



**USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER**  
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MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

**Issue No. 1036, 07 December 2012**

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Tehran Times – Iran

## U.S. Open to Bilateral Talks with Iran: Clinton

Political Desk

Sunday, 2 December 2012

TEHRAN – The United States is open to bilateral talks about Iran’s nuclear program if Tehran is “ever ready,” Reuters quoted U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton as saying on Friday.

The U.S. and its allies claim that Iran may be seeking to develop nuclear weapons. Iran denies the claim, saying its nuclear program is purely for peaceful purposes such as power generation and producing medical isotopes.

Speaking to a group of officials, experts, and diplomats from the U.S. and the Middle East, Clinton said that the Obama administration is prepared for bilateral talks with Iran.

For now, Clinton said Washington is working with the so-called 5+1 group (the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and Germany) to resume talks with Iran about its nuclear program.

“We are working on the P5+1 and making our willingness known that we are ready to have a bilateral discussion if they are ever ready to engage,” said Clinton, who has said she plans to step down as secretary of state next year.

While giving no details, Clinton said the 5+1 group was trying to craft a proposal to Iran “that does make it clear we are running out of time. We have got to get serious; here are issues we are willing to discuss with you but we expect reciprocity.”

In October, diplomats had said they were considering asking Iran for stricter limits on its nuclear program in exchange for an easing of sanctions in a long-shot approach aimed at yielding a solution that has eluded them for a decade.

<http://tehrantimes.com/politics/103706-us-open-to-bilateral-talks-with-iran-clinton>

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Seattle Times

Sunday, December 2, 2012

## Iran Says Nuclear Fuel Removed Because of Debris

*Iran's nuclear chief says fuel was removed from the country's sole nuclear reactor in October because debris had been left behind during its construction.*

The Associated Press (AP)

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran's nuclear chief says fuel was removed from the country's sole nuclear reactor in October because debris had been left behind during its construction.

The Sunday report by several Iranian newspapers quotes Fereidoun Abbasi as saying that bolts and welding material left inside the Russian-built Bushehr reactor had led to abnormal readings during operation.

Abbasi added that fuel removal and temporary plant shutdown is part of normal operating procedures.

On Wednesday, Iran said the power plant is ready to resume operations after refueling. Last week, the U.N. International Atomic Energy Agency reported the removal of the partly-used fuel in October. The plant reached its full 1000-megawatt capacity in September and is undergoing final technical assessments before Iranian engineers take over full responsibility from a Russian team in early 2013.

[http://seattletimes.com/html/nationworld/2019810209\\_apirannuclear.html](http://seattletimes.com/html/nationworld/2019810209_apirannuclear.html)

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Al Arabiya – U.A.E.

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## U.S. Steps up Spying on Iran's Nuclear Reactor: Report

Monday, 03 December 2012

By Agence France-Presse (AFP)

Washington: U.S. intelligence agencies have significantly stepped up spying operations on Iran's Bushehr nuclear reactor prompted by concerns about the security of weapons-grade plutonium there, The Wall Street Journal reported Monday.

Citing unnamed U.S. officials, the newspaper said the increased U.S. surveillance of Bushehr has been conducted in part by U.S. unmanned drones operating over the Gulf.

The effort resulted in the interception of visual images and audio communications coming from the reactor complex, the report said.

Iran says its nuclear program is peaceful but many in the international community suspect its real aim is to develop nuclear weapons.

The U.N. Security Council has imposed four rounds of sanctions on Iran which have been augmented this year by painful Western restrictions on its vital oil exports, leading to serious economic problems.

Tehran suggested that a U.S. drone was spying on Bushehr on Nov. 1 when it sent Iranian fighter jets to pursue the unmanned craft, firing at it but missing, the U.S. paper said.

But according to U.S. officials, the drone was conducting surveillance that day, but not on Bushehr, The Journal said.

The stepped up surveillance came after the U.S. government became alarmed over activities at Bushehr, especially the removal of fuel rods from the plant in October, just two months after it became fully operational, the paper said.

Tehran formally protested the Pentagon's spying activities in a Nov. 19 letter to United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, The Journal said.

