionally by the command center, a U.S. rocket expert said.

According to David Wright, co-director of the Global Security Program at the Union of Concerned Scientists, the reason for the failure is unclear from the information provided by South Korean and U.S. authorities and that its flight could have been aborted by the command center shutting down the engines after mechanical failures developed.

"It is also possible that the launch was aborted by the command center before mechanical failure could fully set in," Wright said in an article published on May 4 on the North Korea analysis website 38 North. He added that while it is unclear whether North Korea's command center intentionally caused the failure, there have been reports that the rocket was fitted with a flight termination system.

"It is possible that if … the first stage burned to completion but there was a problem with staging that the North may have aborted the flight at that point."

According to Wright, the disparity in the information provided by the U.S. and Seoul makes it difficult to make informed guesses about the cause of failure.

The U.S. Northern Command said that the first stage of the missile fell into the sea 165 km west of Seoul, while South Korea's Ministry of National Defense stated that debris of the rocket fell in to the West Sea between 100 and 150 kilometers west of Gunsan, North Jeolla Province.

According to Wright's calculations, the area pointed to by the U.S. would be about 300 kilometers from the launch site in Dongchang-ri, North Pyongan Province, indicating that the failure lay within the first stage of the rocket.

Using the data provided by the South, which puts the drop zone about 400 kilometers away from the launch site, the failure is likely to have occurred during the separation of the second stage after the first stage rocket functioned as intended.

With regards to what North Korea would have gained from aborting the launch, Wright speculates that Pyongyang would have gained "little or no information about the performance of several key systems in the upper stages" as the rocket failed too soon after launch.

Wright also argued that while it was not unusual for rocket systems to fail while under development, North Korea's successive failures and the lack of flight testing indicates that Pyongyang's long-range rocket program is "less advanced than widely assumed."

http://www.koreaherald.com/national/Detail.jsp?newsMLId=20120507001282

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Minneapolis Star Tribune

Experts Say even If North Korea Performs 3rd Nuke Test, a Useable Weapon may still be Far Off

By ERIC TALMADGE, Associated Press
May 8, 2012

TOKYO - If getting international attention is North Korea's goal, then there is nothing quite like detonating a nuclear device to make your adversaries sit up and take notice. But experts say North Korea probably has a long way to go before it will be able to actually deploy a nuclear weapon.

While North Korea is adept at getting political mileage out of showy military displays, Pyongyang's attempts to show off its strength are, just as often, reminders of its weaknesses — and a nuclear test would likely fit that pattern.

Fears that such a test may be imminent were heightened last month, when North Korea marked an important anniversary with a long-range rocket launch. Its two previous tests came soon after such launches. Satellite imagery also suggested stepped-up activity at the North's Punggye-ri nuclear testing site.

Little progress at the site has been reported since, which could mean the activity was a ruse or the device is simply not ready yet. It also could mean that the new regime headed by Kim Jong Un, who assumed power after the death of his father in December, is having second thoughts about whether to risk international sanctions by forging ahead.

Sooner or later, however, a test is highly likely.

"The North Koreans clearly value the demonstration effect of nuclear and missile tests, even if the test is only partially successful," said Jeffrey Lewis, of the Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Monterey Institute of International Studies. "North Korea gets a tremendous amount of leverage from our fear that these weapons might work someday."

But he noted that Pyongyang failed miserably in its attempt to launch an ICBM-style rocket last month, then capped off a lavish military parade with the unveiling of a half-dozen ominous-looking new missiles that analysts now believe were low-quality mockups of a design that could never fly.

"They are trying to run before they can walk, with the predictable outcome of tripping," Lewis said.

A test could have two practical goals.

North Korea may be developing devices that use highly enriched uranium, instead of the harder-to-obtain plutonium it has relied on in the past. If so, it needs to try one out and see if it works. Either way, the North has to shrink its warheads down to fit them on a missile — so it needs to test that capability as well.

"There can be a huge difference between a nuclear explosive `device' and a weapon," said Ivan Oelrich, a nuclear weapons consultant and former head of strategic weapons at the Federation of American Scientists. "We have no idea how large North Korea's bombs are, or even whether they have anything that would be described as a `bomb.'"

North Korea's devices are likely along the lines of the first plutonium bomb the U.S. built — Fat Man, which was dropped on Nagasaki in 1945. That bomb was 3 meters (10 feet) long and weighed more than 4.5 tons.

Such a bomb could be loaded on a ship or an airplane, but without significant "miniaturization," which requires difficult technological redesigning, it would be useless as a missile payload.

"A weapon has to be light and compact, a more or less self-contained package," said Oelrich. "To fit on a missile, they would have to be less than a few hundred kilograms (about 600 pounds) and smaller than a cubic meter or two."

Though estimates vary, outside experts say the North has enough plutonium for about four to eight "simple" bombs, more if it can employ uranium. But, so far, North Korea's attempts to demonstrate it has mastered the technology — with tests in 2006 and 2009 — have not been entirely successful.

The first produced a yield of less than 1 kiloton of TNT, and the second was equivalent to only 4 kilotons, both quite small by nuclear standards, though some experts believe North Korea in the second test may have been trying out the smallest device it could put on a missile.

Success or failure, the tests provide an opportunity for North Korea's nuclear scientists to learn valuable lessons. That's why the international community has imposed harsh sanctions after each of its previous underground blasts. But turning those lessons into a viable weapon is no easy task.

"Testing a device underground is relatively easy, as one can initiate the test once everything is in order and verified to be ready," said Michael Elleman, of the International Institute for Strategic Studies. "A military or strategic nuclear weapon must be able to detonate on demand, with little forewarning."

Then there is the other problem — how to deliver it to a target.

South Korea and Japan — and the more than 70,000 U.S. troops based in those countries — are already within range of the North's Nodong weapon, which was test fired in 1993 and can travel up to 1,300 kilometers (800 miles) with a 1,200-kilogram (2,600-pound) payload.

If tipped with nuclear weapons, they would put millions of lives at risk.

But all of North Korea's long-range rocket launches have ended in failure, meaning it is 0-4 since 1998. That has led some experts to doubt whether North Korea, lacking in resources and expertise and hamstrung by stringent international trade sanctions, will ever succeed in fashioning an ICBM of its own.

http://www.startribune.com/world/150554415.html?page=all&prepage=1&c=y#continue

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Mainichi Daily News – Japan

North Korean Nuclear Weapons: How Real Is the Threat?

Associated Press (AP)
May 9, 2012

USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER
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http://mainichi.jp/english/english/newsselect/news/20120509p2g00m0in014000c.html

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Yonhap News Agency – South Korea
May 10, 2012

N. Korea Vows to Bolster Nuclear Deterrent at Any Cost

SEOUL, May 10 (Yonhap) -- North Korea said Thursday that it will further strengthen its nuclear deterrent and other defense capabilities, the latest snub to international calls to give up nuclear and missile programs.

"Our military and people will thoroughly safeguard our dignity and sovereignty by further boosting defense capabilities, including nuclear deterrent, at any cost," the North's Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of Korea said in a comment carried by the country's official Korean Central News Agency.

North Korea has long used the term, "nuclear deterrent," to refer to its nuclear arsenal.

The committee said the North won't be fooled by "temptations" of hostile forces that the North could receive benefits in return for abandoning nuclear programs and suspending missile launches.

The North also rejected suggestion that other countries could launch North Korea's rocket on the North's behalf.

The committee lashed out at South Korea over its recent accusations that the North wasted about $850 million in the failed rocket launch last month. South Korea said the impoverished country should have used the money to buy much-needed food for its 24 million people.

The North claimed the launch was meant to put a satellite into orbit, but South Korea and the United States said it was a cover for testing the North's ballistic missile technology.

The long-range rocket exploded soon after lift-off on April 13 and the U.N. Security Council swiftly condemned the launch.

On Sunday, the North also vowed to continue to push strongly forward with its nuclear and rocket programs.

http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2012/05/10/89/0401000000AEN20120510005300315F.HTML

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China Daily – China

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S. Korean Conservative Heavyweight Urges Return of U.S. Tactical Nuclear Weapons

May 10, 2012
(Xinhua)

SEOUL, May 10 (Xinhua) -- South Korea's ruling party presidential candidate said Thursday the country should redeploy U. S. tactical nuclear weapons to counter growing threat from north of the border.

Chung Mong-joon, a seven-term lawmaker of the Saenuri Party who recently declared himself a presidential candidate, said the country should bring back nuclear weapons on its soil to deter nuclear threats posed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

"There is no reason not to respond in a proportional manner (to the DPRK's military threat),"Chung told a press conference in Seoul, calling Pyongyang a "de facto nuclear power" and a "real security threat."

Responding to concerns that redeploying nuclear weapons would only give Pyongyang a good excuse to develop weapons of mass destruction, Chung said the northern neighbor "does not need an excuse" to go nuclear.

"The threat of a counter-nuclear force may be the only thing that can change North Korea (DPRK)'s perception of South Korea," the conservative heavyweight said, advocating the return of U.S. tactical weapons.

The United States, which has stationed some 28,500 troops in South Korea since the 1950-1953 Korean War ended with a truce, withdrew its nuclear weapons from South Korea in 1991 for arms reduction.

Washington has since repeatedly voiced its commitment to defending South Korea, including keeping the country under its nuclear umbrella.

Former South Korean Defense Minister Kim Tae-young said in 2010 that the country is "considering" reintroducing U.S. tactical weapons, a remark that reignited domestic debates on the issue.

Observers believe Pyongyang could conduct its third nuclear test in the near future following its failed rocket launch last month.

