



USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER
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MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

Issue No. 1016, 20 July 2012

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FARS News Agency – Iran
Tuesday, July 17, 2012

MP: Iranian Vessels to Use N. Fuel

TEHRAN (FNA) - A senior Iranian legislator revealed the country's plan to use nuclear fuel in its vessels, and urged the government to enrich uranium to the needed levels to be used in such nuclear-powered ships.

"The government should enrich uranium to the needed level to supply fuel for the ships," member of the parliament's Industries Commission Allahverdi Dehqani told FNA on Tuesday.

"Given the western states' sanctions against the Islamic Republic of Iran, which include embargo on supplying fuel to Iranian vessels, the Islamic Republic will replace the fossil fuel with nuclear fuel to counter the sanctions so that the Iranian ships will not need refueling for long-distance voyage," he added.

"The government should enrich uranium to the necessary levels to supply fuel for such ships since we cannot cut our trade relations with other countries due to the western sanctions," Dehqani said.

"The western countries have violated the Iranian nation's rights with their measures, and their past record shows that they are the biggest violators of human rights," he underlined.

His remarks came after the Iranian lawmakers prepared a draft bill requiring the government to design nuclear-powered merchant ships and provide them with nuclear fuel.

MP Mohammad Bayatian said on Monday that sanctions are forcing Iran to use different fuel for its oil tankers and other large vessels, to avert the need to refuel during long voyages.

Another lawmaker, Mehrdad Bazrpash also told FNA on Sunday that "a bill has come on the agenda of the parliament's Industries Commission which requires the mines and industries sector of the government to seriously focus on new technological plans for oil tankers and warships' engines".

Bazrpash said according to the plan, the country's oil tankers and warships should be able to sail long distances without any need to refueling in those countries which refrain from providing Iranian vessels with fuel due to the sanctions.

Bayatian said the bill has been approved by a parliamentary committee and will be debated in the house next week.

"Given the sanctions that enemies have imposed against our country, the bill must be enacted," he said.

Iranian military officials have also earlier informed that the country is designing a nuclear submarine.

Last week, a senior Iranian Navy commander stressed Iran's high capabilities in designing and manufacturing different types of submarines, and announced the country's move towards manufacturing nuclear-powered submarines.

Speaking to FNA last Tuesday, Lieutenant Commander of the Navy for Technical Affairs Rear Admiral Abbas Zamini pointed to the navy's plan to manufacture super heavy nuclear-powered submarines, and stated, "Right now, we are at the initial phases of manufacturing atomic submarines."

He noted Iran's astonishing progress in developing and acquiring civilian nuclear technology for various power-generation, agricultural and medical purposes, and said such advancements allow Iran to think of manufacturing nuclear-fueled submarines.

He further reminded that using nuclear power to fuel submarines is among the civilian uses of the nuclear technology and all countries are, thus, entitled to the right to make such a use.

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=9104250312>

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Daily Telegraph – U.K

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Iran's Revolutionary Guards 'Overseeing Huge Expansion of Country's Nuclear Programme'

Iran's Revolutionary Guards are overseeing a massive expansion of the country's nuclear weapons programme in an attempt to bring forward the date when the regime can produce its first warhead, according to a leading Iranian dissident group.

By Con Coughlin, Defence Editor

17 July 2012

A specialist team of 60 nuclear scientists has been seconded to a specially-designated unit called the New Defence Research Organisation which answers directly to the Revolutionary Guards, the elite force under the control of Iran's supreme leader.

Having previously revealed the existence of Iran's top-secret uranium enrichment plant at Natanz, the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI) says it has now uncovered conclusive evidence of how the Revolutionary Guards are quietly expanding the weapons programme.

The new unit, which set up last year, has been established to work on the key areas of the weapons programme that still need to be completed before Iran can start work on assembling a nuclear weapon.

Last week The Daily Telegraph revealed that Sir John Sawers, the head of MI6, had told a select group of senior civil servants that, at the current rate of progress, Iran would be able to have a nuclear device within two years.

But Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's spiritual leader who has overall responsibility for Iran's nuclear programme, is keen for Iran's nuclear scientists to intensify their efforts to achieve the technological expertise required for making an atom bomb.

According to the NCRI, the Iranian opposition movement which claims to have a highly effective network of activists working inside the country. the headquarters of the new research unit is based at Mojdeh, in the Lavizan region.

The unit has been divided into seven subdivisions which each have responsibility for conducting a specific area of research. These include working on the fissile material used for making a nuclear weapons, conducting research into the different metals used for making a warhead, and developing a detonator for such a device.

Many of the scientists working for the new unit are in direct contact with the newly-constructed underground uranium enrichment facility at Fordow, another top-secret complex whose existence was only revealed three years ago by Barack Obama.

Israeli intelligence officials suspect Iran has built the complex, which is located deep beneath the mountains on the outskirts of the holy city of Qom, to conceal its attempts to develop nuclear weapons from the international community.

Israel's deepening concerns over Iran's nuclear programme has raised fears that the Jewish state may be planning to launch unilateral air strikes against Iran's key nuclear facilities later this year.

Tom Donilon, the US National Security Advisor, visited Jerusalem at the weekend for talks with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and senior Israeli security officials amid mounting concern in Washington that the Israelis are in the final stages of planning an attack.

Mr Donilon, who sought to reassure Mr Netanyahu that Washington would not tolerate a nuclear-armed Iran, is one of several high-ranking Obama administration officials to visit Israel in recent days to try to persuade the Israelis to refrain from taking unilateral action.

The Obama administration argues that the latest round of economic sanctions applied against Iran are starting to have an impact, and explains Tehran's recent decision to resume negotiations over the future of its nuclear programme

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after a break of three years. Washington wants to give the talks more time, and is therefore exerting intense diplomatic pressure on Israel to exercise restraint.

Yesterday Hillary Clinton, the U.S. Secretary of State, became the latest high-profile visitor to arrive in Jerusalem to lobby Mr Netanyahu. (quotes to come later) Mrs Clinton has not been Israel in two years, having previously stated that she would not visit until there was progress to report on the Middle East peace process.

With no signs of a breakthrough, State Department officials claimed that the purpose of her trip was to "exchange impressions" about the impact of the Arab Spring on the Middle East, but there was little doubt that Iran was at the centre of her real agenda.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iran/9405897/Irans-Revolutionary-Guards-overseeing-huge-expansion-of-countrys-nuclear-programme.html>

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San Francisco Chronicle

Jordan Moving to Ward off Syrian Chemical Attack

By JAMAL HALABY, Associated Press

Tuesday, July 17, 2012

AMMAN, Jordan (AP) — Jordan has taken precautions to ward off a possible Syrian chemical attack, Jordan's foreign minister said Tuesday, reflecting concern that Syria might use such weapons if the uprising there threatens the regime.

"The matter is of grave concern to us, and we have taken all necessary measures to confront that," Foreign Minister Nasser Judeh said. He declined to say what measures were taken.

"We will not allow anything to threaten the internal security of the kingdom," he told reporters at a joint news conference with visiting British Foreign Minister William Hague.

Israel and other countries have expressed concern about Syrian chemical weapons. Syria has not acknowledged possessing chemical weapons.

Syria has been traditionally suspicious of Jordan's pro-Western outlook and its longtime alliance with the U.S., as well as its 1994 peace treaty with Israel.

Jordan's relations with Syria have been bumpy over the years, though there have been only two notable flare-ups, as Jordan tries to avoid riling its powerful neighbor.

Syria invaded Jordan during the 1970 conflict between the Jordanian army and Palestinian factions. The Syrian army moved to protect the Palestinians, who tried to set up their own government before being expelled.

In the wake of a 1982 massacre of thousands of Muslim Brotherhood supporters in the Syrian city of Hama, Syria massed troops on Jordan's northern border after accusing the kingdom of supporting the Islamists.

No attack took place, but there was a wave of assassinations of Syrian Muslim Brotherhood activists who took refuge in Jordan. Amman blamed Syria.

"History repeats itself, and there is a good chance that Assad may do something foolish if he felt cornered and that his days are numbered," said Khalil Rawahneh, a retired Jordanian army colonel who served at the border with Syria in 1982.

"We don't have the means to fend off a chemical attack, if Assad sent his missiles flying over densely populated areas, especially the Jordanian capital," Rawahneh told The Associated Press.

He said Iran or its proxy Shiite Lebanese Hezbollah may also "try to attack us with chemicals to defend Assad and prolong his days in power."



A Jordan-based Western diplomat said Jordan has been "desperately shopping around" for an anti-missile defense system to deploy near its northern frontier, but that "no deal has been concluded yet." He declined to say if the United States has been approached.

He insisted on anonymity, citing the sensitivity of the matter.

Syria is believed to have nerve agents as well as mustard gas, Scud missiles capable of delivering these lethal chemicals and a variety of advanced conventional arms, including anti-tank rockets and late-model portable anti-aircraft missiles.

Associated Press writer Elizabeth Kennedy in Beirut, Lebanon, contributed to this report.

<http://www.sfgate.com/news/article/Jordan-moving-to-ward-off-Syrian-chemical-attack-3713115.php>

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The Star – Malaysia
Wednesday, July 18, 2012

Syria "Spinning Out of Control," US Defence Chief Says

By Phil Stewart

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - U.S. Defence Secretary Leon Panetta said on Wednesday the situation in Syria appeared to be "spinning out of control" as he and his British counterpart warned that the Syrian regime would be held responsible for securing its chemical weapons.

"This is a situation that is rapidly spinning out of control," Panetta said, adding that the international community needed to "bring maximum pressure on (President Bashar al-Assad) to do what's right, to step down and allow for that peaceful transition."