The complaint charged that the United States has repeatedly violated Iranian airspace with its drone flights, according to the paper.

<http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/12/03/253084.html>

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New York Times

## U.S. Warns Syria on Chemical Weapons

By PETER BAKER and MICHAEL R. GORDON

December 4, 2012

Page – A8

WASHINGTON — President Obama warned Syria on Monday not to use chemical weapons against its own people, vowing to hold accountable anyone who did, even as American intelligence officials picked up signs that such arms might be deployed in the fighting there.

The White House said it had an "increased concern" that the government of President Bashar al-Assad was preparing to use such weapons, effectively confirming earlier reports of activity at chemical weapons sites. The administration said it would take action if they were used, suggesting even the possibility of military force.

"Today I want to make it absolutely clear to Assad and those under his command: The world is watching," Mr. Obama said in a speech at the National Defense University in Washington. "The use of chemical weapons is and would be totally unacceptable. If you make the tragic mistake of using these weapons, there will be consequences and you will be held accountable."



Neither the president nor his aides would specify how the United States would hold Syrians accountable, but the White House confirmed that contingency plans had been drawn for direct action. The president's statement amplified similar warnings issued by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton earlier in the day in Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic, which represents the interests of the United States in Damascus now that the American Embassy there has been closed.

"This is a red line for the United States," Mrs. Clinton said. "I am not going to telegraph in any specifics what we would do in the event of credible evidence that the Assad regime has resorted to using chemical weapons against their own people. But suffice it to say, we are certainly planning to take action if that eventuality were to occur."

The sharpening language came as NATO was preparing to buttress its member Turkey against a potential attack from Syria. A plan expected to be endorsed by the alliance's foreign ministers during two-days of meetings that begin Tuesday in Brussels calls for deploying American, German and Dutch Patriot missile-defense batteries under the operational control of the NATO military command, Western officials said Monday.

Such a move would be the most direct action in the Syrian conflict by the alliance, which has remained cautious about intervention there. But for months, Turkey has expressed concerns about the potential of missile attacks from Syria as relations between the two countries have worsened, and last month Turkey asked for Patriot batteries.

As the United States and its allies tried to forestall the conflict from escalating, the Syrian Foreign Ministry said the government "would not use chemical weapons, if it had them, against its own people under any circumstances." The statement was reported on Syrian state television and the Lebanese channel LBC.

Mr. Obama has called for Mr. Assad to step down but has shied away from taking direct action sought by Syrian rebels. With the election over, advisers are considering a more robust response, including possibly providing arms to the rebels and recognizing the opposition as the legitimate representative of the Syrian people.

But Mr. Obama avoided any mention of such actions in his speech. "We will work to support the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people, engaging with the opposition, providing them with the humanitarian aid and working for a transition to a Syria that's free of the Assad regime," he said.

Jay Carney, the president's press secretary, hinted at possible military action in response to any use of chemical weapons but declined to specify options. "We think it is important to prepare for all scenarios," he said. "Contingency planning is the responsible thing to do."

Mrs. Clinton flew from Prague to Brussels for the NATO meeting. A senior NATO official said the alliance would declare its support for Turkey's request for help and welcome the intention of three allied nations to deploy Patriot missile batteries there. It would then be up to the United States, Germany and the Netherlands to decide how many batteries to deploy and for how long.

Surveys are being conducted of 10 potential sites, mainly in southeastern Turkey, but a senior American official traveling with Mrs. Clinton said it would probably take several weeks to deploy the batteries. Once deployed, they would be under the operational control of NATO's top military commander, Adm. James. G. Stavridis.

The pending move has prompted speculation that it might be an indirect way of extending protection to forces opposing Mr. Assad in northern Syria by targeting Syrian warplanes operating there. But NATO and American officials were adamant that was not the purpose.

"There is no safe haven," the American official with Mrs. Clinton said. "There is no de facto cross-border aspect to this."

Instead, officials said the idea was to discourage Syria from threatening Turkey for supporting Syrian insurgents — and to discourage Turkey from feeling pressured to intervene to head off attacks against it. The Turkish military issued a statement Monday calling the deployment "a measure entirely aimed at defense."