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/xinhua/2012-05-10/content_5877120.html

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New Delhi Television Limited (NDTV) – India

India's Missile Defence Shield Ready: Defence Research and Development Organisation

By Press Trust of India (PTI)
May 06, 2012

New Delhi: India has developed its own missile defence shield which can be put in place at short notice to protect at least two cities, bringing the country at par with an elite group of few nations. The shield, developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), has been tested successfully and an incoming ballistic missile with the range of up to 2,000 kms can be destroyed.

"The Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) shield is now mature. We are ready to put phase one in place and it can be put in very short time," DRDO chief V K Saraswat told PTI in an interview.

He said the shield, as part of phase one of the programme, can be put in place in two cities in the country, where the infrastructure is available. However, the two places have not yet been identified and the selection will be made at the

political level. The DRDO used variants of Prithvi missiles as simulated targets and successfully intercepted missiles in test-firings.

The system was first test-fired in November 2006 elevating India into the elite club of countries to have successfully developed an Anti-ballistic missile system, after United States, Russia and Israel.

"We have carried out six successful launches and demonstrated the capability for 2,000 km targets. We have demonstrated it in two layers that is endo-atmospheric (inside the Earth's atmosphere) and exo-atmospheric (outside the Earth's atmosphere)," Mr Saraswat said.

The DRDO chief said the Indian missile defence system is comparable with the US Patriot 3 system, which was successfully used during the 1990 Gulf War against Iraq.

He said all the elements such as long-range radars and tracking devices, real-time datalink and mission control system required for the missile system have been "realised" successfully.

Under the phase two of the project, the premier defence research agency would upgrade the system to handle ballistic missiles with range of 5,000 km. This phase is expected to be ready by 2016.

The system required for phase-II of the project is being developed, he said, adding that for this purpose, ships are being built from where the target missiles would be launched.

Talking about the advancement of the system, he said the missile defence shield has been "automated" to an extent where human intervention would be required only if the mission has to be aborted.

As part of its efforts to protect itself from enemy missiles, India is developing this two-tier BMD which can intercept enemy missiles at altitudes of 80 km and 150 km.

The DRDO is thinking of intercepting the missiles at higher altitudes as it would give it more response time in case the first attempt is a miss and the second layer of the system can be put into action.

http://www.ndtv.com/article/india/indias-missile-defence-shield-ready-defence-research-and-development-organisation-206946?pfrom=home-otherstories

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The Nation – Pakistan

Pakistan Successfully Test Fires Nuclear Capable Ballistic Missile Hatf-III Ghaznavi

By Independent News Pakistan (INP)
May 10, 2012

Pakistan Thursday conducted a successful training launch of Short Range Ballistic Missile Hatf III (Ghaznavi), which can carry nuclear and conventional warheads to a range of 290 kilometers.

The launch was conducted at the conclusion of the annual field training exercise of Army Strategic Force Command. The exercise was aimed at testing the operational readiness of a Strategic Missile Group.

The field exercise of the ASFC was witnessed by the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Khalid Shameem Wynne, Director General Strategic Plans Division Lieutenant General Khalid Ahmed Kidwai (R), Commander Army Strategic Force Command Lieutenant General Tariq Nadeem Gilani, Commander Karachi Corps Lieutenant General Muhammad Ijaz Chaudhry, Chairman NESCOM Mr Muhammad Irfan Burney, and other senior military officials and scientists.

Addressing the troops in the exercise area, the CJCSC commended the troops on displaying a high standard of proficiency in handling and operating the state of the art weapon system. He said that the nation had developed a

strong nuclear deterrence capability and expected that the officers and men entrusted with the task of deterring aggression would continue to train hard and maintain professional excellence. He said that Pakistan's Armed Forces were fully capable of safeguarding Pakistan's security against aggression.

The successful test has also been warmly appreciated by the President and Prime Minister of Pakistan, who have congratulated the participating ASFC troops, the scientists and the engineers on their outstanding success.

It should be mentioned that two weeks ago Pakistan test-fired an intermediate range ballistic missile, seen as a response to India's launch of its new long-range Agni V, capable of hitting targets anywhere in China.

Defence analysts say India's strategic priorities are moving away from Pakistan to focus more on China, while Pakistan is still worried about its old foe.

http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/national/10-May-2012/pakistan-successfully-test-fires-nuclear-capable-ballistic-missile-hatf-iii-ghaznavi

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Voice of Russia – Russia

Putin Back in Control of Russia's Nuclear Button

May 07, 2012
By Agence France-Presse (AFP)

Russia's newly sworn-in President Vladimir Putin Monday was handed the black suitcase that controls the country's vast nuclear arsenal moments after taking his oath to a third term, Interfax reported.

The Kremlin ceremony of passing the "nuclear suitcase" from outgoing leader Dmitry Medvedev to Putin was overseen by Russian Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov, the news agency reported.

The portable communications device uses a secret code called Cheget to allow the country's commander-in-chief to launch commands that could potentially trigger a nuclear attack against a foreign country.

The system was developed in 1983 and first used by former Soviet leader Konstantin Chernenko in 1984, the news agency said.

Widely seen as a relic of the Cold War standoff between Moscow and Washington, the suitcase accompanies the Russian president on all his foreign trips.

Although always remaining in the president's possession, it was briefly passed on to late Russian prime minister Viktor Chernomyrdin in October 1996 when former leader Boris Yeltsin underwent a heart bypass operation.

Medvedev held on to it for four years after taking over the presidency from Putin, whose first two terms stretched between 2000 and 2008.

http://english.ruvr.ru/2012_05_07/74040423/

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

Russia to Adopt New Liquid Heavy ICBM after 2022 - Expert

08 May 2012

Russia will only be able to adopt a new 100-ton liquid-propellant intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) intended to penetrate the US missile defense system by 2022, the manufacturer said on Tuesday.

Russian military mentioned the possibility of the new ICBMs in 2009 but the official decision to launch development of the new silo-based missile designed to replace the Voyevoda R-36M2 Satan ICBM was only announced late last year.

"Statistics says it will take about ten years," said Andrei Goryaev, deputy director of the Russian missile maker NPO Mashinostroyeniya.

He said it was hard to make any forecasts about the timeframe. "If the country has not done it for 30 years then difficulties are inevitable," he said.

Strategic Missile Forces chief Lt. Gen. Sergei Karakayev said in December that Russia's current solid-propellant ICBMs might be unable to penetrate U.S. missile defenses that the country is deploying in Europe to protect against possible attacks from 'rogue states' such as Iran and North Korea.

Russia has expressed concerns that the U.S. missile shield might threaten its national security.

Presently, Russia's Strategic Missile Forces reportedly have over 400 ICBMs, including 171 Topol (SS-25), 70 Topol-M (SS-27), and three RS-24 Yars missiles.

MOSCOW, May 8 (RIA Novosti)

http://en.ria.ru/mlitary_news/20120508/173310124.html

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RT – Russia

'US Outer Space Missile Defense Is Mission Impossible'

10 May 2010
By Robert Bridge, RT

As US officials reopen the debate on placing elements of the country's global missile defense system in space, one Russian analyst says it would always be possible to breach such out-of-this-world defenses.

The United States cannot build an absolutely invulnerable missile defense system even if it deploys some of its elements in outer space, says Yury Zaitsev, an academic advisor of the Russian Academy of Engineering Sciences.

"Even a brief review of possible measures to neutralize such a comprehensive missile defense system shows that it is absolutely unnecessary to fully destroy it," Zaitsev said, commenting on American plans to build a global missile defense system. *"It is enough to make a breach in [the missile defense system] by affecting its most vulnerable elements, [thereby] delivering a retaliatory strike powerful enough to be unacceptable to an aggressor."*

"Apart from the need to resolve difficult technical problems, an efficient missile defense system with its attack elements deployed in space will require broad application of various space systems performing support functions," he said.

"These are missile detection, global positioning, communications, control and other systems," he added.

US military officials have once again introduced the idea of deploying interceptor missiles in outer space because, according to the leading Russian academic, they understand that any ground-based missile defense system will be unable – even in the distant future – of protecting the country from ballistic missiles, especially those armed with multiple warheads.

In early 2007, China upped the space ante when it destroyed a disabled weather satellite with a ground-based medium-range ballistic missile. Several countries, including the United Kingdom and the US, expressed concern that the test could trigger a space arms race as nations rush to protect their space-based assets.

Zaitsev recalled the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) pursued under former US President Ronald Reagan, which envisioned the deployment of 432 satellites traveling along 24 orbits, 18 satellites in each, carrying interceptor missiles with self-targetable warheads.

"This is more than the current number of all US satellites in orbit, both military and civilian, which have been created for decades," Zaitsev said.

Another mulled US project involved the deployment of 108 orbital stations armed with chemical lasers, each costing about $1 billion, he said.

"It is known that this project did not materialize either, if only because the Americans have not had and will not have launch vehicles capable of delivering units weighing hundreds of tons to orbits passing half a thousand kilometers away from Earth," he said.

At present, the United States, which conducted its final space shuttle mission in July 2011, is dependent upon Russia for satellite and manned voyages into outer space.

In 1967, the United States and the Soviet Union signed the Outer Space Treaty, which prohibits signatories from placing nuclear weapons or any other weapons of mass destruction in outer space.

http://rt.com/politics/us-missile-defense-space-russia-923/

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

American Hypersonic Weapons 'Threat to Russia' - Rogozin

11 May 2012

American research into hypersonic weapons, which the U.S. aims to complete by 2015, represents an especially serious threat to Russia, acting Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin said on Friday.