Syria's defence minister and Assad's brother-in-law were killed in a Damascus suicide bomb attack carried out by a bodyguard on Wednesday, the most serious blow to the president's high command in the country's 16-month-old rebellion.

Still, Western powers have been loath to intervene militarily in the conflict.

Panetta discussed Syria with British Defence Secretary Philip Hammond, who, speaking at the same Pentagon news conference, said the situation in Syria was "deteriorating and is becoming more and more unpredictable."

The Assad government appears to be quietly shifting some chemical weapons from storage sites, Western and Israeli officials have said, but it is not clear whether the operation is merely a security precaution amid Syria's escalating internal conflict.

Panetta warned that Syria would be held accountable for safeguarding any chemical weapons it possessed.

"We've made very clear to them that they have a responsibility to safeguard their chemical sites and that we will hold them responsible should anything happen with regards to those sites," Panetta said, adding that the United States was working closely with its allies on the issue.

Hammond appeared to make a veiled reference to Russia and China when he said that the Assad regime still existed because of the tacit support it receives from "other powers in the world."

"So our diplomacy has to focus on getting those who have the greatest influence with the regime to ensure that it acts responsibly in relations to chemical weapons."

Additional reporting by David Alexander; Editing by Vicki Allen

http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2012/7/18/worldupdates/2012-07-18T140832Z_1_BRE86HOPM_RTROPTT_0_UK-SYRIA-CRISIS-USA-PENTAGON&sec=worldupdates



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Trend News Agency – Azerbaijan

Iran Leaps from 3.5-Percent to Weapon-Grade Refined Uranium

18 July 2012

By Dalga Khatinoglu, Trend Agency's Iran Service Department Chief

Iranian parliament member, close to ruling conservatives party, Allah-Verdi Dehghani's statement about the necessity of producing nuclear-fuel engines for ships because of avoidance of the U.S. allies to provide Iranian ships with fossil type fuel, are likely to increase the doubts over the final goal of Iran's nuclear program.

Earlier, in 2010, Iran started processing 20-percent enriched uranium due to avoidance of western countries from bartering 1,200 kg of Iran's 3.5-percent enriched uranium gas (UF₆) stockpile with 120 kg of 20-percent enriched nuclear fuel for 5 megawatt-thermal Tehran's Research Reactor (TRR). Now, according to International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) latest report, Iran holds above 140 kg 20-percent enriched uranium, without existence of another pool-type reactor in the country, excepting TTR.

During an interview with Iranian Mashreghnews.ir website, Dehghan said that Iran should produce higher-level uranium for ships. However, Iran does not have any nuclear fuel ship, which uses 60 percent to 90 percent refined uranium, a level that can be used for nuclear bombs, too.

On the other hand, Iran has neither technology to produce nuclear fuel engines, nor higher-level refined nuclear fuel, but increasing the enrichment level of UF₆ needs only the mechanical process, turning the rotor of centrifuges and a little time, maybe 6 months or so.

Earlier, Iran announced that it is preparing to produce nuclear-fuel submarines, which work with higher-level refined uranium as well.

I think Iran's these sorts of announcements are always a forepart for preparing new steps and opening new stage in Iran's nuclear program, which Iran considers as deal and a tool of pressure to force the enemies to compromise against Islamic Republic, and the West eyes a long step be taken by Iran to reach nuclear weapon. In case of realizing Iran's new plan, the conflicts over that would absolutely raise, even it can encourage the U.S. or Israel to strike on Iran's nuclear facilities.

The shadow of war will remain over Iranian government's head, but with two choice: having enough raw 90-percent refined uranium, ready to be converted to solid nuclear warhead immediately, or without strategic weapon-level uranium stockpile.

<http://en.trend.az/regions/iran/2047815.html>

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Al Arabiya News – U.A.E.

Al-Qaeda Could Get Syria's Chemical Weapons, Jordan King Warns

Thursday, 19 July 2012

By Agence France-Presse (AFP)

WASHINGTON: Syria is spinning out of control and in a worst case scenario the al-Qaeda militant group could get its hands on some of the regime's chemical weapons, Jordan's King Abdullah said Wednesday.

"Our information is that there is a presence of al-Qaeda in certain regions inside Syria, and has been there for a while," he told CNN.

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"And, again, one of the worst case scenarios as we are obviously trying to look for a political solution would be if some of those chemical stockpiles were to fall into unfriendly hands," he warned.

The Jordanian king told the U.S. news network the attack was a serious blow to the regime, but played down speculation that its collapse was imminent.

"Definitely this shows some cracks in the system, but again, I don't think we should jump to any conclusion writing the regime off in the near future," he said, while warning that time was running out for a political solution.

"I think as we continue to pursue the political option, the realities on the ground may have overtaken us. Therefore I think the clock is ticking," he said.

"I think we should continue to give politics its due. But if we haven't already passed that window, I think we're getting very close to it."

"If it breaks down, if civil order breaks down to the point of no return, then it will take years to fix Syria. And I have a feeling we're seeing signs of that over the past three weeks," he warned.

"The only people that can bring us back from that brink are obviously the president and the regime. And I believe this is the last chance that they have," he said.

<http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/07/19/227161.html>

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Xinhua News – China

Kim Jong Un Awarded Title of Marshal of DPRK

July 18, 2012

PYONGYANG, July 18 (Xinhua) -- Top leader Kim Jong Un of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) has been awarded the title of Marshal of the DPRK, the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) reported Wednesday.

"A decision was made to award the title of Marshal of the DPRK to Kim Jong Un, supreme commander of the Korean People's Army," the KCNA said.

The KCNA added that the decision was jointly issued Tuesday by the Central Committee and the Central Military Commission of the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK), the National Defense Commission (NDC) of the DPRK and the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly of the DPRK.

The KCNA flashed a bulletin about an hour before the news was officially released at 0300 GMT.

Kim Jong Un earlier this year was elected first secretary of the WPK, chairman of the WPK Central Military Commission and first chairman of the NDC. He was promoted to the rank of general in September 2010.

In the DPRK, marshal is the second highest title next only to grand marshal, which had been awarded to the country's founding father, Kim Il Sung, in 1992 and to the late leader Kim Jong Il posthumously in 2012.

The KCNA announced Tuesday a decision of the WPK Central Military Commission and the NDC to promote Gen. Hyon Yong Chol to vice marshal.

Hyon's promotion came a day after Pyongyang's announcement to relieve Vice Marshal Ri Yong Ho of "all posts due to his illness." Ri had served as a member of the Presidium of the Political Bureau of the WPK Central Committee, vice chairman of the WPK Central Military Commission and chief of general staff of the Korean People's Army.

On the other side of the Korean Peninsula, South Korean President Lee Myung-bak called a security meeting Wednesday to discuss changes in the DPRK as it reshuffled military leaders.



Lee ordered officials to "keep close tabs on developments" in the DPRK and maintain cooperation with other countries concerned, Lee's spokesman, Park Jeong-ha, said during a briefing.

Attendees at the 90-minute meeting included the intelligence chief, the foreign minister and the defense minister.

Kim Jong Un, 29, assumed power of the nation after his father Kim Jong Il died of a heart attack last December at the age of 69.

Tensions between the north and the south as well as the United States were eased but later tightened again after the new DPRK leader took power.

Pyongyang and the United States reached an agreement in late February under which the DPRK agreed to suspend its uranium enrichment and nuclear and long-range missile tests, and allow UN inspectors back to the country in return for 240,000 tons of food aid by Washington.

The DPRK's decision to press ahead with the launch of an "earth observation" satellite on April 13, however, prompted Washington to suspend its planned assistance.

Speculation was rife about a third nuclear test by Pyongyang following the failed satellite launch. However, the DPRK said that it has no plans to conduct a third nuclear test "at present."

DPRK Foreign Minister Pak Ui-chun said in Cambodia last Saturday that his country was ready to rejoin the six-party talks.

The six-party talks, which involve South Korea, the DPRK, China, the United States, Japan and Russia, began in 2003 but stalled in December 2008. The DPRK quit the talks in April 2009 to protest international condemnation of its long-range missile tests.

While meeting with Pak Ui-chun on the sidelines of the ASEAN meetings in Cambodia, Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi said that easing the situation on the Korean Peninsula serves the interests of all parties.

China will strengthen communications and coordination with all parties and work together to maintain peace and stability on the peninsula and create conditions for the resumption of the six-party nuclear talks, Yang said.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2012-07/18/c_131722753.htm

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Chosun Ilbo – South Korea

July 18, 2012

U.S. Digs in Heels in Missile Talks with Korea

South Korea is having trouble persuading the U.S. to extend its permissible missile range and payload. The U.S. is apparently insisting on a trade-off clause in a bilateral agreement that says if the maximum range is extended from the current 300 km, then the weight of the warhead must be reduced from the present 500 kg.

"The U.S. is steadfastly opposed to our demands to boost the range of our missiles to 800-1,000 km in order to deal with a North Korean threat," a government official here said on Tuesday. "It's unwilling to change its stance that any extension in range would require the size of the payload to remain the same as the present limit or be reduced."

But experts here say a warhead weighing less than 500 kg would not pack much of a punch unless it is a nuclear payload.

"If we follow the U.S. proposal, then there would be no point in extending the range of our missiles since we do not have nuclear warheads," a military expert at a state-run think tanks said. "A warhead weighing more than 500 kg is essential to destroy North Korean missile bases or nuclear facilities located in deep underground bunkers," said another.