*Peter Baker reported from Washington, and Michael R. Gordon from Brussels.*



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<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/04/world/middleeast/nato-prepares-missile-defenses-for-turkey.html>

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FARS News Agency – Iran  
December 5, 2012

## **Senior MP Sees No Room for N. Weapons in Iran's Defense Strategy**

TEHRAN (FNA) - A senior Iranian lawmaker reiterated the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear program, stressing that the Islamic Republic's defense strategy has no room for nuclear weapons.

The remarks were made by Chairman of the Iranian parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Commission Alaeddin Boroujerdi at a seminar organized by Chairman of the Pakistani parliament's Defense Commission Mushahed Hussain at the venue of Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS) in Islamabad on Tuesday.

"Atom bomb has no role in Iranian defense strategy," Boroujerdi said, adding that there is no place for atomic bomb in the strategic policy of Iran.

Iranian officials have always underscored Iran's firm and steadfast opposition to the possession, production and use of the nuclear weapons.

The US-led West accuses Iran of trying to develop nuclear weapons under the cover of a civilian nuclear program, while they have never presented any corroborative evidence to substantiate their allegations. Iran denies the charges and insists that its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes only.

Tehran stresses that the country has always pursued a civilian path to provide power to the growing number of Iranian population, whose fossil fuel would eventually run dry.

Despite the rules enshrined in the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) entitling every member state, including Iran, to the right of uranium enrichment, Tehran is now under four rounds of UN Security Council sanctions for turning down West's calls to give up its right of uranium enrichment.

Tehran has dismissed West's demands as politically tainted and illogical, stressing that sanctions and pressures merely consolidate Iranians' national resolve to continue the path.

Political observers believe that the United States has remained at loggerheads with Iran mainly over the independent and home-grown nature of Tehran's nuclear technology, which gives the Islamic Republic the potential to turn into a world power and a role model for other third-world countries.

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=9107124504>

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Saudi Gazette – Saudi Arabia

## **'Iranian Nuclear Bomb would Trigger Arms Race'**

Thursday, December 06, 2012

By Reuters

VIENNA — A nuclear-armed Iran would cause a regional arms race and make Tehran more isolated and vulnerable, according to a former Iranian negotiator who argues that the Tehran is not seeking to build nuclear bombs.

Israel and the United States suspect Iran is developing a nuclear arms capability and have not ruled out military action to prevent it from obtaining such weapons of mass destruction. Iran says it is only seeking nuclear energy. But its refusal to suspend atomic activity which can have both civilian and military applications, and its lack of openness with the UN nuclear agency, have drawn tough Western punitive measures.

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Former nuclear negotiator Hossein Mousavian, now a visiting scholar at Princeton University in the United States, said Iran recognizes that if it were to become a nuclear weapons state, Russia and China would join the United States and “implement devastating sanctions that would paralyze the Iranian economy.”

Moscow and Beijing have backed a series of UN Security Council sanctions resolutions against Iran since 2006. But they have criticized tougher unilateral steps by Washington and the European Union targeting Tehran’s vital oil exports.

“Based on Iranian assessments, the possession of nuclear weapons would provide only a short-term regional advantage that would turn into a longer-term vulnerability,” Mousavian wrote in the *National Interest*, a foreign policy journal.

“It would trigger a regional nuclear arms race, bringing Egypt, Turkey, and other Mideast countries into the fold sooner or later,” Mousavian, added.

Mousavian held his post before conservative President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad took over from his reformist predecessor Mohammad Khatami in 2005.

Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt, tweeting Mousavian’s article, said “these points of view by a very well informed person are worth noting”.

Sweden is a member of the 27-nation EU, which has ratcheted up the sanctions pressure on Tehran.

Most Iranian politicians believe that having nuclear weapons would be an obstacle for Tehran’s access to technological cooperation with developed countries, Mousavian said in the article headlined “Ten Reasons Iran Doesn’t Want the Bomb”.

“They do not want to see Iran come under the kind of extreme international isolation levied against North Korea,” he said.