"This breakthrough decision by the U.S. opens up for them the prospect of a transition from a demonstrator prototype to creation of a multirole hypersonic missile by 2015-2018," Rogozin said during a visit to the Raduga "Bereznyak" state-owned missile design bureau at Dubna in the Moscow Region.

Rogozin, who has responsibility in the Russian government for the military-industrial complex, picked out American development work in the X-51, Falcon, HiFire and HyFly programs as examples of the perspective threat posed by U.S. hypersonic development work.

"The undertaking of this work allows us to lay the basis for creation of a national competitor in hypersonic weapons," he said.

Development of such a weapon should be discussed at the highest levels of state, he said.

Earlier this year India announced a joint project with Russia's NPO Mashinostroeniye missile producer to build a hypersonic successor to its BrahMos supersonic cruise missile.

Raduga and NPO Mashinostroeniye both carried out research work in hypersonic weapons during the Soviet era but did not produce a working weapon.

DUBNA, May 11 (RIA Novosti)

http://en.ria.ru/world/20120511/173391392.html

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London Telegraph – U.K.

USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER
CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL
MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

Britain Must Keep Trident as Other Countries Increase Nuclear Capabilities, Says US Adviser

Britain must keep its Trident missile system in a world in which other countries are increasing their nuclear capabilities, according to a former senior official in the US government.

By Martin Beckford, Home Affairs Editor
10 May 2012

Franklin Miller, who served as an adviser to George W Bush and sat on the National Security Council, told a meeting in Parliament that as a country with global interests Britain could not give up on its nuclear deterrent.

He argued that updating the Trident system based on submarines would be the most cost-effective option as the alternative would be Britain developing and building new types of warheads. He said that the submarines must remain on patrol as they would become targets if they were kept in port.

Mr Miller spoke to the Henry Jackson Society think-tank in London on Wednesday night as debate continues over whether or not Britain should spend as much as £15billion to £20bn on the Trident successor programme.

Currently Britain's nuclear arsenal consists of four Vanguard-class submarines based at Faslane on the Gare Loch while their missiles and warheads are stored at the nearby base of Coulport on Loch Long.

Although the fleet has years of use left, developing a replacement could take decades and so a decision on its future cannot be put off indefinitely.

The Liberal Democrats had previously called for Trident to be scrapped but as part of the Coalition Agreement with the Conservatives, the party agreed it could be replaced but must provide "value for money".

The issue has been further complicated by the possibility of Scotland becoming independent, as experts believe the country's naval depot is "unique" and so the missiles would have to remain despite opposition from the Scottish National Party.

Speaking to *The Daily Telegraph* before his speech in a Commons committee room, Mr Miller said: "The first thing is to remind people that nuclear weapons are going to continue to be a feature and an influence on the world for a long time to come.

"Unlike the US or the UK which have reduced the role of nuclear weapons in their security policy, others continue to emphasise nuclear weapons."

He said that France, China, India, Pakistan and North Korea all have growing programmes but singled out Russia's nuclear ambitions and "sabre-rattling".

"They've put nuclear weapons at the very heart of their security policy," routinely flying strategic bombers into other countries' airspace and threatening governments that would host US bases.

Mr Miller, who now works for the Scowcroft Group business advisory firm in Washington, went on: "In this kind of world the UK is going to need a nuclear deterrent. As a country with global interests, the UK does need its own deterrent."

He said that continuing with the Trident programme would be the least expensive and best value for money option.

By contrast, the supposedly cheaper idea of putting long-range cruise missiles on Astute class submarines would not work because the US Tomahawk missiles have been retired and so Britain would have to develop, test and build its own alternative.

"The current policy of having one submarine always at sea needs to be sustained because if a submarine is not at sea it's simply a target for pre-emption.

"If you don't have submarine at sea all the time you have signalled that nuclear deterrent is not an important issue."

He admitted that nuclear weapons are not an "all-purpose deterrent", in response to claims that they cannot deal with a terrorist threat.

But Mr Miller insisted that the nuclear deterrent must be more than symbolic and does affect how states behave, pointing out that major wars were more common before 1945.

"The very fashionable notion that the nuclear deterrent doesn't modify great power behaviour, is great cocktail party talk in the foreign policy salons here and in Washington, but they don't say that in Moscow and they don't say that in Beijing."

http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/defence/9255397/Britain-must-keep-Trident-as-other-countries-increase-nuclear-capabilities-says-US-adviser.html

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Bloomberg News

Bomber Should Be Nuclear-Ready from Start, Lawmakers Say

By Roxana Tiron
May 9, 2012

House lawmakers pressed the U.S. Air Force to ensure its planned new bomber can carry nuclear weapons as soon as it is operational.

The House Armed Services Committee approved a nuclear-ready requirement for the bomber today as it began acting on the defense authorization measure to set spending targets and military policy for the fiscal year starting Oct. 1.

President Barack Obama's revised military strategy calls for development of a new long-range stealth bomber even as the Pentagon seeks about $490 billion in reductions over a decade. The bomber is part of the administration's goal to have weapons able to reach areas far from bases and where "our access and freedom to operate are challenged," according to the strategy released in January.

The aircraft will be the first new bomber design since Northrop Grumman Corp. (NOC) was awarded the contract for the B-2 in 1981. The Air Force plans to spend $6.3 billion through 2017 on developing the next bomber.

The Air Force expects to begin using the new bomber in the mid-2020s. While the service envisions the bomber carrying nuclear weapons eventually, House members want that possibility sooner. The Air Force would have to certify the bomber to use nuclear weapons no later than two years after it reaches initial operating capability.

http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-05-09/bomber-should-be-nuclear-ready-from-start-lawmakers-say.html

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The Hill
DEFCON Hill Blog

Armed Services Panel Backs East Coast Missile Defense Site

By Jeremy Herb
May 9, 2012

The House Armed Services Committee rejected Democratic attempts Wednesday to kill a proposal for a new East Coast missile defense site.

The committee defeated an amendment from Rep. John Garamendi (D-Calif.) that would have stripped the provision from the Defense authorization bill 28-33 on a near party-line vote. Two Republicans, Rep. Walter Jones (R-N.C.) and Chris Gibson (R-N.Y.), joined Democrats to back the measure.

Republicans' inclusion of $100 million to start planning for a third U.S. missile interceptor site by 2015 in this year's Defense authorization bill was criticized by Democrats, who say it's a political move that the Pentagon does not want.

Strategic Forces subcommittee ranking member Loretta Sanchez (D-Calif.) said in a statement after the vote she was "frustrated" that Republicans "have directed hundreds of millions of dollars to an un-required missile defense system that our own military leaders have clearly stated they do not want."

Rep. Michael Turner (R-Ohio), chairman of the Strategic Forces subcommittee, said the site was necessary to prepare for a growing threat from Iran and North Korea.

The issue generated some of the most heated debate during the day-session of the committee's marathon mark-up, which is expected to last until early Thursday morning.

Turner cited Obama's "hot mic" incident with in March with then-Russian President Dmitry Medvedev in claiming that Congress had to push forward on missile defense because president was not. But Democrats argued he and the Republicans were merely trying to paint the president as weak on national security.

A host of other missile-defense amendments from Sanchez and other Democrats were voted down by the committee, including attempts to limit funds for ground-based interceptors and eliminating a section that would limit funds on the Obama administration's European missile defense program.

The committee adopted a 48-page amendment from Turner that limits funding for the implementation of the New START treaty with Russia.

http://thehill.com/blogs/defcon-hill/policy-and-strategy/226563-armed-services-panel-backs-east-coast-missile-defense-site

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Reuters – U.S.

U.S. Downs Test Missile with New Interceptor

By Jim Wolf
Thursday, May 10, 2012

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - U.S. forces said they had destroyed a target in the first successful test of the Navy's newest anti-missile interceptor, designed to protect allies from attacks by countries like North Korea and Iran.

A target ballistic missile was downed near Hawaii late on Wednesday by the latest Raytheon Co-built Standard Missile-3 interceptor, the Pentagon's Missile Defense Agency (MDA) said.

The advanced interceptor is key to the next phase of an anti-missile shield being built by the United States in and around Europe.

The United States plans to deploy increasingly capable SM-3 versions up to around 2020 to boost defenses against missiles that could be fired by Iran and North Korea.

"Initial indications are that all components performed as designed," the agency said in an emailed statement.

The interceptor, called the SM-3 Block 1B, had failed to knock out its target in its maiden intercept test in September. This led to a continuing delay in Raytheon's production.

The shield under construction in Europe involves ground- and ship-based hardware as well as space-based sensors.

The SM-3 IB interceptor is due to be deployed on land in Romania by 2015 in the second stage of President Barack Obama's "phased adaptive" approach to missile defense. It will also be used on ships equipped with Lockheed Martin Corp's "Aegis" anti-missile combat system.

The Aegis system, named after the mythological shield that defended Zeus, ties together sensors, computers, displays, weapons launchers and weapons.

A total of 27 specially equipped Aegis warships are set up for ballistic missile defense - 23 in the U.S. Navy and four in the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force, according to Lockheed Martin, the Pentagon's No. 1 contractor by sales.

In the drill on Wednesday, a short-range ballistic target missile was launched from the Pacific Missile Range Facility, located on Kauai, Hawaii, MDA said.

The interceptor came from the USS Lake Erie, an Aegis cruiser that tracked the target and sent flight-path information to the SM-3 Block IB in-flight.

This set up a collision with a warhead, released by the SM-3, that destroyed the target by the force of impact known as "hit to kill," the MDA statement said.

Richard Lehner, an MDA spokesman, declined to say whether the test included countermeasures such as decoys that an enemy likely would use to try to overwhelm the defense.