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Ballistic missiles like the Hyunmu-2 presently operated by the South Korean military carry warheads that do not exceed 500 kg, but North Korean missiles are apparently equipped with warheads weighing between 650 kg to 1 ton. China's ballistic missiles carry warheads that weigh up to three tons, and Russia has 8.8 ton warheads.

http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2012/07/18/2012071800667.html

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Washington Times

Inside the Ring: North Korean EMP

By Bill Gertz, *The Washington Times*

Wednesday, July 18, 2012

Recent satellite navigation jamming by North Korea's military near the demilitarized zone and a report in a Chinese journal are raising new fears that Pyongyang is developing electromagnetic pulse weapons.

A communist-owned monthly journal in Hong Kong reported last month that the GPS jamming of aircraft navigation systems that was traced to North Korea is part of asymmetric warfare capabilities of the reclusive communist state.

The *Bauhinia* journal article, by military commentator Li Daguang said the new capabilities threaten South Korea's information and electronic warfare capabilities.

"North Korea has always planned to develop small-scale nuclear warheads," the article said. "On this foundation, they could develop electromagnetic pulse (EMP) bombs in order to paralyze the weapons systems of the South Korean military — most of which involve electronic equipment — when necessary."

In fact, Chinese analysts believe North Korea is working on small nuclear warheads that could produce "super-EMP bombs," the report said. "Once North Korea achieves the actual war deployment of EMP weapons, the power of its special forces would doubtlessly be redoubled," the report said.

EMP bombs emit high-powered electronic magnetic waves that destroy or severely disrupt all electronics within a large area of the waves.

The bursts were first discovered during above-ground nuclear tests and several states are now developing EMP weapons that produce the same shock waves without having to produce a nuclear blast.

"Currently, many nations such as the United States and England, and including North Korea, are researching and developing EMP bombs," the report said.

"A number of experts have analyzed the matter and believe that North Korea's EMP studies have reached a rather high level. Even though there are differences between GPS-jamming radio waves and EMP, they both use electromagnetic waves."

Peter V. Pry, a former CIA official who is executive director of the Task Force on National and Homeland Security that advises Congress on EMP and other threats to the critical infrastructures, said the Chinese article on North Korean EMP highlights the problem of what the U.S. could face in the aftermath of a nuclear EMP attack by Iran or terrorists.

An EMP attack would be worse than the recent East Coast power disruptions that closed businesses and federal agencies, disrupted emergency services and communications, caused massive food spoilage, blacked out gas pumps and traffic signals and left millions without air conditioning during a heat wave.

Mr. Pry said the blackout was minor compared to a nuclear or natural EMP disaster.

"Rogue states or terrorists armed with a single nuclear weapon detonated at high-altitude over the United States could cause a protracted blackout nationwide, that would last months or years and might even be unrecoverable," he said in an interview.

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<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/jul/18/inside-ring-north-korean-emp/>

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AsiaOne News – Singapore

Missile Shield may Spark China Nuclear Upgrade: Officer

By Reuters

Thursday, July 19, 2012

VIENNA - China may need to modernize its nuclear arsenal to respond to the destabilizing effect of a planned US-backed missile defence system, a senior Chinese military officer said on Wednesday.

"It undermines the strategic stability," said Major General Zhu Chenghu of China's National Defence University about the US-led development of a missile shield, which has also alarmed Russia.

"We have to maintain the credibility of deterrence," he told Reuters on the sidelines of a panel discussion on nuclear disarmament, referring to the military doctrine that an enemy will be deterred from using atomic arms as long as he can be destroyed as a consequence.

The United States is spending about US\$10 billion (S\$12.5 billion) a year to develop, test and deploy missile defences, which would include a European shield as part of a layered system.

The defences would also include ship-based interceptors that could be deployed in the Middle East and Asia-Pacific - for instance as a hedge against North Korea - plus ground-based missile interceptors in silos in Alaska and California.

The United States says the system in Europe - which is to be deployed in four phases by about 2020 - is intended to counter a potential threat from Iran and poses no risk to Russia.

But Moscow says the interceptors that the United States and NATO are deploying will be able to destroy its own warheads in flight by about 2018, upsetting the post-Cold War balance of power.

The comments by Zhu - who stirred controversy in 2005 by suggesting China could use nuclear weapons if the United States intervened militarily in a conflict over Taiwan - indicated this is an argument that also resonates in China.

FIRST STRIKE

China "will have to modernize its nuclear arsenal" because the deployment of a missile defence system "may reduce the credibility of its nuclear deterrence," Zhu told the seminar.

"Therefore Beijing will have to improve its capabilities of survival, penetration ... otherwise it is very difficult for us to maintain the credibility of nuclear deterrence."

Joseph Cirincione, president of the Ploughshares Fund, a global security foundation, said any American military planner in Zhu's position would say the same.

Planned anti-missile systems and other advanced weapons in the future could "make it theoretically possible for the US to launch a first strike on China, knock out most of its 40 or so long-range missiles, and intercept any left that were launched in response," he said.

"Missile defences, however benign they appear to the side building them, always force others nations to improve and increase their offensive weapons," Cirincione, who also took part in Wednesday's discussion in Vienna, said in an e-mail.

The European system is to include interceptor missile installations in Poland and Romania and a radar in Turkey as well as interceptors and radars on ships based in the Mediterranean Sea.

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The United States and Russia hold the vast majority of the world's nuclear weapons. China, France and Britain are the three other officially recognised nuclear-armed countries, but their arsenals are much smaller.

China closely guards information about its nuclear weapons. However, the US Department of Defence has said that China has about 130-195 deployed nuclear-capable ballistic missiles.

<http://www.asiaone.com/News/AsiaOne%2BNews/Asia/Story/A1Story20120719-359943.html>

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Bloomberg News

North Korea Reviewing 'Nuclear Issue' to Counter U.S.

By Sangwon Yoon

July 20, 2012

North Korea said it is reviewing the "nuclear issue" to counter the U.S., days after Kim Jong Un consolidated his power by taking the nation's top military rank and removing the army chief.

The U.S. is funding plots to bring down the regime in Pyongyang, an unidentified Foreign Ministry spokesman said in a statement carried by the official Korean Central News Agency today. The dispatch didn't elaborate on what was meant by the nuclear review.

Kim may be preparing to follow in the footsteps of his father, Kim Jong Il, who detonated nuclear devices in 2006 and 2009, according to South Korea's Foreign Ministry. The new leader, who took power after the December death of the elder Kim, presided over a botched long-range missile launch in April that ended a U.S. aid deal and further isolated the impoverished nation.

The regime, which in May denied any plans to test an atomic weapon, said today it had arrested a traitor who was paid and directed by U.S. and South Korean intelligence agencies to stir unrest by destroying national monuments, giving the U.S. a pretext for military intervention.

The statement shows that North Korea may change its mind and conduct a third nuclear test, said a South Korean Foreign Ministry official involved in nuclear talks, who asked not to be identified because he isn't authorized to speak to the media. He said there was no substance to North Korea's accusation and urged it to return to six-nation talks aimed at ending its nuclear weapons program.

Military Alert

South Korea raised some military alert levels this week after Kim assumed the title of marshal and Ri Yong Ho was fired as army chief.

The arrested man, Jon Yong Chol, was a North Korean who defected to the South in 2010 and then returned illegally to destroy statues celebrating the Kim family, KCNA said yesterday.

South Korea's Unification Ministry, which handles Seoul's relations with North Korea, confirmed Jon's 2010 defection. South Korea denies all the allegations of espionage, Kim Hyung Suk, a spokesman for the ministry, said by telephone.

The six-nation forum involving China, Japan, Russia, the U.S. and South Korea began in 2003 and hasn't convened since 2008. The North Korean regime disclosed a uranium enrichment plant in November 2010, providing it with a second means in addition to plutonium to create nuclear weapons.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-07-20/north-korea-reviewing-nuclear-issue-to-counter-u-s-.html>

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India Today – India

Issue No. 1016, 20 July 2012

United States Air Force Counterproliferation Research & Education | Maxwell AFB, Montgomery AL
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Government Baffled over DRDO Chief's Claim on Missile Shield

By Manoj Joshi, *Mail Today*
July 18, 2012

New Delhi: The government of India has been baffled by DRDO chief V.K. Saraswat's repeated claims that a ballistic missile shield is ready for deployment, and that two locations, presumably New Delhi and Mumbai, will be the first recipients of the ballistic missile defence (BMD) system. Speaking on a TV programme in early May, Saraswat said that "this system is now ready for induction". Nearly two weeks later, the claim was repeated in an interview to Press Trust of India where Saraswat was quoted as saying, "The ballistic missile defence shield is now mature... We are ready to put phase I in place."

Well-known defence technology analyst Prasun K. Sengupta is sceptical; he bluntly terms the DRDO's claims as "sheer unabashed jingoistic kite-flying by DRDO, period".

Only six tests, that too in highly controlled conditions, have taken place so far and there is no independent confirmation of whether they have been successful. As of now it is not clear which of the three services will even man the system. Former joint director of the Centre for Air Power Studies, Air Vice-Marshal (retd.) Kapil Kak says, "It is indeed surprising why the IAF - as the national instrument vested with the responsibility of India's air defence - was not closely involved from the proof-of-concept stage itself."

Mail Today requested the DRDO to respond to a series of questions early last week, but had received no response till Tuesday.