<http://www.saudigazette.com.sa/index.cfm?method=home.regcon&contentid=20121206145142>

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NBCNews.com

## **Syria Loads Chemical Weapons into Bombs; Military Awaits Assad's Order**

December 6, 2012

By Jim Miklaszewski and M. Alex Johnson, NBC News

The Syrian military is prepared to use chemical weapons against its own people and is awaiting final orders from President Bashar Assad, U.S. officials told NBC News on Wednesday.

The military has loaded the precursor chemicals for sarin, a deadly nerve gas, into aerial bombs that could be dropped onto the Syrian people from dozens of fighter-bombers, the officials said.

As recently as Tuesday, officials had said there was as yet no evidence that the process of mixing the "precursor" chemicals had begun. But Wednesday, they said their worst fears had been confirmed: The nerve agents were locked and loaded inside the bombs.

Sarin is an extraordinarily lethal agent. Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's forces killed 5,000 Kurds with a single sarin attack on Halabja in 1988.

U.S. officials stressed that as of now, the sarin bombs hadn't been loaded onto planes and that Assad hadn't issued a final order to use them. But if he does, one of the officials said, "there's little the outside world can do to stop it."

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Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton reiterated U.S. warnings to Assad not to use chemical weapons, saying he would be crossing "a red line" if he did so.

Speaking Wednesday at NATO headquarters in Brussels, Clinton said the Syrian government was on the brink of collapse, raising the prospect that "an increasingly desperate Assad regime" might turn to chemical weapons or that the banned weapons could fall into other hands.

"Ultimately, what we should be thinking about is a political transition in Syria and one that should start as soon as possible," Clinton said. "We believe their fall is inevitable. It is just a question of how many people have to die before that occurs."

Aides told NBC News that Clinton was expected next week to officially recognize the main opposition movement, the National Coalition of Syrian Revolutionary and Opposition Forces, with which she is scheduled to meet in Morocco. Britain, France, Turkey and some key Arab leaders have already recognized the opposition.

Fighting intensified Wednesday in the 21-month civil war, which has left 40,000 people dead. The U.N. withdrew its personnel from Damascus, saying conditions were too dangerous.

The government said this week that it wouldn't use chemical weapons on its own people after President Barack Obama warned that doing so would be "totally unacceptable."

But U.S. officials said this week that the government had ordered its Chemical Weapons Corps to "be prepared," which Washington interpreted as a directive to begin bringing together the components needed to weaponize Syria's chemical stockpiles.

U.S. officials had long believed that the Syrian government was stockpiling the banned chemical weapons before it acknowledged possessing them this summer.

NBC News reported in July that U.S. intelligence agencies believed that in addition to sarin, Syria had access to tabun, a chemical nerve agent, as well as traditional chemical weapons like mustard gas and hydrogen cyanide.

Officials told NBC News at the time that the Syrian government was moving the outlawed weapons around the country, leaving foreign intelligence agencies unsure where they might end up.

Syria is one of only seven nations that hasn't ratified the 1992 Chemical Weapons Convention, the arms control agreement that outlaws the production, stockpiling and use of such weapons.

Bombshells filled with chemicals can be carried by Syrian Air Force fighter-bombers, in particular Sukhoi-22/20, MiG-23 and Sukhoi-24 aircraft. In addition, some reports indicate that unguided short-range Frog-7 artillery rockets may be capable of carrying chemical payloads.

In terms of longer-range delivery systems, Syria has a few dozen SS-21 ballistic missiles with a maximum range of 72 miles; 200 Scud-Bs, with a maximum range of 180 miles; and 60 to 120 Scud-Cs, with a maximum range of 300 miles, all of which are mobile and are capable of carrying chemical weapons, according U.S. intelligence officials.

[http://worldnews.nbcnews.com/\\_news/2012/12/05/15706380-syria-loads-chemical-weapons-into-bombs-military-awaits-assads-order?lite](http://worldnews.nbcnews.com/_news/2012/12/05/15706380-syria-loads-chemical-weapons-into-bombs-military-awaits-assads-order?lite)

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Washington Post

## **U.N. Nuclear Chief: Alleged Weapons Testing Site Was Probably Sanitized by Iran**

By Joby Warrick

December 6, 2012



The United Nations' chief nuclear official urged Iran on Thursday to allow inspection of a military base where Iranian scientists are suspected of conducting secret nuclear-weapons research, although he acknowledged that any traces of illicit activity have probably been removed.