"We don't divulge presence of countermeasures for any missile defense tests," he said in an email.

Critics such as Tom Collina, research director at the private Arms Control Association, maintain that intercept tests cannot show whether a system would work in the real world unless countermeasures are included.

Compared with the current SM-3 model, the new version features an improved target seeker, an advanced signal processor and better controls for adjusting its course.

Two more tests of the new version are scheduled to take place this year. Missile production decisions "will be made based upon system performance in any or all of the tests," Lehner said.

Riki Ellison, a prominent missile-defense advocate with close ties to military forces involved in the project, said the test on Wednesday could be viewed as a scenario involving North and South Korea. In this case, it could be a U.S. Aegis ship from the 7th fleet deployed in the Sea of Japan that would defend the South and the U.S. troops located there.

The latest test marked the 22nd successful intercept in 27 flight test attempts for the Aegis program, MDA said. It was the 53rd successful hit-to-kill intercept in 67 flight test attempts since the integrated system began development in 2001, according to MDA.

The latter number includes tests of components known as the Ground-based Midcourse Defense, Terminal High Altitude Area Defense and PATRIOT Advanced Capability-3 as well as the Aegis drills.

Reporting By Jim Wolf; Editing by Andrew Heavens

http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/05/10/us-usa-missile-idUSBRE8490CY20120510

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Foreign Policy
The Cable Blog

House Pushes Obama Administration to Consider Tactical Nukes in South Korea

By Josh Rogin
Thursday, May 10, 2012

Frustration with North Korea's ongoing nuclear weapons and missile programs has pushed Congress to reopen the debate in Washington over whether the United States should reintroduce tactical nuclear weapons in South Korea.

The House Armed Services Committee adopted an amendment to the fiscal 2013 national defense authorization bill that supports "steps to deploy additional conventional forces of the United States and redeploy tactical nuclear weapons to the Western Pacific region," and mandates that Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Defense Secretary Leon Panetta submit a report on the feasibility and logistics of redeploying forward-based nuclear weapons there, "in response to the ballistic missile and nuclear weapons developments of North Korea and the other belligerent actions North Korea has made against allies of the United States."

The amendment, sponsored by Rep. Trent Franks (R-AZ), was approved by a vote of 32-26, with all Republicans, except for Rep. Randy Forbes (R-VA), and two Democrats in favor. It comes only weeks after another committee member, Rep. Mike Turner (R-OH), demanded the administration investigate North Korea's apparent acquisition of Chinese-made mobile ICBM launchers.

"We in the last many years have appealed to China to help us negotiate with North Korea to bring them in line in the quest for peace in the world... In fact, China has now embarked on selling nuclear components to North Korea," Franks said at at the committee's Wednesday markup. "Consequently it's become time for us as a nation to look to our deterrent and our ability to take care of ourselves and work with our allies to do everything we can to deter and to be able to defend ourselves against any future belligerence or threats from North Korea."

The United States stockpiled nuclear weapons in South Korea for 33 years before President George H.W. Bush removed them in 1991 as part of his effort to withdraw all overseas tactical nukes, except a few in NATO countries. Since then, every so often South Korean politicians raise the idea of reintroducing them as a response to North Korean aggression.

One senior South Korean politician argued this week that North Korea's ongoing belligerence justified a new discussion about the issue.

"There is no reason not to respond in a proportional manner [to the DPRK's military threat]," Conservative Party lawmaker and presidential candidate Chung Mong-joon said in a press conference in Seoul on Thursday. "The threat of a counter-nuclear force may be the only thing that can change North Korea's perception of South Korea."

In early 2011, the White House WMD Czar Gary Samore told a South Korean reporter that the U.S. would be willing to deploy tactical nukes to South Korea, after which the White House quickly backpeddled Samore's remarks and insisted the issue was not under discussion.

"Our policy remains in support of a non-nuclear Korean peninsula," Robert Jensen, deputy spokesman for the National Security Council, told Yonhap News Agency after the Samore comments. "There is no plan to change that policy. Tactical nuclear weapons are unnecessary for the defense of South Korea and we have no plan or intention to return them."

Josh Rogin reports on national security and foreign policy from the Pentagon to Foggy Bottom, the White House to Embassy Row, for The Cable.

http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/05/10/congress_pushes_obama_administration_to_consider_tactical_nukes_in_south_korea

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Atlanta Journal-Constitution

AP Source: Feds Investigate Leak in Terrorism Case

By PETE YOST, Associated Press
Wednesday, May 9, 2012

WASHINGTON — Federal investigators are conducting a probe into who leaked information about an al-Qaida plot in which an explosive device was to have been detonated on a U.S.-bound airline flight, a law enforcement official said Wednesday.

The official spoke on condition of anonymity about the leak investigation, which is just getting under way.

The federal investigation is the latest move in an aggressive campaign by the Obama administration to crack down on leaks, even as it has supported proposed legislation that would shield reporters from having to identify their sources. The administration has already brought at least six criminal cases against people for discussing government secrets with reporters, more than under any previous presidency.

The investigation follows stories by The Associated Press and other news organizations disclosing the terrorist operation by the group known as al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula.

The reports said that al-Qaida had completed a sophisticated new, nonmetallic underwear bomb last month and that the would-be suicide bomber actually was a double agent working with the CIA and Saudi intelligence agencies.

The would-be suicide bomber secretly turned over the group's most up-to-date underwear bomb to Saudi Arabia, which gave it to the CIA. Before he was whisked to safety, the spy provided intelligence that helped the CIA kill al-Qaida's senior operations leader, Fahd al-Quso, who died in a drone strike last weekend.

In an appearance Wednesday before the House Judiciary Committee, FBI Director Robert Mueller said the FBI is examining the explosive device. He said the scheme hatched in Yemen demonstrates that it's essential for Congress to reauthorize counterterrorism tools enacted in 2008. Some of these programs expire at year's end.

A spokesman for the AP, Paul Colford, said in a statement that the news organization "acted carefully and with extreme deliberation in its reporting on the underwear bomb plot and its subsequent decision to publish."

"As the AP has reported, we distributed our exclusive report on the underwear bomb only after officials assured us — on Monday — that their security concerns had been satisfied and we learned that the White House would announce the news the next day," Colford said.

http://www.ajc.com/news/nation-world/ap-source-feds-investigate-1434666.html

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency
OPINION/Analysis

European Missile Defense System as a New Iron Curtain

04 May 2012
By RIA Novosti military commentator Konstantin Bogdanov

An international conference on missile defense in Europe opened in Moscow on May 3. Washington and Moscow – the event's major players – are still unable to find common ground: Russia insists that the missile defense system in Europe poses a threat, and the West deliberately shrugs off these concerns. The Russian General Staff is prepared to take strong measures to make its voice heard.

Old words, new font

Both sides continued to recite their monologues in a vacuum. Russia highlights the threats presented by U.S. missile defense programs, while Washington pretends not to understand what Moscow is talking about.

In response, the Russian military are deliberately heating up what could have been a discussion if at least some formal features of a dialogue were present. Chief of Staff and Army General Nikolai Makarov reiterated that Russia could use its conventional (and other) weapons against U.S. missile defense facilities deployed at its border "if the situation deteriorates."

The deployment of new offensive weapons in southern and northwestern Russia, including the deployment of an Iskaner missile system in the Kaliningrad Region, is one way to destroy the missile defense infrastructure in Europe," Makarov said.

There's nothing shocking in the general's comments at the conference: The rhetoric about using military force (including Iskander missiles) against the U.S. missile defense system in Europe has been on display for over a year now. President Dmitry Medvedev himself made this threat in no uncertain terms in November 2011.

But this time, rather that issuing unsubstantiated threats about "appropriate measures," the Russian delegation briefed the conference participants about the reasons for their concerns that explain their violent reaction.

Apocalypse in a slideshow

Deputy Chief of Staff Colonel-General Valery Gerasimov (appointed Commander of the Central Military District just a week ago) showed the audience visual images of simulated missile launches from Russia if the Americans deploy their new information systems and weapons that work together with components of the national missile defense system in Alaska's Fort Greely and the Californian base Vandenberg.

The findings by the Russian General Staff members were designed to boldly underline the dangers inherent in the U.S. global missile defense system.

The Russian military showed a sense of humor during the demonstration: Iranian missiles flying over Europe in a hypothetical attack against the United States were not intercepted by the U.S. missile defense system in Europe; or rather they were intercepted together with Russian missiles launched from European Russia, which seems to contradict the assertions of the Americans.

In a joint system, Russian advanced systems that have characteristics similar to their U.S. counterparts and are deployed in southern Russia, could intercept such threats coming from Iran. However, our friends from NATO are not willing to move forward and integrate our missile defense systems, Russian generals say.

The simulation didn't show signs that the Russian missiles headed toward the U.S. territory were totally vulnerable. However, the simulation offered a good demonstration of the technical capabilities of U.S. missile defense against them (from different angles). The question of the vulnerability of combat patrols performed by Russian missile submarines was raised as well. So the main concerns of the Russian military were outlined rather graphically, inviting the opponents to bargaining.

In this regard, the response by Deputy Secretary General of NATO Alexander Vershbow is particularly noteworthy for its lack of focus. Stating his fundamental disagreement with the findings of the Russian General Staff, Vershbow said that Russia still had a lot of nuclear missiles, which are guaranteed to overcome the U.S. missile defense system, if need be.

Anyway, this system, Vershbow went on to say, was directed against single launches of imperfect ballistic missiles and, of course, nothing can stand in the way of a massive nuclear strike by modern Russian strategic nuclear forces.