According to the DRDO, six of its seven tests have been successful. But, instead of carrying them out in realistic conditions, they have been done in laboratory conditions so far. The usual test comprises of the launch of a "hostile missile" from the Interim Test Range in Chandipur on the Orissa coast, and the counter-launch of an interceptor missile from Wheeler Island just 70 km away. DRDO scientists say that the target missile that was intercepted in the test of February 2012, for example, mimicked a 2,000-km range missile of the type that Pakistan possesses, yet it was actually launched from 70 km away.

Equally important is the fact that the "target" missile is a liquid fuelled slow-moving Prithvi, and as of now the DRDO has not tested its system against its own solid-propelled missiles like Agni I or Agni II. As Sengupta puts it, "Its (the Prithvi's) slow speed during both the boost phase and the terminal phase "does not in any way mimic the flight profiles of the solid-fuelled Theatre Ballistic Missiles and Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles with both China and Pakistan."

With nuclear weapons around, only a shield that will guarantee blocking every single missile is the only one worth having. As of now there is no indication that the DRDO, or any other country, can achieve such a goal. None of the DRDO's claims have been verified by third parties, say, any of our armed forces. In contrast, China's January 2010 test was authenticated by the Pentagon whose spokesman said, "We detected two geographically separated missile launch events with an exo-atmospheric collision also being observed by space-based sensors."

The Indian BMD system is something of a puzzle. It was initially mooted by APJ Abdul Kalam in 1997 and taken up in the 2000s, when key technology relating to tracking, fire control and guidance radars became available from Israel, France and Russia. However, none of the three services ever expressed any requirement for such a system. Their need has been for a system to counter shorter ranged, theatre ballistic missiles and cruise missiles.

Non-proliferation experts are appalled at the lack of any visible political guidance to the BMD. The obvious response of an adversary to a missile shield is to field greater numbers of missiles with nuclear weapons; that seems to be the track Pakistan is following. Kak notes, "For an unstable and fragile state like Pakistan, India's BMD could indeed be destabilising, as this would substantially reduce the value of Pakistan's nuclear and missile arsenal, tempting it to increase the same."



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MIT scholar Christopher Clary argues that, "Indian policymakers must be willing to make the calculation that whatever safety comes from missile defences of dubious effectiveness outweighs the risks that come from a Pakistani nuclear arsenal that is larger than it would be without Indian missile defences."

Of course, there is the other question. In its claims DRDO says that the system will be ready for "two places", presumably Mumbai and Delhi. But what about Kolkata, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Lucknow and the rest of the country?

The government only has itself to blame for permitting a technology programme with such serious ramifications and not providing it any political guidance.

<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/government-baffled-over-drdo-chief-claim-on-missile-shield/1/208850.html>

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London Guardian – U.K.

Nuclear Weapon Safety Hindered by Cuts, Says MoD Report

Head of armed forces nuclear watchdog says reduction in number of expert staff will affect submarines and silos

By Rob Edwards

Tuesday, 17 July 2012

The safety of Britain's nuclear weapons and nuclear-powered submarines is being increasingly jeopardised by spending cuts and staff shortages, according to a report from the Ministry of Defence.

The report, by the MoD's head of nuclear safety, Commodore David Langbridge, warns that there is a "lack of adequate resource to deliver the defence nuclear programmes safely". The problem is getting worse and requires "significant action", he says.

The MoD is responsible for up to 220 nuclear warheads, used to arm Trident missiles on four reactor-driven submarines. The warheads are stored at Coulport, near Glasgow, and are regularly transported by road to and from the bomb factories at Aldermaston and Burghfield in Berkshire.

The Royal Navy also operates six nuclear-powered but conventionally armed submarines, with a seventh due to come into service later this year. Five more are due to be commissioned by 2024, as old submarines are retired.

Langbridge is head of the MoD's defence nuclear safety regulator and his report covers 2011. It is the latest in a series of official reports expressing concern about cutbacks and nuclear safety released by the MoD after it was challenged under freedom of information law in 2010. The equivalent report from 2010 warned that risks of accidents or radiation leaks were getting "progressively worse".

"Inadequacy of resources, both money and staff complement, and the difficulties in maintaining a sustainable cadre of suitably competent staff (Royal Navy, MoD civilians and in industry partners) are the principal threats to safety in the defence nuclear programme in the medium term," Langbridge concludes.

He codes the lack of finance and staff as red, the highest level, which means "significant action might be necessary within a year". The inadequacy of resources is defined as "degrading" because of continuing reductions in the MoD's budget.

Langbridge points to particular shortages of submarine reactor engineers, and suggests that measures in hand to try to address the problem may be insufficient. Plans to reduce MoD staff by a quarter by 2014-15 "provide a difficult backdrop", he says.

He highlights six other problems areas, though they are coded amber or green because the action required is less urgent. They include a lack of funding for decommissioning submarines, and inconsistent approaches to demonstrating plant safety and minimising exposure of radioactivity.

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"The number of incidents remains too high," he says. "Individually they have not been of high significance or safety/environmental detriment, but taken together they produce concern that working conditions and culture might not prevent an incident of higher significance."

The problem areas all represent a potential compromise to safety, according to Langbridge. "They pose the risk that it will become increasingly difficult to maintain that the defence nuclear programmes are being managed with due regard for the protection of the workforce, the public and the environment."

Fred Dawson, who worked for the MoD for 31 years before he retired as head of the radiation protection policy team in 2009, accused ministers of ignoring the regulator's repeated warnings. "The MoD has failed to allocate sufficient resources to nuclear safety," he said.

John Ainslie, co-ordinator of the Scottish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, suggested that ministers were asking the regulator to do more work with fewer resources. "The government is putting the safety of the public at risk by cutting the nuclear safety budget while they press ahead with the plan to build new nuclear-armed submarines," he said.

The MoD, however, insisted that its nuclear safety record over the last 50 years was excellent. A spokesman said: "The report recognises a wide range of actions we have already taken, and the progress that has been made, towards sustaining those high standards of safety, including actions on maintaining sufficient numbers of experienced personnel."

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2012/jul/17/nuclear-weapons-safety-cuts-mod>

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The Independent – U.K.

Lib Dems Push for 'Stand-By' Trident Replacement Deal

Party leaders say proposal not to replace Vanguard subs would save billions and set them apart from the Tories

By Andrew Grice

Thursday, 19 July 2012

The future of Britain's nuclear deterrent looks likely to be an issue at the 2015 election as the Liberal Democrats prepare to endorse a scaled-down version of the £25bn programme to replace the Trident system.

An internal review by the Ministry of Defence is expected to produce a "menu of options" including putting the UK's nuclear weapons on "standby" so they could be reactivated at short notice.

The warheads would be launched with Cruise missiles from the existing Astute class submarines, with the two elements kept at separate locations. This would save billions of pounds as the Government would not need to replace the four Vanguard submarines, one of which is continuously at sea.

Supporters think an Astute submarine with nuclear weapons could be deployed within a week if there were a build-up of international tension. Some defence experts believe more time could be needed and that the Astute subs might need to move much nearer their target than the Vanguards, which have a range of 6,000 miles.

The MoD review is due to conclude by the end of this year and, while some details will be kept secret, a summary is likely to be published early next year. The "standby" option is winning growing support among Liberal Democrats and is expected to feature in their 2015 election manifesto if it is given the go-ahead by the MoD study.

The move would allow the Liberal Democrats to fight the election on a platform distinct from that of the Conservatives, who remain strongly committed to providing a "like-for-like replacement" for Trident by 2028, a process begun by the previous Labour Government. The Conservatives would almost certainly portray the "standby" plan as too risky in an uncertain and dangerous world and argue that the UK must remain a full member of the nuclear club to maintain a credible deterrent.

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Although contracts worth £1.3bn for the new Trident system have been announced recently, the Coalition parties have agreed to differ on the issue and have put off the final decision on the UK's deterrent until 2016.

Nick Clegg's party, which is keen to "differentiate" from the Conservatives in the run-up to the election, could seize on the scaled-down Trident option as a way of winning back progressive voters who have deserted the Liberal Democrats since they joined the Tories in coalition.

One Liberal Democrat source said yesterday: "We have to ask whether we can afford a Cold War weapons system in the age of austerity. Being a 'threshold' nuclear power would save billions. Other countries would know we still had a nuclear capability."

Labour supports an independent deterrent but has suggested making savings on the Trident replacement programme. But Ed Miliband said on becoming Labour leader that the party would "need to look very carefully at whether renewing Trident is the necessary or the right thing to do".

The MoD review will report to Philip Hammond, the Defence Secretary, and Nick Harvey, the Liberal Democrat Armed Forces minister, who is keen to explore alternatives to the £25bn Trident programme.

Tory ministers had hoped the exercise would build support for a "like-for-like" replacement but that now appears unlikely. Senior Liberal Democrats including Sir Menzies Campbell, the party's former leader, have questioned the value of the existing "Moscow criterion" – keeping an independent deterrent capable of obliterating the capital of Russia – in the post Cold War era.

Even some senior defence officials and retired service chiefs believe Trident is a relic and would rather see part of the £25bn budget spent on the conventional weapons needed for today's conflicts.

Nuclear weapons: The alternatives

1. "Like for like" replacement of existing submarine-launched Trident from 2028 at a cost of £25bn. Favoured by Conservatives and, for now, by Labour.
2. Scaled down version of Trident with warheads launched with Cruise missiles from Astute class submarines. Much cheaper. Likely to feature in 2015 Lib Dem manifesto.
3. Air-launched nuclear deterrent. Was considered by previous Labour Government. Critics say it would be expensive to build a new fleet.
4. Scrapping the nuclear deterrent. Favoured by CND, the SNP and the Green Party.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/lib-dems-push-for-standby-trident-replacement-deal-7956987.html>

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CNN.com

Security Clearance Blog

July 18, 2012

Civil Rights Groups Sue U.S. for Killing of Americans Tied to al Qaeda

By Ted Metzger, with reporting from Joe Sutton

Two civil rights groups sued the CIA director, the defense secretary and two military commanders over two covert U.S. strikes that killed three Americans in Yemen last year.