International Atomic Energy Agency Director General Yukiya Amano said the nuclear watchdog would try again next week to visit the Parchin military base, a sprawling complex where Iran is thought to have conducted tests on high-precision explosives used to detonate a nuclear bomb.

Iran has repeatedly refused to let IAEA inspectors visit the base, on the outskirts of Tehran. Instead, in the months since the agency requested access, satellite photos have revealed what appears to be extensive cleanup work around the building where tests are alleged to have occurred.

"We are concerned that our capacity to verify would have been severely undermined," Amano told a gathering of the Council on Foreign Relations in Washington. He noted Iran's "extensive" cleanup effort at the site, which has included demolishing buildings and stripping away topsoil.

"We cannot say for sure that we would be able find something," Amano said.

The IAEA chief made the remarks six days before a scheduled visit to Iran by IAEA inspectors to try to resolve a standoff over the country's refusal to clear up suspicions about research projects conducted by Iranian scientists nearly a decade ago. The experiments, described in documents obtained by Western spy agencies, appear to show Iranian scientists seeking to master specific technologies used in making nuclear weapons. Iran claims the documents are forgeries and insists that the country's nuclear program is peaceful.

In his remarks, Amano noted a "sense of urgency" in the effort to clear up questions about Iran's nuclear past. The Obama administration said last month that Iran must fully cooperate with the IAEA's investigation by March or face the prospect of being brought before the U.N. Security Council for further action, possibly including new sanctions.

The nuclear agency chief also acknowledged that computer hackers have made several attempts to break into the IAEA's sensitive files in recent months. Agency officials recently disclosed an intrusion by a group that swiped data from IAEA computer networks and posted some of it on a Web site.

Amano said he could not confirm reports that the hackers were Iranians. "The group . . . has an Iranian name, but that doesn't mean that the origin was Iranian," he said.

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/un-nuclear-chief-alleged-weapons-testing-site-was-probably-sanitized-by-iran/2012/12/06/aff27d90-3fef-11e2-ae43-cf491b837f7b\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/un-nuclear-chief-alleged-weapons-testing-site-was-probably-sanitized-by-iran/2012/12/06/aff27d90-3fef-11e2-ae43-cf491b837f7b_story.html)

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Korea Times – South Korea  
December 2, 2012

## **N. Korea Notifies Countries under Missile Path of Launch Plan: Seoul Official**

SEOUL, Dec. 2 (Yonhap) -- North Korea notified Japan and other countries within the projected path of its scheduled missile of the launch plan before making a public announcement, a diplomatic source here said Sunday.

The communist country said Saturday it plans to launch a rocket carrying a "working satellite" between Dec. 10 and 22, with much of the world suspecting it is testing ballistic missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads.

"North Korea was seen to give prior notice to countries, including Japan, that could come under the influence of its rocket launch, about the timing and expected path," said a high-ranking government official from Seoul, requesting anonymity.

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Tokyo received a "notice to airmen" about the plan from Pyongyang via its aviation authorities, the official said.

Other East Asian and southern Pacific countries are widely expected to be included in the advance notice, but detailed information has yet to be confirmed, he added.

In a statement by a spokesman for the (North) Korean Committee for Space Technology issued on Saturday, Pyongyang said it "will fully comply with relevant international regulations and usage as regards the upcoming launch."

Relevant international organizations including the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), however, have not been formally notified by the North, according to officials.

Before its last two rocket launches, North Korea notified the IMO and ICAO about its intentions to do so.

Any country that intends to launch a rocket is obliged to separately notify its plan to countries deemed to come under incurred danger, but reporting the plan to the international organizations is not mandatory. (Yonhap)

[http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2012/12/485\\_126024.html](http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2012/12/485_126024.html)

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The Australian – Australia

## **US Warns Against N Korean Missile Launch**

By Australian Associated Press (AAP)

December 02, 2012

THE United States has urged North Korea to scrap plans to launch a rocket later this month, warning the "highly provocative" move would destabilise the region.