U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defense Madelyn Creedon repeated the same points, extolling the power and technical excellence of Russian missile forces, which can break through the American missile defense system even in the long-term perspective, because, as she stressed at every opportunity, it is not directed against Russia's deterrent capabilities in the first place.

If this is the case, then there's nothing to bargain about: "We will not accept any restrictions either in terms of the number of missiles or the capabilities of this system [missile defense]," Creedon added.

The danger is the wall, not the bricks

Tactfully, the Americans perhaps failed to notice the main point in the remarks of Colonel-General Gerasimov about the close integration of information and weapon systems of both national and European components of the U.S. global

missile defense system in real time. Moreover, Creedon pointedly emphasized that she will be looking at America's national missile defense system separately from the European one, since they are different projects with different objectives.

The synergy effect of the American plan lies exactly in the close interaction of distributed components. Its individual building blocks do not pose a threat to Russia's retaliatory capability, but when they come together to form a wall they create a totally different defensive capability. The Iron Curtain between the East and the West may descend again, but this time it will be more technologically advanced.

The potential flexibility of this shared network of information and weapon systems (including mobile and space ones, both existing and prospective) forces us to address this antimissile shield with all seriousness. Today, and even tomorrow, it will not threaten Russia's strategic nuclear forces in any way, but who can guarantee what's going to happen in the long run? What means of destruction could be easily integrated into the U.S. global defense system 10-20 years from now?

So far, even such a representative international forum as this Moscow conference has failed to establish at least some common ground on the issue, which is setting off a new nuclear arms race right before our eyes.

The views expressed in this article are the author's and may not necessarily represent those of RIA Novosti

http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20120504/173229692.html

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Korea Times – South Korea
OPINION/Op-Ed
May 06, 2012

Uranium or Plutonium?

By Andrei Lankov

It seems likely that the third North Korean nuclear test will take place soon — perhaps, in a matter of days or weeks. There are signs of preparation at the test site, and it would fit into a well-established pattern: a test of a long-range rocket is usually followed by a nuclear test.

In July 2006, North Korea launched Taepodong-2, the largest of its long-range missiles (it exploded shortly after liftoff), and then tested a nuclear device that October. In 2009, the pattern was repeated. In April, a Taepodong-2 was launched and in May the second nuclear test took place.

Perhaps the most interesting question that analysts, spies and scientists will try to answer is what the exact type of device used in the test would be. It makes a big difference whether they test a plutonium device, as they have done twice before, or if this time we will see the first test of a uranium one. There is a major difference between the two.

Plutonium occurs naturally only in tiny quantities and hence has to be produced artificially in a nuclear reactor where it is a normal byproduct of nuclear fission. However, a nuclear reactor is a large machine which cannot possibly be hidden by the prying eyes of satellites.

If the outside world knows the technical details of the reactor, it is possible to guess its total plutonium output, from when the reactor became operational. Analysts believe that North Korea's nuclear reactors have produced between 30 and 50 kilograms of weapons-grade plutonium (enough for five to 10 nuclear bombs).

Uranium is different. Highly-enriched uranium (HEU), which is used in nuclear weapons, is produced by enriching uranium ore. There are different technologies but most of the time a cascade of centrifuges is used, with each centrifuge in the cascade producing a more concentrated product.

Unlike unwieldy reactors, such cascades are relatively easy to hide from satellites and reconnaissance planes. There is no way to be sure that all the centrifuge cascades have been located. Therefore it is difficult to estimate the size of stockpiles of HEU in a given country, and this means that HEU is remarkably more dangerous when it comes to proliferation.

In North Korea, the plutonium program began in the 1960s. However, North Korea's nuclear reactors were shut down in the 1990s. North Korea does not currently produce plutonium.

It seems that North Korea began to advance its HEU production program in the late 1990s, if not earlier. The existence of the program became known to the United States and was the major factor which triggered the 2002 diplomatic crisis.

For a while, North Koreans denied the existence of the program, but in November 2010, they showed large HEU production facilities to a visiting US delegation. Siegfried Hecker, former director of the Los Alamos Laboratories, was proudly shown around North Korea's new state-of-the-art facilities, seemingly with as many as 2,000 centrifuges.

He was not allowed to stay long enough to ascertain whether the facilities were fully functional, therefore the actual scale may be significantly smaller than Dr. Hecker's hosts implied. But it might just be larger, too: an HEU program is very easy to decentralize and there is no reason why the North might not have more facilities elsewhere.

Experts agree that it is sometimes possible to distinguish between a uranium and plutonium test. At this stage, we cannot be certain which materials the North might use. If they test another plutonium device, it could be seen merely as a provocative waste of valuable resources. The test would amount to a waste of 5 kilograms of precious plutonium, which is not in abundant supply and no longer produced locally.

The political effect of a uranium test would be rather different. The implications of such a test are that the North is able to produce uranium in sufficient quantities to make nuclear devices. Uranium being so much easier to make secretly, this will produce a far more negative international reaction.

This is exactly what the North Korean leadership wants. Like the nuclear and missile program in general, the test is designed to achieve two strategic objectives. First, it should demonstrate North Korea's nuclear capability, in order to deter hostile powers. Second, it should provide a serious incentive to foreign powers to negotiate with the North about dismantling and/or freezing the program in exchange for a large fee.

Indeed it is possible that from before its inception, the HEU program was made to be sold. The North is likely to freeze and even dismantle it, on the condition of a big pay off and if they are allowed to maintain their existing stock piles of weapons-grade plutonium (thus ensuring that they will have enough leverage for diplomatic blackmail as well as sufficient power of deterrence).

So, will it be uranium or plutonium? We may well know the answer soon.

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http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2012/05/304_110408.html

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Arms Control Wonk
OPINION/Blog

Are We Winning or Losing?

By Michael Krepon
6 May 2012

Are we winning or losing the battle against proliferation? This simple question does not have a simple answer because bad headlines mask quiet progress.

Since the 1960s, reports on the status of proliferation have almost always been pessimistic. It doesn't pay to wear rose-colored glasses in this business, since optimistic projections can lead to broken careers. Besides, there is usually ample reason for pessimism because the hardest cases overshadow modest gains. One example: more countries are signing up to the Additional Protocol, but Iran still restricts access at suspect sites.

And yet, deeply pessimistic proliferation forecasts do not have a good track record. The long view usually turns out to be more positive than snapshots of problem cases. A recently declassified State Department cable, courtesy of the Nation Security Archive and the Wilson Center's Nuclear Proliferation History Project, is illustrative. This cable, dated June 6, 1979, focuses on Pakistan's determined, clandestine quest for the Bomb, and its likely repercussions for India and beyond. It warns that US nonproliferation policy "could collapse under the weight of two additional nuclear weapon states" – a common projection back then. The NPT regime has managed to survive negative developments on the subcontinent, thanks to the determined efforts of its protectors and positive trends on other fronts.

True to form, most assessments of the contemporary state of nuclear danger are pessimistic, with worries that the NPT regime could collapse under the weight of unchecked Iranian and North Korean nuclear programs. President Obama and Governor Romney have both said that an Iranian bomb will lead to a nuclear cascade. William Walker's new book, A Perpetual Menace (2012) concludes with a warning that the NPT regime may be "heading for the rocks." Francois Heisbourg, in a paper written for the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center ("Nuclear Proliferation – Looking Back, Thinking Ahead: How Bad Would the Further Spread of Nuclear Weapons Be?" dated April 4, 2012), concludes that, "There are strong and mutually reinforcing empirical and logical reasons" that explain why the future of proliferation will be more bleak than the past. He points to "a nuclear arc-of-crisis from the Mediterranean to the Sea of Japan" that would, at best, back-peddle the NPT regime to the 1970s and at worst, foreshadow its breakdown. To support his analysis, Heisbourg points to illicit supply networks, technical trends simplifying enrichment, and black swan events.

In contrast, Jacques E.C. Hymans offers an optimistic view in "Botching the Bomb: Why Nuclear Weapons Programs Often Fail on Their Own – and Why Iran's Might, Too" in the May/June 2012 issue of Foreign Affairs. Hymans argues that, "[T]the fact is that since the 1970s, there has been a persistent slowdown in the pace of technical progress on nuclear weapons projects and an equally dramatic decline in their ultimate success rate." By Hymans' calculations, the average timeline for programs to seek the Bomb prior to 1970 was around seven years. The average timeline for successful projects after 1970 was about seventeen years. In his view,

"The great proliferation slowdown can be attributed in part to U.S. and international nonproliferation efforts. But it is mostly the result of the dysfunctional management tendencies of states that have sought the bomb in recent decades. Weak institutions in those states have permitted political leaders to unintentionally undermine the performance of their nuclear scientists, engineers, and technicians… [long break] The more a state has conformed to the authoritarian management culture typically found in developing states, the more time it has needed to get its first bomb and the higher its chances of failure."

The NPT regime has been important and resilient enough to withstand the demise of the Soviet Union and the nuclear weapon programs of India, Pakistan and Israel. A new, positive element in proliferation equations is state-of-the-diplomatic-art sanctions, which do not substantially figure in the assessments by Walker, Heisbourg and Hymans. While it's true that dysfunctional management tendencies retard proliferation, they don't prevent it. Hymans is, however, right in emphasizing that proliferation has now become a slow-motion affair. The terminology of "cascade effects" is neither helpful nor likely, given this trend. Proliferation doesn't cascade; hedging strategies do – and hedging strategies at present will depend primarily on what kind of nuclear program Tehran seeks.

So, who's right – proliferation optimists or pessimists? Are the challenges ahead more severe than before? I don't think so, but they sure do seem familiar. I'm not nearly as optimistic as Hymans, nor as pessimistic as Walker and Heisbourg. That makes me a cautious, heretical optimist.