The operations killed radical Muslim cleric Anwar al-Awlaki, his son Abdulrahman al-Awlaki and Samir Khan, editor of a Jihadist online publication.

The two groups - the American Civil Liberties Union and the Center for Constitutional Rights - filed the lawsuit on behalf of the parents of Anwar al-Awlaki and Samir Khan.

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It claims the strikes that killed the three men violated their constitutional rights because the targeted attacks "rely on vague legal standards, a closed executive process and evidence never presented to the courts," according to the complaint filed in D.C. federal court this morning.

"It's about accountability," said Jameel Jaffers, the ACLU deputy director. "If the government is claiming the power, as it seems to be, to kill any American who is deemed to be a national security threat without judicial review of any kind, then we believe the government has an obligation to explain its actions."

But in the case of Anwar al-Awlaki, who was a major figure in al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, the Justice Department said it is justified.

He was linked to the plot of the so-called "underwear bomber" Umar Farouk AbdulMutallab and alleged Fort Hood shooter Nidal Hasan, and the Justice Department says there is a legal framework in place that makes going to the courts unnecessary.

"It does not require judicial approval before the president may use force abroad against a senior operational leader of a foreign terrorist organization with which the United States is at war," Attorney General Eric Holder said in a March speech. "Even if that individual happens to be a U.S. citizen."

The legal argument is slightly different for Khan and al-Awlaki's son, both presumed to be collateral damage in the drone strikes.

Khan was killed in September alongside Anwar al-Awlaki, whose son, Abdulrahman al-Awlaki, died in a separate drone strike a few weeks later, also in Yemen.

It is unclear whom the U.S. was targeting in the attack and why al-Awlaki's son was near that location.

Jaffers hopes those questions will be answered in court.

Relatives say the terror suspect's son was not affiliated with terrorism.

"I never thought that one day this boy, this nice boy, will be killed by his own government for no wrong he did certainly," his grandfather, Nasser al-Awlaki, said in a video statement provided to CNN by the ACLU.

The Kahn family's attorney advised them not to make a statement, but family friend and former family spokesman Jibril Hough said the issue isn't personal, but constitutional. "What Samir thought, felt, etc. is not the issue. The issue is the Constitution and giving the government the power to kill anyone 'at will.'" Hough said he didn't agree with Kahn, but, "He he had 'rights' as an American. If we don't have those rights, then we are not much better than the regime in Syria and other rogue places."

Holder said the U.S. takes the death of innocent bystanders into account.

"Under the principle of proportionality, the anticipated collateral damage must not be excessive in relation to the anticipated military advantage," Holder said in March.

The lawsuit against CIA Director David Petraeus, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and two military officials seeks damages against the four government officials. It does not name a specific dollar amount, only saying "an amount to be determined at trial," according to the complaint.

"It's not about money," Jaffers said. "The main purpose of bringing the lawsuit is to obtain a kind of accountability that can only be obtained in a federal court."

This is the second lawsuit the ACLU has filed on behalf of Nasser al-Awlaki.

In 2010, it filed a suit in federal court trying to prevent the targeting killing of Anwar al-Awlaki after it was made public that he was on a U.S. government "kill list."

The court dismissed the case a few months later.

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http://security.blogs.cnn.com/2012/07/18/first-on-cnn-civil-rights-groups-sue-u-s-for-killing-of-americans-tied-to-al-qaeda/?hpt=hp_bn2

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Minneapolis Star Tribune

Lawmaker: Fort Hood Report Shows FBI Worried about Political Correctness, Ignored Terror Signs

By EILEEN SULLIVAN, Associated Press

July 19, 2012

WASHINGTON - The FBI was too concerned about political correctness and did not launch an investigation into a man who was later charged with killing 13 people in the 2009 attack in Fort Hood, Texas, despite significant warning signs that he was an Islamic extremist bent on killing civilians, according to a lawmaker briefed on a new report about the terrorist attack.

In emails to a known terrorist, Army Maj. Nidal Hasan expressed his support for suicide bombings and killing civilians, while the terrorist, Anwar al-Awlaki, encouraged Hasan to stay in touch, Rep. Michael McCaul, R-Texas, told The Associated Press Wednesday after he was briefed on the findings of a new review of the attack.

The review was done by former FBI Director William Webster and was more than two years in the making. FBI Director Robert Mueller asked that Webster conduct an independent review, and the bureau is expected to release an unclassified version this week.

Much was already known about the series of oversights and missteps the government made leading to the terror attack at the Fort Hood Army post. Soon after the attack, it was revealed that members of two FBI anti-terrorism task forces saw emails between the Army psychiatrist and al-Awlaki beginning in December 2008. Those task forces reviewed the communications and decided they were in keeping with Hasan's research at the time, and as a result, no formal investigation of Hasan was opened. Hasan was writing a research paper about the effects of combat in Iraq and Afghanistan.

But McCaul said Webster's report offers some new details that show the FBI was concerned about investigating an American Muslim in the military, and that is why an investigation was not pursued.

The FBI in San Diego had been investigating al-Awlaki, a former San Diego resident, for his possible connections to the 9/11 hijackers. When agents saw emails between Hasan and al-Awlaki, they asked the FBI's Washington office to talk to Hasan's bosses, according to a government official briefed on the findings who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak publicly about the Webster report. But the Washington agents thought that interviewing American Muslims who visit extremist websites was a sensitive issue and did not reach out to Hasan's bosses at the Defense Department, the official said.

"It shows you the length of the political correctness stuff going on," McCaul said after he was briefed on the findings of the independent review Wednesday.

Neither the FBI nor Webster responded to requests for comment. But the FBI and Defense Department have said that they've made several policy changes since the 2009 attack to help stave off similar attacks in the future.

One major change was that if al-Awlaki comes up as part of a terror investigation, FBI headquarters would be alerted, Mark Giuliano, assistant director for the FBI's National Security Branch, said last year.

Al-Awlaki, implicated in other terror plots, was killed in a drone strike in Yemen last fall.

Hasan, charged with killing 13 people and wounding 32 others in the November 2009 shooting rampage, is currently being tried in a military court.

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<http://www.startribune.com/nation/162963976.html>

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Institute of Peace & Conflict Studies (IPCS) – India
OPINION/Article #3681
18 July 2012

Pakistan's Babur and Ra'ad Cruise Missiles: Strategic Implications for India

By Shane A. Mason

If recent missile tests are any indication, cruise missiles, rather than ballistic missiles, appear to be taking an increasingly more prominent role in Pakistan's strategic force posture. The Babur (Hatf-7) land-attack cruise missile was inducted in 2010, and has been tested three times since. Pakistan's newest cruise missile – the air-launched Ra'ad (Hatf-8) – has been tested four times in all, including on 31 May, and is due to be handed over to the armed forces in the not-too-distant future.

Official Pakistani statements following the cruise missile tests have emphasised their "strategic" function. Instead of carrying conventional warheads, the cruise missiles are engineered to deliver either conventional or nuclear payloads. If it can overcome significant technological hurdles – including miniaturising nuclear warheads – Pakistan clearly envisions a nuclear role for its cruise missile programme. In light of the strategic aspirations for the Babur and Ra'ad, how will Pakistan's new and growing cruise missile arsenal influence India's strategic behaviour?

What Pakistan's cruise missiles mean for India

Ultimately, Pakistan's nuclear-capable cruise missiles have the potential to complicate India's decision-making calculus and even constrain Indian strategic behaviour. First, Pakistan's cruise missiles will pose a serious challenge to India's fledgling missile defence system. Cruise missiles are virtually undetectable and highly survivable, even in the face of modern missile defences. The first few weeks of the 2003 Iraq War demonstrated that sophisticated missile defences could shoot down ballistic missiles with relative ease, but faced a significantly more difficult task in preventing a cruise missile strike. This is not to say that cruise missiles can never be shot down or that they are perfectly invulnerable. Several U.S. cruise missiles veered wildly off-course – in a guidance-system failure called "clobbering" – during its missile campaign against Afghanistan in 1998 and during the Iraq War. Additionally, cruise missile defence, unlike ballistic missile defence, is relatively new and technologies developed to deal with this threat are likely to emerge in the coming years. Nevertheless, these shortcomings are superseded by the tremendous advantages cruise missiles have over ballistic missiles in defeating existing missile defences.

If the goal of India's missile defence system has been to bait Pakistan into an economically ruinous arms race – as some suggest the U.S. did with the Soviet Union in the 1980s – then it appears to be succeeding. But at what cost to India's security? Going down this path can only lead to a weaker, poorer, less-stable Pakistani state with more fissile material, nuclear warheads, and missiles. This result – an even more heavily-armed, less-stable Pakistan – is clearly not in India's interests.

Second, the addition of cruise missiles to Pakistan's arsenal can obscure the distinction between tactical and strategic weapons, thereby complicating nuclear signalling by creating a degree of uncertainty in the minds of Indian decision-makers. Nuclear signalling involves the preparation or movement of nuclear weapons in order to communicate to the adversary that a situation has escalated to the point where these weapons may be used. Signalling works best in a setting where the message being communicated between adversaries is explicit and clear. Since the Babur and Ra'ad cruise missiles can be used in a conventional or nuclear role, Indian decision-makers may mistakenly view conventional preparations as strategic ones, or vice versa. This confusion would likely lead India's armed forces to avoid taking any unnecessary risks, like penetrating deep into Pakistani territory, crossing the Line of Control, and the use of airpower.