"Devoting scarce resources to the development of nuclear weapons and long-range missiles will only further isolate and impoverish North Korea," State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said in a statement on Saturday.

Her comments came after Pyongyang announced it would conduct between December 10 and 22 its second long-range rocket launch this year following a much-hyped but failed attempt in April.

As in April, the North said it would be a purely "peaceful, scientific" mission aimed at placing a polar-orbiting earth observation satellite into orbit.

The announcement was certain to ratchet up tensions with South Korea, which is just days from a presidential election.

The US and its allies insist the launches are disguised tests for an inter-continental ballistic missile (ICBM) capable of carrying a nuclear warhead.

As such, they would contravene UN resolutions triggered by Pyongyang's two nuclear tests in 2006 and 2009.

"A North Korean 'satellite' launch would be a highly provocative act that threatens peace and security in the region," Nuland said.

"We call on North Korea to comply fully with its obligations under all relevant UNSCRs," she added, referring to UN Security Council resolutions.

Washington and its allies say the North's Unha-3 rocket is actually a three-stage variant of the Taepodong-2 ICBM that Pyongyang has been developing for years but has never tested successfully.

"The path to security for North Korea lies in investing in its people and abiding by its commitments and international obligations," Nuland added.

She said Washington was "consulting closely" with its allies on a response.



<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/breaking-news/us-warns-against-nkorean-missile-launch/story-fn3dxix6-1226528197650>

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Global Times – China

## **NK Urged to Drop Launch**

Reuters - Agences France-Presse (AFP)

December 3, 2012

By Agencies

Russia urged North Korea on Monday not to go ahead with a plan for its second rocket launch of 2012, saying the launch would violate restrictions imposed by the UN Security Council.

"We urgently appeal to the government of North Korea to reconsider the decision to launch a rocket," the Russian Foreign Ministry said.

Echoing its criticism of the April launch, Russia said North Korea had been warned not to ignore a UN Security Council resolution which "unambiguously prohibits it from launching rockets using ballistic technology."

North Korea is under UN sanctions that ban trading in missile or nuclear technology.

China on Monday also urged all sides not to take any action that worsens the problem.

China believes that maintaining peace and stability on the Korean peninsula and in Northeast Asia accords with the interests of all sides and is the joint responsibility of all sides, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei told reporters. He said China will remain in touch and coordinate with the other parties.

But despite growing international calls to cancel the mission, a South Korean government source told Yonhap news agency Monday that North Korea has installed the first stage of a long-range rocket it plans to launch this month.

The source said it was expected that North Korea would need three or four days to erect all three stages required before launching a rocket.

North Korea insists it is a purely "peaceful, scientific" mission aimed at placing a polar-orbiting earth observation satellite in orbit.

In a notification to neighboring countries, Pyongyang said the launch timing would be between 7 am and midday on any day in the given window, Yonhap reported.

According to the notice, the first stage would fall into the Yellow Sea off the Korean peninsula's west coast and the second would come down in the sea some 190 kilometers east of the Philippines.

Meanwhile, reports and officials said Monday Japan has begun deploying a surface-to-air missile defense system and is putting its armed forces on standby ahead of the planned North Korean rocket launch this month.

NHK reported that a naval vessel carrying PAC-3 (Patriot Advanced Capability-3) ballistic missiles left a western Japan naval base on Monday, headed for the country's southern Okinawa island chain. Tokyo is also planning to deploy Aegis warships in neighboring waters, the Yomiuri Shimbun reported.

Officials are preparing to issue an advance order as soon as Friday to shoot down the rocket if it looks set to fall on Japanese territory, after an emergency meeting chaired by Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda, the Nikkei business daily reported.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/747971.shtml>

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Yonhap News Agency – South Korea  
December 5, 2012

## **N. Korea Completes Installation of Long-Range Rocket on Launch Pad**

SEOUL, Dec. 5 (Yonhap) -- North Korea has assembled all three stages of a long-range rocket on its launch pad, a South Korean official said Wednesday, the latest sign that preparations to fire off the rocket is in full swing.