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the US Arms Control and Disarmament Agency during the Carter administration, and in the US House of Representatives, assisting Congressman Norm Dicks.

http://krepon.armscontrolwonk.com/archive/3433/are-we-winning-or-losing

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China Daily – China
OPINION/Editorial

Avoiding an Arms Race

May 07, 2012
(China Daily)
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Although, US State Department special envoy Ellen Tauscher claimed: "Your 10-foot fence cannot cause me to build an 11-foot ladder," there is clearly the possibility of a new arms race breaking out between Russia and the United States, as the missile defense conference in Moscow that ended on Friday showed that the US and Russia are at an impasse.

Russian officials threatened pre-emptive strikes on missile defense facilities in Eastern Europe if the US-led NATO missile shield goes ahead and said talks on finding mutually acceptable solutions are "close to dead."

A Russia-NATO meeting during the annual NATO summit, which was due to be held in Chicago at the end of May, has been postponed indefinitely.

Russia is uneasy about NATO's plan, believing it will disrupt the balance of nuclear forces on the continent and it is demanding firm and legally binding guarantees that the missile system will not pose a threat to its national security.

However, NATO members are avoiding signing a legally binding document that would sooth Russia's nerves, primarily because the US will not accept even the slightest limitation on the missile program.

Given this intransigence, the sophisticated missile system looks set to spawn another arms race.

Back in November, President Dmitry Medvedev said Russia will have to take asymmetrical but necessary measures to protect its national interests. This would include the deployment of operational-tactical missiles in response to the deployment of American missile bases in Poland and Romania.

And the Russian military has announced plans to develop a new liquid-fueled intercontinental ballistic missile capable of carrying a large number of warheads, decoys and other components designed to penetrate US missile defenses.

The Obama administration is unlikely to make any compromises for fear of looking weak during his campaign to be re-elected and Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, who is due to be sworn in as president on Monday, promised to protect Russia's interests and replace its aging missile stocks.

The missile system will continue to be a thorn in their relations for the foreseeable future, but wide as their gap is, Russia and the US-led NATO should continue their negotiations.

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/opinion/2012-05/07/content_15221270.htm

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Foreign Policy
Opinion/Argument Blog

The Asian Arms Race That Wasn't

India and Pakistan are firing off missiles left and right. So why aren't the Chinese nervous?
BY M. TAYLOR FRAVEL, VIPIN NARANG

USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER
CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL
MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

MAY 8, 2012

Are we in the middle of a missile race in Asia? On April 25, Pakistan conducted the first test of its Shaheen 1-A intermediate-range ballistic missile. The Pakistan military **said** that the missile, which is capable of delivering a nuclear warhead against targets in India, successfully hit its intended location in the Indian Ocean.

If the thought of the world's most unstable nuclear power testing such weapons doesn't keep you up at night, consider this: Pakistan isn't the only nation bombarding the Indian Ocean with ballistic missiles in recent days -- an Indian missile test of its 5,000-km Agni V likely spurred the trial of the Shaheen 1-A. On a small island off India's eastern coast late last month, a three-stage missile capable of carrying a nuclear warhead blasted off and climbed more than 370 miles into the atmosphere before re-entering and splashing down into the water. Mainstream reporting on India's successful test of the Agni V missile has suggested that the launch gave it "nuclear parity" with China -- a claim echoed by seasoned South Asia hand Edward Luce last Sunday.

However, there is little reason to overreact to this series of missile tests. India's test reflects one step forward in a long process of gradually achieving a retaliatory capability against its regional adversaries, especially China. Nothing more, and nothing less. Moreover, the test will not fuel an arms race with either China or Pakistan -- despite Islamabad's test of its own intermediate-range ballistic missile in response to the Indian test.

It is important to understand precisely where India's ballistic missile development program stands. With a range of 5,000 kilometers, the Agni V is technically an intermediate range ballistic missile (IRBM), not an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), which is defined as missiles with a range of at least 5,500 kilometers. Yes, this is an arbitrary cutoff. But it is useful for understanding the capabilities that India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), the agency responsible for India's ballistic missiles, has mastered -- and those it has not. India does not have, and is at least several years away from, a true ICBM or sea-based capability.

The importance of this development should not be minimized: When the Agni V is eventually inducted into India's Strategic Force Command, it will give it the ability to strike anywhere in China, including the capital Beijing. It extends the reach of India's Agni family of land-based strategic ballistic missiles, which range from 700 km (Agni I) to now 5,000 km (Agni V). Chinese missiles, on the other hand, can already strike anywhere on the Indian subcontinent. The Agni V is designed to support India's ability to assure nuclear retaliation against China in the event nuclear weapons are used against it.

The Indian test also represents a substantial achievement for India's DRDO, demonstrating its mastery of maintaining structural integrity under significant stresses, successful stage separation, and terminal warhead guidance. But beyond these technical advances, the significance of the test should not be over-hyped. It was just a test, and only the first one for the Agni V. DRDO remains several tests, and several years, away from being able to reliably produce and operationalize the Agni V.

The idea that India can -- or even intends to -- achieve nuclear parity with China with a single test is misguided. Nuclear posture unfolds over years and decades, and India is just now creeping toward having an assured retaliation capability against China. Even when the Agni V is inducted into India's military, Beijing will still enjoy clear advantages in both warheads and delivery systems, and it will retain them for the foreseeable future. For starters, China has at least twice as many nuclear warheads as India, many of which contain much higher yields than their Indian counterparts. With several decades of experience developing nuclear systems, China's missiles are also probably more reliable than India's. With the ongoing development of the Type-094 *Jin*-class nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine that will carry the *Julang*-2 submarine-launched ballistic missile, China also has a significant head start on sea-based capabilities.

Don't expect this test to spark an arms race in the region, either. India has been developing the Agni V since at least 2007, so both China and Pakistan have likely already factored its eventual deployment into their own nuclear planning. One central point missed by many analysts is that China and India have remarkably similar nuclear strategies --both are keyed to assured retaliation, or guaranteeing a secure second-strike capability. This means that once both sides have

developed survivable second-strike forces capable of reaching an adversary's key strategic targets, there is little need for additional forces.

Most importantly, neither India nor China have nuclear strategies that target each other's nuclear forces. This would make nuclear stability critically dependent on the numerical balance of forces, as was the case during periods of the Cold War. Instead, with assured retaliation strategies, nuclear stability can be established much more easily, once both states acquire secure second-strike capabilities. India is only now reaching the point of having an assured retaliation capability against China. Given China's superior capabilities, the eventual deployment of the Agni V will thus not weaken China's deterrent, even as it strengthens India's. China is unlikely to deploy more weapons in response, because its ability to survive a first strike by India remains robust. As a result -- although an editorial in the always acerbic *Global Times* stated that India "should not overestimate its strength" -- China's official reaction was quite muted.

Pakistan is also unlikely to alter its own approach to nuclear weapons following the deployment of the Agni V. First, it is unclear how the test alters the nuclear balance between the two rivals: India's existing arsenal can already reach Pakistan's strategic targets. Second, Pakistan primarily aims to use its nuclear forces to deter an Indian conventional attack, abjuring a "no first use" pledge in order to credibly threaten nuclear use in such a contingency. Thus, its nuclear requirements are driven largely by India's growing conventional capabilities - not the range of its nuclear capabilities. Finally, even Pakistan's test of the Shaheen 1A missile is part of its longstanding quest to achieve a secure second-strike capability against Indian targets, and no evidence exists that Pakistan will produce or deploy such missiles in numbers that would trigger an arms race. Moreover, as Pakistan has typically timed the test of its missiles with those of India's, its test was largely predictable. And neither of the launches would have caught the other state by surprise, as both have adhered to an agreement to notify each other ahead of impending ballistic missile tests.

One development could, however, upset the strategic balance in South Asia. Shortly after the test, comments from the head of the DRDO suggested that India might also be developing multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles (MIRVs) for several Agni variants. This capability could enable India to deliver multiple nuclear warheads against an adversary's targets -- or its nuclear forces -- with a single ballistic missile launch. MIRVs, coupled with a potential missile defense system in development, could have far-reaching implications for the survivability of China and Pakistan's nuclear forces. Nevertheless, these comments were likely unauthorized and certainly do not reflect the policy of the Indian government or its future force posture. They were most likely made to enhance the organizational prestige of the DRDO, which has long sought to claim that it can indigenously develop world-class systems. This is not the first time that DRDO has made comments with strategic implications that do not reflect official policy.

Finally, in an alarmist article in the *New York Times*, Graeme Herd at the Geneva Center for Security Policy claims that the timing of the Agni V test would heighten suspicions that it was aimed at China, because it occurred as Beijing is engulfed in the political scandal surrounding deposed party boss Bo Xilai. Most missile tests, however, do not work this way. The Agni V test was planned for years, and it was most likely scheduled for when DRDO was simply ready to test the missile -- and of course, when the weather was clear. Recall that the United States tested missiles according to a standard operating procedure as well -- even once conducting a pre-planned test in the middle of the Cuban Missile Crisis simply because it was already scheduled.

A sober look at the Agni V test suggests that it was a significant technical step forward in India's longstanding quest for an assured second-strike capability toward its regional adversaries. But it was not much more than that. Analysts expecting an arms race in Asia will likely be disappointed.

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http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/05/08/the_asian_arms_race_that_wasnt?page=0,0

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Federation of American Scientists (FAS)
OPINION/ FAS Strategic Security Blog

B61 Nuclear Bomb Costs Escalating

May 9, 2012
By Hans M. Kristensen

The expected cost of the B61 Life-Extension Program (LEP) has increased by 50 percent to $6 billion dollars, according to U.S. government sources.