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On the other hand, this ambiguity may provoke the opposite response. To eliminate a perceived Pakistani threat, New Delhi may disregard its long-standing no first-use pledge and use nuclear weapons in an offensive, rather than a defensive, fashion. Although this scenario appears extremely unlikely, states will do what they must to protect their sovereignty, even if it means abrogating on previous commitments.

Babur, Ra'ad, and thinking about war in South Block

The credibility of Pakistan's nuclear deterrent, augmented by its new strategic cruise missile program, will likely steer India towards an increasingly prudent military posture. Due to its numerical and geographic advantage over Pakistan – which would almost certainly lead to an Indian victory in a conventional engagement – India would like to create a firewall between conventional and strategic operations, keeping nuclear weapons out of any future conflict with Pakistan. Pakistan, however, will not allow this to happen. Instead, Islamabad has done everything - including eschewing a no-first use doctrine, developing the Nasr short-range ballistic missile, and operationalising nuclear-capable cruise missiles like the Babur and Ra'ad – to give the Army the tools to quickly turn a conventional attack from India into a nuclear crisis.

The Babur and Ra'ad have brought the fundamental dilemma in Indian defence planning vis-à-vis Pakistan into sharp relief. That is, India's armed forces – conventionally superior to Pakistan – must be used in a way that punishes the adversary, yet falls short of crossing one of Islamabad's nuclear red-lines. This must be done as Pakistan remains ambiguous about what its nuclear thresholds actually are and threatens nuclear retaliation. Furthermore, when Pakistan's newest weapons systems are deployed, they will, especially, be vulnerable to theft from terrorist groups – a non-trivial concern. Clearly, cruise missiles make an existing challenge to Indian defence planning more complex.

Shane A. Mason is a Graduate Research Assistant, Monterey Institute of International Studies Monterey, CA.

<http://www.ipcs.org/article/india/pakistans-babur-and-raad-cruise-missiles-strategic-implications-for-india-3681.html>

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Arms Control Association

Nuclear and Missile Systems We Can't Afford, Don't Need

OPINION/Volume 3, Issue 12

July 18, 2012

By DARYL G. KIMBALL

If the Congress and the White House are serious about reducing the booming federal deficit, they must work together to scale back previous schemes for a new generation of strategic nuclear weapons delivery systems and unnecessary spending on a ground-based missile defense system that doesn't work for a threat that doesn't exist.

It has been more than two decades since the end of the Cold War, yet the United States maintains--and is poised to rebuild--a costly strategic nuclear triad that is sized to launch far more nuclear weapons than necessary to deter nuclear attack against the U.S. or its allies.

Today, the United States deploys some 1,737 strategic nuclear warheads, while Russia deploys some 1,492 strategic nuclear warheads. Each side has thousands more warheads in reserve.

Other than Russia, the only potential adversary with a long-range nuclear capability is China, which has no more than 40-50 warheads on intercontinental ballistic missiles. The United States' has more than 30 times as many. Just one U.S. nuclear-armed submarine--loaded with 24 missiles, each armed with four 455-kilaton warheads--could kill millions.

As the Pentagon's new defense strategy correctly asserts, "It is possible that our deterrence goals can be achieved with a smaller nuclear force...."

However, current plans call for 12 new nuclear-armed ballistic missile submarines to carry more than 1,000 strategic nuclear warheads into the 2070s, at a total cost of almost \$350 billion.



The Air Force is seeking a new, nuclear-armed strategic bomber that would cost at least \$68 billion, as well as a new fleet of land-based ballistic missiles. Modernization and operation of the United States' 450 Minuteman III land-based ballistic missiles would cost billions more.

As, then-Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. James Cartwright explained last year, "... we have to recapitalize all three legs [of the nuclear triad], and we don't have the money to do it."

In a time of budget austerity, these ambitious and expensive schemes for a new generation of strategic nuclear weapons delivery systems can and must be scaled back in manageable, cost-effective way.

Likewise, U.S. ballistic missile interceptor programs should be cost-effective, proven through real-world testing, and sized to address threats that actually exist. The fiscal year 2013 budget request would already provide \$9.7 billion for all ballistic missile defense programs, and the administration projects spend another \$47.4 billion for these programs from 2013 to 2017.

The administration's missile defense budget includes \$903 million for operating 30 ground-based interceptor (GBI) missiles in Alaska and California to deal with a potential limited, long-range missile attacks from North Korea or Iran, neither of which have successfully tested such missiles. The system failed in their last two intercept tests, in January and December 2010. The MDA plans to have 52 GBI missiles by 2017.

Despite the GBI program's severe shortcomings and high-costs, some would have the taxpayer spend even more on the program than the administration has requested.

There are four principal ways in which the president and the Congress can trim unnecessary strategic nuclear force modernization programs and trim excess spending from the unproven Ground-Based Mid-Course strategic missile interceptor program--and still retain more than enough megatonnage to deter nuclear attack by any current or future adversary.

1. Rightsize the Strategic Nuclear Sub Fleet

The first step is to reevaluate and reduce the size of the future nuclear-armed strategic submarine force. In January 2012, the Pentagon said it would delay procurement of the proposed Ohio-class replacement nuclear-armed submarine (SSBNX) by two years, starting in 2031 not 2029, which could save some \$6-7 billion in the next ten years.

However, without a reduction in the size of the force, the overall cost of the program will remain the same, and take resources away from the Navy's other priority shipbuilding projects. The Pentagon has requested \$565 billion for the SSBNX program for fiscal 2013.

By reducing the Trident nuclear-armed sub fleet from 14 to 8 or fewer boats and building no more than 8 new nuclear-armed subs, the United States could save roughly \$27 billion over 10 years, and \$120 billion over the 50-year lifespan of the program.

Furthermore, by changing prompt launch requirements developed during the Cold War and increasing the number of missile tubes and warhead loadings on each submarine, the Navy could still deploy the same number of strategic nuclear warheads at sea on a smaller, 8 sub fleet, as currently planned under the New START treaty (about 1,000).

2. Postpone Work on a New Strategic Bomber

Second, work on a new strategic bomber should be delayed. There is no rush to field a fleet of new bombers given the Pentagon's plan to retain 60 of its existing nuclear-capable, long-range B-2 and B-52 bombers into the 2040s, which will already cost approximately \$4 billion to refurbish over the next 4 years. Delaying work on the new bomber program would save \$18 billion over the next decade and approximately \$292 million in fiscal year 2013 alone, according to the Pentagon.

3. Trim the Cold War ICBM Force

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For additional savings, the Pentagon should reduce its land-based intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) force from 420 to 300 by cutting one squadron at each of the three Air Force bases where such missiles are deployed and foregoing a follow-on missile program to replace the existing force. This move would save approximately \$360 million in operations and maintenance costs in fiscal 2013 alone and far more in future years.

Prudent U.S. strategic nuclear force reductions could also induce Russia to further reduce its deployed strategic nuclear arsenal, which is already 200 warheads fewer than the United States, and prompt Moscow to delay or cancel some of its own costly plans for modernizing its strategic nuclear delivery systems.

4. Don't Spend More Taxpayer Money for Ground-Based Mid-Course Missile Interceptors That Don't Work

The United States already has two GMD sites on the west coast, with 30 interceptors deployed in California and Alaska, to counter a potential, limited long-range ballistic missile volley from a rogue state. Neither Iran nor North Korea has yet deployed long-range missiles that could reach the United States.

The administration's budget request also includes \$1.5 billion for the European Phased Adaptive Approach, which involves the SM-3 interceptor system to handle potential attacks involving short- and medium-range missiles from Iran. Iran does have such missiles.

Spending even more for the GBI system—which has not had a successful intercept test since 2008; has had two flight test failures in 2010; and cannot yet deal with decoys—is not prudent. Because the GBI cannot be relied upon to work in real-world conditions and because Iran and North Korea has not successfully tested long-range missiles, pouring more money into the program doesn't improve U.S. national security and drains resources from other, higher priority programs.

More Security for Less Money

Fresh thinking is in order. Programs that address low-priority threats must be scaled back to make room for more pressing national priorities and reduce the deficit. Smart reductions in spending on unnecessary new nuclear weapons systems would enhance U.S. security.

Daryl Kimball has been the Executive Director of the Arms Control Association since September 2001. From 1997 to 2001, Kimball was the executive director of the Coalition to Reduce Nuclear Dangers, a consortium of 17 of the largest U.S. non-governmental organizations working together to strengthen national and international security by reducing the threats posed by nuclear weapons.

<http://www.armscontrol.org/issuebriefs/Nuclear-and-Missile-Systems-We-Cant-Afford-Dont-Need%20>

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Heritage Foundation
OPINION/The Foundry

U.S. Nuclear Triad Essential for National Security

By Bryan DeWinter
July 18, 2012

General Robert Kehler, the current commander of the Strategic Command, offered only tepid support for the existing U.S. nuclear triad during a July 12 speech on Capitol Hill.

General Kehler said that the traditional U.S. nuclear triad—comprised of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), and strategic bomber aircraft—remains “the best arrangement that we have today.” Strategic Command would, according to General Kehler, consider eliminating this structure if the President’s requirements change.



While it is entirely appropriate for a senior military commander to follow the policies of the President, this approach is wrongheaded for policymakers. The triad continues to serve vital security interests, and its maintenance should be derived from a sound evaluation of the strategic environment.