"North Korea is believed to have completed the installation of a long-range rocket on the launch pad" at the Dongchang-ri base in the country's northwest, a government official said on condition of anonymity. "Some workers are pulling out of the site."

The first stage was put on the pad on Monday and the second stage on Tuesday.

A South Korean expert said the Unha-3 rocket is estimated to have a range of about 10,000 kilometers, a distance that could reach Los Angeles in the mainland United States, considering the "burn-out" time of its engine.

The expert, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said he drew the range estimate because the North launched the same type of rocket in April that had a burn-out time of 130 seconds, which translates into the 10,000 km range.

The North has said it will launch the same Unha-3 model this time as in April.

The previous version, the Unha-2, had a burn-out time of 112 seconds and flew about 3,800 km in a 2009 launch. The first stage of that rocket was made up of four Nodong-B missile engines while its second stage had one Nodong B missile engine.

Now that all three stages have been placed on the pad, the North is expected to install support equipment, such as radar, cameras and measuring equipment before fueling the rocket. Should fueling take place over the weekend, the rocket is expected to be launched between Dec. 10-12.

"If the North begins fueling the rocket, fuel tanks will be seen around the launch site," the official said. "If many fuel tanks are spotted, we should take that as meaning that fueling has begun."

Pyongyang announced Saturday it will launch a long-range rocket to put what it calls a "working satellite" into orbit, with much of the world suspecting it is in reality testing intercontinental ballistic missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads.

Officials at South Korea's state weather agency forecast no precipitation at the launch site between Dec. 10 and 22, although it will be cloudy. That means the communist nation can go ahead and fire the rocket.

The planned launch will be the North's second launch attempt under current leader Kim Jong-un, following a failed launch in April. The young leader took power following his father's death last December.

On Monday, North Korea notified the U.N. shipping agency, the International Maritime Organization, about the launch.

Coordinates provided by Pyongyang showed the rocket's first stage would fall into the Yellow Sea between the Korean Peninsula and China, and the second stage drop-off would take place off the Philippines.

South Korea has warned it will take North Korea to the U.N. Security Council and press for new sanctions if the rocket launch proceeds, though it is unclear whether China, the only major ally of the North, would agree to further sanctions.

There have been questions about the effectiveness of any additional sanctions on North Korea, a country that has been under a string of sanctions for decades. Widespread views are that new sanctions would be aimed at identifying and freezing secret North Korean bank accounts overseas.



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In 2005, the U.S. imposed similar financial sanctions on Pyongyang by blacklisting a bank in the Chinese territory of Macau with links to the North. That not only froze North Korean money held in Banco Delta Asia, but also scared away other global financial institutions from dealing with Pyongyang for fear they would also be blacklisted.

The measure hit Pyongyang hard, and reports at the time said that North Korean officials had to carry around bags of cash for financial transactions because they were not able to use the international banking system.

Seoul's chief nuclear envoy, Lim Sung-nam, arrived in Washington Tuesday (local time) for discussions on the issue.

"In line with the principle, (we) will first focus consultations on a direction to stop North Korea's missile launch plan," Lim told reporters as he arrived in Washington for a three-day trip.

He headed straight to the State Department for a series of meetings with Ambassador Glyn Davies, Washington's top envoy on Pyongyang, and Wendy Sherman, undersecretary of state for political affairs.

Lim and Davies are also scheduled to have a trilateral meeting later in the day with Shinsuke Sugiyama, the director general of the Japanese foreign ministry's Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau, who serves as Tokyo's point man on Pyongyang.

"We need to talk about specific ways" to block North Korea from firing a long-range rocket, Lim said. "We will discuss what measures are necessary to maximize diplomatic efforts."

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2012/12/05/54/0301000000AEN20121205005852315F.HTML>

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People's Daily – China

## **Xi Jinping Calls for Powerful Missile Force**

(Xinhua)

December 06, 2012

BEIJING, Dec. 5 (Xinhua) -- The People's Liberation Army (PLA) has been ordered to build a powerful and technological missile force by Xi Jinping, the newly elected chairman of the Central Military Commission of the Communist Party of China (CPC).