Only one year ago, the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) estimated in its Stockpile Stewardship and Management Program report to Congress that the cost of the program would be approximately $4 billion.

The escalating cost of the program – and concern that NNSA does not have an effective plan for managing it – has caused Congress to cap spending on the B61 LEP by 60 percent in 2012 and 100 percent in 2013. The Pentagon's Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE) office is currently evaluating NNSA's cost estimate and is expected to release its assessment in July. After that, NNSA is expected to release a validated cost, schedule and scope estimate for the B61 LEP, a precondition for Congress releasing the program funds for Phase 6.3 of the program.

Ambitious Program

Beyond mismanagement, the 50 percent increase is due to the ambitious modifications that NNSA, the nuclear laboratories, and the Pentagon say are needed to extend the life of the bomb.

That includes new use-control and safety features to increase the surety of what is already the most safe warhead design in the stockpile. Several warhead design options were proposed, ranging from a simple life-extension with the current features to a significantly altered design with new optical wiring and multi-point safety. The Nuclear Weapons Council in December chose the second-most ambitious design without optical wiring and multi-point safety.

Expectation for the ambitious B61-12 program has already spawned a hiring frenzy at Sandia National Laboratory for a program that dwarfs the W76 LEP, the ongoing production of one of the navy's Trident missile warheads. "It is the largest effort in more than 30 years, the largest, probably, since the original development of the B61-3,4," according to the head of the B61 LEP at Sandia.

Program Justification

The Pentagon is promoting the consolidation of four B61 versions into the B61-12 as an effort to increase efficiency and lowering costs. But we have yet to see the budget justification for that and it is not clear how much of the savings will come from consolidation or from simply reducing the overall number of B61s in the stockpile. Already the consolidation part is turning out to be much more expensive than we were led to believe.

The B61 LEP was catapulted forward by the April 2010 Nuclear Posture Review, which committed – before a validated cost, schedule and scope estimate had been developed – the United States to conduct a "full scope" B61 LEP. That commitment came as part of a "deal" that promised significant investments in nuclear weapons modernization in return for Congressional approval of the New START treaty.

The Mission

The administration says that the B61 LEP is needed to provide nuclear extended deterrence to NATO allies and to continue a gravity bomb capability on the B-2 stealth bomber. According to the U.S. Air Force, the B61-12 is "critical" to "deterrence of adversaries in a regional context, and support of our extended deterrence commitments."

But privately, U.S. Air Force officials do not see a need to continue the deployment in Europe, where the United States currently deploys nearly 200 B61-3/4 bombs in 87 aircraft shelters at six bases in five countries. And although the

NATO Summit later this month is expected to endorse – for now – continuation of the current nuclear posture in Europe, none of the European allies appear to be willing to pay for continuing the mission.

Extended deterrence can be provided with other means and the B61-12 is not the only U.S. air-delivered nuclear weapon system. Indeed, the U.S. Air Force currently has seven different nuclear weapons for delivery by five different delivery platforms. After completion of the B61-12 program, the Air Force will still have four different nuclear weapons for delivery by five different aircraft.

U.S./NATO Air-Delivered Nuclear Weapons

	Platform	Weapon
2012	B-2, B-52H, F-15E, F-16, PA-200 (Tornado), Rafale*	B61-3, B61-4, B61-7, B61-10, B61-11, B83-1, ALCM/W80-1, ASMPA*
2022	B-2, B-52H, F-15E, F-35A, PA-200, Rafale*	B61-11, B61-12, B83-1, ALCM/W80-1**, ASMPA*

Key: ALCM = Air Launched Cruise Missile; ASMPA = Air-Sol Moyenne Portée Amélioré
* French nuclear weapons are not integrated into NATO military command structure, but they exist and France is a member of NATO.
** The U.S. Air Force is planning a nuclear replacement for the ALCM, known as the Long-Range Standoff (LRSO) missile.

The U.S. Air Force has six different nuclear weapons for delivery by five different aircraft. After the B61 LEP it will still have four weapons for five aircraft.

Why so many different ways of delivering a nuclear weapon from the sky is needed for deterrence is anyone's guess. The nuclear redundancy in the bomber leg is significantly greater than for ICBMs and SLBMs and appears to be the result of a combination of a left-over Cold War mission in Europe and requirements developed by warfighters to hold a variety of targets at risk in a variety of different ways.

Conclusions

After having spent hundreds of millions of dollars between 2006 and 2010 on extending the service life of the secondary of the B61-7 (and adding new spin-rocket motors to improve performance), NNSA and DOD are now planning to scrap the weapon and replace it with the $6 billion B61-12.

Although the cost estimate of the B61 LEP has increased by 50 percent over the past year, the $6 billion price tag is only part of the cost. The new guided tail kit the Air Force is developing to increase the accuracy of the B61-12 is expected to cost about $800 million. And the cost of making the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter capable of delivering the bomb is estimated to add another $340 million.

The anticipated cost of the B61-12 program is now greater than the high-end cost estimate for the CMRR-NF, the plutonium pit production factory planned at Los Alamos that the Senate recently decided to mothball for at least five years due to its high cost. Or if that is not impressive enough, the cost of the B61 LEP is comparable to what NNSA plans to spend on sustaining the entire active stockpile for the next decade.

This level of nuclear cost increase and mismanagement is neither justifiable nor sustainable. It shouldn't be normally, but it certainly isn't in the current financial crisis. And all of this to sustain a nuclear deployment is Europe that may well end before the B61 LEP is completed and a nuclear capability on the B-2 bomber that already carries another nuclear bomb.

The current B61-12 program should be stopped and reassessed to reduce cost and scope. Congress has already asked the JASONs to examine the scope of the program and provide an assessment of any major concerns. In the meantime,

the mission in Europe should temporarily be sustained with a much more basic life-extension program while the administration works to convince NATO to agree to a withdrawal of the remaining U.S. nuclear weapons from Europe. The nuclear capability of the B-2 bomber should be limited to what it already carries.

http://www.fas.org/blog/ssp/2012/05/b61cost.php

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Forbes
OPINION/Interview of Joe Cirincione
By Rahim Kanani, Contributor
May 9, 2012

Expert: 'Pakistan Is the Most Dangerous Country on Earth'

In an in-depth interview with the President of Ploughshares Fund and one of nation's top nuclear experts Joe Cirincione, we discussed the true threat of nuclear disaster and its relationship to other global challenges, a new international policy and consensus on nuclear weapons, a ranking of global nuclear threats, whether diplomacy is a dying art, the role of multilateral institutions, and much more.

Joseph Cirincione is President of Ploughshares Fund, a global security foundation. He previously served as Vice President for National Security and International Policy at the Center for American Progress and Director for Nonproliferation at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. He is the author of *Bomb Scare: The History and Future of Nuclear Weapons* and *Deadly Arsenals: Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Threats*. Cirincione serves on the Secretary of State's International Security Advisory Board, which provides the Department of State with independent insight and advice on all aspects of arms control, disarmament, international security, and related aspects of public diplomacy. He is also a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

At the Skoll World Forum in March, Cirincione participated in a panel discussion on "catastrophic risks and threats to the global commons" along with Arianna Huffington of the Huffington Post, Helene Gayle of CARE, Ian Goldin of the Oxford Martin School and Larry Brilliant of the Skoll Global Threats Fund.

Rahim Kanani: As you think about the range of threats facing the world today–specifically those that have the potential to cause cataclysmic harm–such as climate change, global pandemics, and your particular expertise, nuclear disaster, where on the continuum do you place the nuclear risk in relation to other critical challenges?

Joe Cirincione: We face many challenges in our personal lives, our communities and our nations. But two stand out in their seriousness and consequences: global warming and nuclear weapons. Both threaten destruction on a planetary scale. Both are caused by machines we built. Both are preventable and reversible. But both require new ways of thinking and new leadership to find solutions. Continuing with current policies courts global catastrophe. Other problems also cause or could cause massive human suffering, such as war in the Middle East or the poverty conditions of much of humanity. And others can have global consequences, such as pandemics. But only nuclear weapons and global warming have the potential for fundamentally altering or even ending all that human civilization has accomplished over the past millennia.

Rahim Kanani: Continuing that thought, how would you characterize the relationship between these global threats?

Joe Cirincione: First, these threats are truly global. That is, developments in one nation impact many other nations and only many nations working together can resolve these problems. We see this on many issues. Take the rising economies of China and India that have lifted hundreds of millions out of poverty. These nations have an increasing impact on global economies and global diplomacy. But their success is not just the result of national policies. It would not have been possible without global institutions such as the World Trade Organization and multi-national corporations. Similarly, we need effective multi-national organizations to coordinate actions on the top global threats. No one nation can do it.

The need for international cooperation is obvious when addressing threats like global warming and pandemics, but it is also true for nuclear problems–reducing the 19,000 nuclear weapons that threaten us today, preventing new nations from getting these weapons and stopping nuclear terrorism. The U.S. and Russia, with 95 percent of the weapons, must take the lead, but others, like China and India will have to join the effort. Even stopping the relatively small, weak nations of Iran and North Korea from becoming nuclear weapon states requires the united efforts of many nations to apply the right pressures and provide the needed incentives.

There are other connections between global threats. Some believe that nuclear power is essential to slowing carbon emissions that are warming the Earth. But civilian nuclear power programs are often used by nations as a pathway to nuclear weapons. Al Gore once said, "During my eight years in the White House, every nuclear weapons proliferation issue we dealt with was connected to a nuclear reactor program. Today, the dangerous weapons programs in both Iran and North Korea are linked to their civilian reactor programs."