Kehler's speech also serves as another reminder of the dangers inherent in the "nuclear zero" policy, which envisions a world without nuclear weapons. It is a guiding philosophy of the Obama Administration, and it should be changed.

The "nuclear zero" concept undermines world stability and security for at least one very fundamental reason: It assumes that U.S. nuclear weapons reductions will generate goodwill on behalf of our adversaries. Nothing could be further from the truth. Countries pursue nuclear weapons programs because of their own perceptions of security, and that is not directly related to the numbers of U.S. nuclear weapons. In addition, nuclear weapons have deterred conflict between major world powers since they were created.

The nuclear triad remains essential for preserving U.S. national security and that of its allies. Each of the three components has complementary strengths that offer the most credible strategic deterrent force. In 2030, when the U.S. plans to start replacing its systems, it will have 60-year-old ICBMs, 40-year-old SLBMs, and 35- to 70-year-old bombers. The current Administration has thus far only demonstrated its willingness to *pledge* to pursue those efforts—with numerous strings attached.

The current fiscal environment means that only dedicated political leadership from the White House will result in the funding necessary to accomplish the needed modernization, despite nuclear weapons presenting only a minor investment in the context of the federal budget.

Eliminating "legs" of the nuclear triad would result in the U.S. falling short in preserving national security, fulfilling its nuclear deterrent guarantees to allies, and helping to preserve international stability. Instead, the U.S. should commit the resources necessary to modernize the nuclear triad and revitalize its nuclear weapons complex.

The overall objective that the Obama Administration should pursue is to calibrate national defenses according to the nature of the strategic environment and in light of existing and emerging threats—not solely budget pressures or arbitrarily determined political goals.

Bryan DeWinter is currently a member of the Young Leaders Program at The Heritage Foundation.

<http://blog.heritage.org/2012/07/18/u-s-nuclear-triad-essential-for-national-security/>

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The Diplomat – Japan

OPINION/The Diplomat Blogs

What's Going On In North Korea?

Changes at the top in Pyongyang? Disney characters on display? Is Kim Jong-un tightening his grip on power? Kosuke Takahashi reports.

July 19, 2012

By Kosuke Takahashi

When it comes to the wrangling of elites inside Pyongyang, one has to wonder whether a power struggle or policy change is under way in the Hermit Kingdom.

In a surprise move, North Korea's top military officer, Vice Marshal Ri Yong-ho, 69, was abruptly removed from all his posts of the ruling Workers' Party of Korea (WPK) due to illness, the state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) announced on July 16.

Pyongyang also announced on July 17 that it has promoted Gen. Hyon Yong-chol, little known outside North Korea, to vice marshal of the military, raising expectations Hyon will replace Ri both as vice marshal and as chief of the General Staff of the Korean People's Army (KPA).

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This sudden reshuffle is sparking speculation over new North Korean leader Kim Jong-un's internal purge of the old guard, such as Ri, cherished by his father, the late Kim Jong-il. This top-level shakeup also suggests the young leader Kim Jong-un and his closest aides only allow Songun (military-first) politics to operate within a framework that ensures the party's superiority over the military, ousting old hardline military officers like Ri.

"Ri Yong-ho and his parents had strong family ties with late Kim Jong-il," Hideshi Takesada, a professor at Yonsei University of South Korea, told *The Diplomat*. "Purging Ri means Kim Jong-un may want to go ahead against his father's will. A recent musical gala featuring Disney characters in Pyongyang may be another example of his departure from his father's policy."

On July 18, North Korea's state media also announced Kim Jong-un has been named "marshal" of the communist state. The BBC noted: "This latest promotion is another sign that Kim Jong-un is planning to rule North Korea through the army, just as his father did—and that he is tightening his grip on the levers of power."

But when it comes to North Korea, it's always important to distinguish fact from unconfirmed information.

First, there has been no sign of an unusual state in North Korea's 1.2 million-strong army, reducing speculation of a possible coup.

Second, some Western media cited Ri as "North Korean military chief." Not quite true. Unlike Western militaries, the No. 1 post of North Korea's military is not the chief of the General Staff of the KPA but the director of the General Political Bureau of the KPA. As evidence of this, Ri ranks fifth in the party hierarchy, while Choe Ryong-hae, the current director of the General Political Bureau of the KPA, ranks fourth, according to North Korea's official periodically released accounts.

"It is very unusual to hold for the Politburo to convene on a Sunday and announce its decision to dismiss Ri abruptly the following day," says Takesada, a former executive director of the National Institute for Defense Studies in Tokyo, the Japanese Ministry of Defense's think-tank.

It was also notable that, when referring to Ri, North Korea didn't use an honorific such as "Comrade" in its official announcement. This may suggest that a power shift or a struggle is still under way in Pyongyang.

Ri played a key role in helping the young heir to establish a powerbase among the military, whose support is key to regime stability. As a career military man, Ri assumed the post of chief of general staff of the KPA in February 2009. He was then appointed vice chairman of the party's Central Military Commission in September 2010, when Kim Jong-un established his status as successor to his father. Ri was one of eight officials who escorted the hearse carrying Kim Jong-il during his funeral in December 2011.

Takesada also notes that Ri, known as a hardliner, was the mastermind behind the sinking of South Korea's naval vessel in March 2010 and the North Korean bombardment of Yeonpyeong Island in November 2010.

Yet Ri's influence has declined over the past few months, as his rival Choe Ryong-hae, 62, has strengthened his own, first by becoming director of the General Political Bureau of the KPA in April and earning the same title as Ri's, as vice marshal.

On April 15, Choe, not Ri, stood beside Kim Jong-un at the high podium during a military parade to celebrate the centenary of the birth of North Korea's founder Kim Il-sung, in Pyongyang. This scene signaled that Choe had effectively robbed Ri of his position as top aide to Kim Jong-un.

Choe is a son of Choe Hyon, a former minister of the People's Armed Forces and close comrade of Kim Il-sung during his days as a partisan fighter.

Choe Ryong-hae in April became a member of the decision-making Politburo Presidium of the WPK as well as vice chairman of the party's Central Military Commission.



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The rise of Choe Ryong-hae, despite his previous civilian status in the Workers' Party, coincides with Kim Jong-un's ascension to power, meaning Choe is Kim Jong-un's strong favorite and top aide. Choe is also known to be close to Kim Junior's Uncle Jang Song-taek.

Experts such as Takesada believe that Jang Song-taek, Vice Chairman of the National Defense Commission, and his wife Kim Kyong-hui, former leader Kim Jong-il's younger sister and a secretary of the party's Central Committee and Choe are strongly supporting Kim Jong-un as guardians.

South Korea's *Yonhap News* points out that Kim Yong-chol, chief of the Reconnaissance General Bureau, or the North's premier intelligence agency, who also played a leading role in the sinking of the corvette Cheonan with Ri, may feel threatened and maneuver against the current regime in some form.

Lee Young-hwa, an economics professor at Kansai University in Osaka and expert on Korea, points out that a new economic reform policy called the "June 28 Policy" has created a conflict between the interests of a new military group led by Ri Yong-ho and those of the old military group led by O Kuk-ryol, thus triggering the current power struggle.

Kosuke Takahashi is a Tokyo-based journalist. His work has appeared in the Asahi Shimbun, Bloomberg, Asia Times and Jane's Defence Weekly, among other publications.

<http://thediplomat.com/2012/07/19/whats-going-on-in-north-korea/>

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World Policy Institute – New York, NY

OPINION/World Policy Blog

STARTing from Scratch: Rethinking Russian-American Missile Defense

July 19, 2012

By Elizabeth Pond

When President Barack Obama shortly orders his generals to implement the latest Nuclear Posture Review, he should rethink Washington's planned defense against rogue-state missiles.

At best, a more modest and supple missile defense might rescue the defunct "reset" of Russian-American relations, restore impetus to Obama's stalled drive for further cuts in global nuclear arsenals, and perhaps even incubate a "Euro-Atlantic Security Community." At a minimum, a new approach could help rationalize the United States' own forces and free some of the \$150 billion missile-defense budget for more urgent military priorities.

The need for a rethink follows from the new nature of 21st century threats. By now the West deems its old foe of Russia less a danger than a nuisance. Ever since Moscow pulled back its 20-odd top divisions from Central Europe in the 1990s and grudgingly let its former client states there join the NATO alliance, the West no longer fears that Russia might attack Western Europe with superior ground forces—and that conventional war might then escalate unintentionally to nuclear war.

Today, by contrast, the West sees peril in nuclear-armed failed, failing, or fanatical states, or even non-state terrorists who could one day acquire nuclear weapons and embrace martyrdom by launching them and accepting a devastating response. In the fluid 21st century, the United States does not regard nuclear-armed North Korea or nuclear aspirant Iran (or, sotto voce, a nuclear-armed Pakistan that might be captured by Islamist extremists) as rational actors who would be deterred by the superpowers' 20th century certainty of mutual suicide in any resort to nuclear weapons.

On taking office, Obama calculated that Moscow would therefore have as much interest as Washington in preventing chaotic nuclear proliferation, especially in view of violent Islamist secessionist movements in Russia's Caucasus. He therefore sought to reset strained bilateral relations by means of the 2010 New START bilateral agreement cutting both countries' huge nuclear stocks. He further stepped up efforts at bilateral cooperation on nuclear non-proliferation

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and a missile defense that could defend the US, its allies, and even Russia against the few nuclear-tipped missiles that any outlaw regimes might muster.