We cannot let our pursuit of a solution to one global threat exacerbate another threat. As long as nuclear power is considered necessary, it must have the strictest safety and non-proliferation standards possible. This may require some to give up their national "rights," by joining regional fuel banks, for example, rather that enriching uranium in their own facilities. They will only do so if they see it as part of a fair, equal, global bargain where all nations are working to reduce and eliminate nuclear dangers.

Rahim Kanani: What were the key insights you took away in regards to your own panel on catastrophic risk mentioned earlier, both in terms of challenges but also solutions?

Joe Cirincione: The challenges related to the risks discussed on our panel – global poverty, pandemics, and nuclear proliferation – can be daunting. Obstacles to progress can seem insurmountable. But the belief that change is impossible is our greatest challenge. It turns out that when people say something is impossible, what they really mean is that it is so hard they cannot imagine a solution. Every year, the Skoll World Forum gathers hundreds of gifted social entrepreneurs who can see the solutions. For a few days, you get to experience, personally and close up, the incredible work these people do. They devote their lives to creating meaningful change. It is inspiring. It is powerful.

With the dedicated work of a few individuals, great ideas can spread. We see now a transformation of thinking on nuclear weapons. A new, non-partisan, international consensus has emerged that sees these weapons as a security liability rather than a security asset. Whatever benefits nuclear weapons may have once had during the Cold War are now seen as overwhelmed by the cost and the dangers they represent. This new consensus on the dangers of nuclear weapons is focused on three actions pursued simultaneously: reduce, prevent and secure. This is the core of a new global policy: reduce existing nuclear arsenals, prevent new nuclear states, and secure nuclear stockpiles around the world to block nuclear terrorism. Progress on each step reinforces progress on the others. Reducing weapons arsenals builds the cooperation you need to prevent new nuclear states and to secure nuclear materials around the world, which creates the security that allows further reductions.

Rahim Kanani: As you survey the nuclear landscape today, and you think about the situation in Iran, North Korea, Pakistan, among others, is any one nuclear threat to global stability more imminent or important than the other, and how should those in decisions of power think about prioritization?

Joe Cirincione: Pakistan is the most dangerous country on Earth. It has enough nuclear material for 60 to 100 bombs, an unstable government, a fragile economy, strong extremist influences in its military and intelligence agencies, and Al Qaeda and a half dozen similar groups operating inside the country. It is not a question of the security of the weapons, it is a question of the security of the government. What happens if the government falls or the Army splinters? Who gets the weapons? Or the scientists who know how to build the weapons, or the material for the weapons? Pakistan could go from a major non-NATO ally to our worst nuclear nightmare overnight.

By comparison, Iran and North Korea are serious challenges but Iran does not (and may never) have nuclear weapons, while North Korea has only have a few. Both are more isolated than ever before with more cooperation among nations

dealing with these nations than ever before. This makes a negotiated solution to these programs more feasible or, failing that, their containment.

Rahim Kanani: When you think about intervention versus diplomacy–in the nuclear context and beyond–is the art of diplomacy a dying construct?

Joe Cirincione: No country has ever been coerced into giving up a nuclear weapons program, but many have been convinced to do so. And these were not easy cases. Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan gave up thousands of nuclear weapons after the collapse of the Soviet Union. South Africa ended a secret program and dismantled the weapons it had built. Argentina and Brazil ended a years-long nuclear rivalry and spearheaded efforts to make all of South America a nuclear weapons free zone. Iraq and Libya gave up nuclear programs. In fact, more nations have given up nuclear weapons and programs in the last 25 years than have tried to acquire them.

All this was done with diplomatic instruments, a combination of pressures and incentives. The process can be difficult, it can be protracted, but in the end a nation has to be convinced that it own goals of security, prestige and productive regional relations can be improved more without nuclear weapons than with them. There is no military short cut. US and Israeli military leaders, for example, agree that an attack on Iran would not end that nation's nuclear program—it would likely accelerate it. An attack would consolidate the regime's grip on power, end all debate on whether to build a nuclear weapon, and launch a Manhattan Project-style effort to deploy the only weapons the regime might believe could protect it from further attacks.

There is no substitute for political solutions to our nuclear threats and never has been. There is no substitute for diplomacy if you want a peaceful, prosperous Middle East, shared water resources, a less warm planet or solutions to any of the dozens of global challenges we face. We have no choice but to get better at it.

Rahim Kanani: Building off that, how would you rate our multilateral institutions–built with diplomacy at heart–in tackling the current threat landscape, which ultimately requires global leadership and collective action?

Joe Cirincione: The real problem is not the institutions themselves, but an overall lack of global leadership and collective action. Nuclear weapons, for example, are a global issue that will require global cooperation. The United States cannot succeed in eliminating the threat of nuclear disaster on its own. It will require a consensus that is thankfully growing. In the U.S., almost all of the living former secretaries of state and many high-level officials have joined these efforts, publicly warning that we court disaster with nuclear policies still frozen in Cold War thinking. Henry Kissinger, George Shultz, Sam Nunn and Bill Perry are leaders of this movement but they are not alone. There are hundreds of institutions and strategists around the world—many of whom we are pleased to support through Ploughshares Fund—who are working to identify and implement practical steps towards the verifiable, global elimination of nuclear weapons. No one thinks this will be easy or quick. But each step towards this goal makes us safer and more secure. We are making progress. In just the four years that I have been president of our foundation, we have seen the US strategic nuclear arsenal cut by 45 percent. This is the global trend. Our job is get it down to safe levels before any weapon goes off anywhere.

Rahim Kanani: Lastly, what is the core driver for you to work on this issue day in and day out, and what is truly at stake if we don't get it right?

Joe Cirincione: People often fail to realize just how completely destructive these weapons are. Mankind has the power to destroy human life as we know it. The use of one nuclear weapon would be devastating, ten would be unimaginable, and one hundred would cause destruction beyond anything humankind has ever seen. We have thousands. I do not believe that fallible human beings can control this destructive power indefinitely.

Not only do thousands of nuclear weapons not make strategic sense, it does not make fiscal sense. The current arsenal is very expensive, and it is about to grow much more so. Each leg of the United States' nuclear triad — long-range missiles, bombers, and submarines — is reaching the end of its expected operational life. Proposals to replace each leg and to refurbish each warhead in the stockpile are now working their way through the Pentagon and Congress. Together, they would regenerate the Cold War force at slightly lower levels well past the middle of this century. I

estimate that spending on all nuclear weapons and related programs will cost the government $600-750 billion dollars over just the next ten years. This is money we do not have, for weapons we do not need.

Our troops, our public and our nation deserve a smarter, safer policy. If we miss this opportunity to modernize our security policies to meet the needs of the 21st Century, we could slip back into a world of more nuclear states, more nuclear arms races, and greater risk of nuclear terrorism. I believe we are smarter than this. I am optimistic that over the next few years we will make the right choices, choose the right strategies and budgets and move step by step towards few weapons and greater security. That is not just my vision, it is my passion.

Rahim Kanani is a writer, advocate, strategist and entrepreneur for global social change.

http://www.forbes.com/sites/rahimkanani/2012/05/09/expert-pakistan-is-the-most-dangerous-country-on-earth/

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London Guardian – U.K.
OPINION/Analysis

Nato Plans to Upgrade Nuclear Weapons 'Expensive and Unnecessary'

Proposals to modernise nuclear arsenal will heighten tensions with Russia, warns thinktank backed by ex-ministers
By Richard Norton-Taylor
Thursday, 10 May 2012

Nato's plans to upgrade the US's estimated 180 tactical nuclear weapons in western Europe are unnecessary, expensive and likely to exacerbate already difficult relations with Russia, according to a report.

The alliance is preparing to replace "dumb" free-fall nuclear bombs and ageing delivery aircraft with precision-guided weapons that would be carried by US F35 strike aircraft, according to a report from the European Leadership Network (ELN), a thinktank supported by former UK defence ministers including Lord Des Browne and Sir Malcolm Rifkind.

The report, Escalation by Default?: the Future of Nato Nuclear Weapons In Europe, is by Ted Seay, who until last year was arms control adviser to the US mission at Nato headquarters in Brussels.

The plans to upgrade significantly the US's stockpile of tactical nuclear weapons would increase its ability to reach targets in Russia at a time when Nato and Russia are already locked in a tense standoff over missile defence, warns the report.

Nato possesses 180 B61 free-fall tactical nuclear bombs in Europe stored at bases in Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, Germany and Turkey. The bombs, relics of the cold war, have no guidance systems and are regarded as having no real military purpose or value, says the report. The aircraft tasked with delivering them are also in need of replacement.

Despite defence spending cuts, the US is planning to upgrade the bombs with precision-guided B61-12 nuclear gravity bombs at a cost of $4bn (£2.5bn), according to the report. European countries, whose pilots are trained to deliver the B-61s to their targets, are also facing expensive decisions to replace their existing aircraft with the US F35 Joint Strike Fighter, whose cost has risen to more than $100m (£62m) each.

Nato's plans would produce a "formidable increase in nuclear capabilities for Nato in Europe", according to Seay, who adds that modernisation would be a form of expensive nuclear escalation by default that could be expected to draw a hostile reaction from Moscow.

Ian Kearns, the ELN chief executive, said: "The planned upgrade of Nato's tactical nuclear forces in Europe will be expensive and is unnecessary. Nato states are fully secure without this additional capability and should be focused on removing all tactical nuclear weapons from Europe, not on modernising them".

http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/may/11/nato-nuclear-weapons-upgrade

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