Obama endorsed the declared assumption of George W. Bush's administration that an elementary missile defense could deter rogue states from firing nuclear weapons at the United States, Western Europe, Russia, or Israel—and the undeclared assumption that it could also help deter Israel from making a preemptive strike at Iranian nuclear development sites. But he reconfigured his predecessor's blueprint in order to allay Moscow's concerns that the nascent Western missile defense might one day surge in quantity and quality and be turned against Russia.

Initially, Russia welcomed Obama's decision to scrap Bush's planned radar site in the Czech Republic and postpone any deployment of future high-speed SM-3 Block IIB missile interceptors until after 2020. Moscow later hardened its position, however—especially after NATO adopted the U.S. missile defense project as its own in late 2010—to demand a binding guarantee that the resulting system would not be directed against Russia's nuclear deterrent. American negotiators gave political assurances to this end, but rejected a legal guarantee. And starting with Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, they dismissed as "ludicrous" Russia's angst that a few dozen U.S. kinetic kill vehicles in Europe might devalue Russia's 1,550 strategic warheads.

In recent months the bilateral impasse has been aggravated by the anti-American rhetoric of President redux Vladimir Putin and by a warning from Russia's Chief of the General Staff that Russia might resort to a preemptive strike on European missile defense bases. Part of Moscow's intransigence arises from Moscow's humiliating loss of superpower status except in nuclear weapons, part from the prospect of having NATO interceptor missiles based in its neighbor and former client state of Poland, and part from the reversal of its overwhelming cold-war conventional military superiority in Europe to overwhelming Western conventional superiority today.

Yet Russia has analytical as well as psychological grounds for concern. It fears that ongoing US missile defense deployments are only, as President Bush's original National Security Directive 23 described them, "a starting point for fielding improved and expanded missile defenses later." Moscow wants to avert any augmentation after 2020 of vastly improved US radar and infrared sensors, along with any breakout of SM-3 Block IIB interceptors with a velocity above the critical five kilometers per second on both European land sites and American Aegis cruisers in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

In the worst-case scenario, Russia fears some ultimate marrying up of NATO European deployments with America's domestic ground missile defense and Aegis-class cruisers and perhaps even with future space-based command and control. It agreed only reluctantly in 2010 to the bilateral New START ceilings on strategic nuclear warheads, which did little more than codify cuts the Russians had already planned for domestic reasons. In the absence of any hedge against U.S. breakout, it will certainly balk at deeper cuts that in theory could make its nuclear deterrent vulnerable to a comprehensive missile defense. Such a global constellation could destabilize the perceived offensive-defensive nuclear balance, invite mutual misreadings of the adversary's intent, and trigger a dodgy and expensive new arms race.

On the presumption that the U.S. goal is indeed what Washington claims—not a front for an eventual global missile defense that might tip the bilateral nuclear balance against Russia, but a prudent measure to deny erratic North Korea, Iran, and Pakistan any political leverage from possession of nuclear weapons—various non-governmental groups have tried to draw up compromise proposals for a new Russian-American understanding on missile defense. Steven Pifer at the Brookings Institution has advanced one possible approach in an initial four-year-long confidence-building agreement that would not necessarily require a formal treaty.

For its part, the Euro-Atlantic Security Initiative (EASI) team under former U.S. Senator Sam Nunn, former Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, and Chairman of the Munich Security Conference Wolfgang Ischinger has brought American, Russian, and European experts together to outline concrete technical architecture for Russian-Western cooperation on the issue up to 2020. At their most visionary, the Carnegie Endowment-sponsored EASI participants hope that such interim cooperation could be a game-changer and lay the foundation for an eventual reshaping of a world order that would escape both cold-war anachronism and an international law of the jungle.

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Characteristic of these and other Track II proposals are common threat assessments, transparency, pooling of relevant warning data showing regional launches of ballistic missiles, joint command-post exercises and reciprocal observance of interceptor tests, preservation of each party's command and operational sovereignty, confidentiality of "sensitive technologies such as hit-to-kill and advanced radar algorithms," step-by-step pragmatism—and skepticism about reliance on drawing-board interceptors that so far have not been tested under realistic conditions.

Given official preoccupation with the never-ending financial crisis and the U.S. election campaign, these proposals have found no political resonance. But if Obama is reelected, he should take them as rough roadmaps for continuing to reduce the residual risk of Armageddon.

And if Mitt Romney is elected, he should do the same. After all, the landmark American-Soviet arms-control treaties of the 20th century—on the Nixon-to-China paradigm—were signed by Republican presidents.

Elizabeth Pond is a Berlin-based American journalist and the author of Friendly Fire: The Near-Death of the Transatlantic Alliance.

<http://www.worldpolicy.org/blog/2012/07/19/starting-scratch-rethinking-russian-american-missile-defense>

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The Diplomat – Japan

OPINION/The Diplomat Blogs

A Response to Waltz: Why Iran Shouldn't Get the Bomb

Iran getting the bomb won't set off an arms race in the region. But it might provoke some states, writes Robert Manning.

July 20, 2012

By Robert A. Manning

In an essay sparking debate amongst the chattering classes, Kenneth Waltz, one of the nation's most prominent International Relations (IR) scholars and the doyen of the "neo-realist" school tries to make the case "Why Iran Should Get the Bomb" in the July/August issue of Foreign Affairs. With little optimism surrounding the next round of "5+1" talks set for next week (July 24th) the question seems particularly timely.

While in some respects, this provocation is an understandable counter to the end-of-the-world hysteria that often surrounds the Iran nuclear debate, Waltz's essay suggests that IR theory suffers from a serious deficit of regional knowledge.

Waltz is best known for his classic 1981 essay, "Nuclear Weapons: More is Better," in which he makes a compelling argument that nuclear weapons were a major reason why major powers have not gone to war since 1945. Certainly, the "balance of terror" created by the awesome destructive power of nuclear weapons was an important factor in keeping the Cold War 'cold'.

Today, Waltz argues that Israel has had a nuclear monopoly that "has long fueled instability in the Middle East" and suggests that a nuclear Iran would become a stabilizing balance.

The first assertion is simply wrong: would a non-nuclear Israel be viewed as significantly different by Arab states?

The second assertion at best, oversimplifies the reality.

Far Cry from the Cold War

Differences in geography, history, and culture between the contemporary Middle East and the bipolar realities of the Cold war—not to mention an entire region engulfed in turmoil of historic proportions—raise questions about how much the balance-of-terror logic would apply to the region. The risks of miscalculation in a volatile region are enough to raise doubts.

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One need look no further than the antagonism between the Saudi/GCC backing of anti-Assad forces and Iran's full-blown support for Damascus for evidence of volatile passions bumping up against each other. A Sunni-Shia quasi-proxy war is playing out not just in Syria but in varying degrees, across the region from Lebanon to Yemen.

Waltz argues that since, "an atomic Israel did not trigger an arms race...there is no reason a nuclear Iran should now." He claims that once Iran crosses the nuclear threshold, deterrence will apply: "No other country in the region will have an incentive to acquire its own nuclear capability."

Really?

Has he talked to the Saudis, Egyptians or Turks lately?

Iran's nuclear program is dangerous in the region for those concerned with the proliferation of nuclear technology and its possible militarization in later flashpoints. Several countries in the region, from the UAE to Jordan, are developing their own nuclear energy programs. As NPT members, they have a right to pursue peaceful nuclear energy, and in some cases have legitimate energy needs. Yet Iran's ambitions and the tension it causes in the region have the potential to change the nature of regional programs from peaceful to militarized.

Waltz goes still further and argues that "the nuclear age is now almost 70 years old, and so far, fears of proliferation have proved to be unfounded."

I guess India, Pakistan and North Korea don't count.

That fears of a world with 20-30 nuclear states that President Kennedy warned about half a century ago have not materialized is cold comfort. Whether or not a nuclear Iran would trigger a chain of proliferation may be arguable. But I would not bet the mortgage that all of the likely suspects would refrain from nuclear competition.

To be fair, Waltz has a point about the specter of "mad mullahs" and an "innately irrational" Iranian regime being exaggerated. Tehran's obscene rhetoric notwithstanding, its leaders give every indication of seeking regime survival and power and do not appear suicidal.

Waltz disputes the notion that a nuclear Iran would be an emboldened if not more reckless international actor, arguing that states acquiring nuclear weapons have been sobered and more cautious.

He again may have a point—but not for the reasons he thinks.

In its quest for regional dominance, Iran's Revolutionary Guards and elite Qods force have allegedly been mucking around from Afghanistan to Yemen so extensively that it is difficult to imagine that a nuclear Iran would sow much additional mischief.

In fact, it is this Iranian imperialism — with a Shia missionary overlay — that makes Iran's nuclear ambitions particularly troubling. Iran's actions suggest that it is still a revolutionary state, not a status quo power seeking acceptance in the global order. One metric for that sort of behavior is the fate of the "5+1" nuclear talks. A failure of Iran to reach a nuclear bargain—despite unprecedented global sanctions crippling its economy, and looming threats of military action —would say a lot about the character of the regime.

Is a nuclear bargain possible with such a cantankerous actor?

A claimed inventor of chess, Iran has on occasion known when it has been checkmated. Faced with a costly stalemate in its protracted war with Iraq, Tehran reached a discomfiting capitulation in 1988. Whether a deal that precludes Iran building a nuclear weapon that both sides can live with is achievable may boil down to whether Tehran concludes that the pain of sanctions overrides the regime's need for the U.S. as an enemy—at least for now.

Robert A. Manning is a Senior Fellow at the Atlantic Council. He has served as Senior Strategist, DNI National Counterproliferation Center until June 2012, on the National Intelligence Council, and on the State Department Policy Planning staff (2005-08).



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