Xi, also newly elected general secretary of the CPC Central Committee, made the comments on Wednesday while meeting delegates at the 8th Party congress of the People's Liberation Army (PLA)'s Second Artillery Force.

The artillery force is the core strength of China's strategic deterrence, the strategic support for the country's status as a major power, and an important cornerstone safeguarding national security, Xi said.

The Party and military leader stressed the absolute CPC leadership over the military, and called for promoting the PLA's glory, fine traditions and working styles, in order to ensure the army's "absolute loyalty, purity and reliability."

The authority of the CPC Central Committee and the Central Military Commission should be consciously safeguarded, and the military should "keep pace with" the leadership in ideology, politics and actions, Xi said.

The military "should absolutely follow the command of the CPC Central Committee and the Central Military Commission at any time and under any circumstances," he said.

Xi also ordered the training of special personnel on joint operations, information-based management and missile technologies.

The military should be ruled by law, he said, adding the phenomena of lawlessness, lax enforcement and not punishing law-breakers in a timely fashion, should be ruled out.

The security and stability of the military should be ensured, he added.

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<http://english.people.com.cn/90786/8047587.html>

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RT (Russia Today) – Russia

## Japan Deploys Patriot Missiles to Combat North Korean Rocket Threat

6 December 2012

The Japanese Navy has delivered surface-to-air missile systems in order to battle a perceived threat arising from the planned North Korean rocket launch, Kyodo news announced.

Two Patriot Advanced Capability-3 batteries have arrived to the island of Ishigaki, some 400 kilometers southwest of Okinawa, on board the JDS Kunisaki. Patriots will also be deployed on Okinawa.

Japan's armed forces have been placed on standby ahead of the planned North Korean missile launch.

On Saturday, the country's defense ministry put troops on alert. *"Our ground, marine, and air forces are now preparing to deploy troops in Okinawa,"* a ministry spokesman told AFP.

Aegis warships are also being deployed in Japanese waters, a number of local news outlets reported this week.

Tokyo maintains that its defense is being readied not to shoot down the Korean rocket, but to avoid any debris that might threaten Japanese territory if the rocket deviates from its planned trajectory.

North Korea has reportedly notified its regional neighbors, including Japan, of the trajectory of the planned launch.

The military buildup around Japan follows Pyongyang's announcement of plans to launch its second long-range rocket this year, between December 10 and 22, after a failed attempt in April.

The April launch failed when the rocket, carrying a Kwangmyongsong-3 satellite, crashed into the Yellow Sea moments after takeoff.

North Korea claims that it plans to place satellites into orbit for peaceful purposes, while the international community suspects foul play and a coverup for the country's intercontinental ballistic missiles.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon strongly urged North Korea Tuesday to reconsider its decision to launch a rocket, which would be *"a clear violation"* of UN sanctions.

<http://rt.com/news/japan-sets-nkorean-rocket-393/>

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San Francisco Chronicle

## US: NKorea Launch Intended to Show Missile Tech

By MATTHEW PENNINGTON, Associated Press

Thursday, December 6, 2012

WASHINGTON (AP) — North Korea's plan to fire a satellite into space is really intended to show the world its capability to build missiles, a top U.S. commander said Thursday, as Pyongyang readied the launch of its long-range rocket and the U.S. moved extra ships toward the region.

Pacific forces commander Adm. Samuel Locklear said it was unclear whether North Korea has corrected the problems of a failed launch of a similar long-range rocket in April that drew U.N. condemnation. He said such a missile capability would be destabilizing to international security.

North Korea says it has only peaceful intentions. It says the launch will take place between Dec. 10 and Dec. 22.



In Seoul, a South Korean military intelligence official said Wednesday that North Korea has mounted the first and second stages of a three-stage rocket on the Sohae launch pad on its northwest coast. South Korean officials couldn't confirm media reports that all three stages of the rocket are in place.

North Korea has a long history of developing ballistic missiles, but in four attempts since 1998 has not successfully completed the launch of a three-stage rocket. It has also conducted two nuclear tests, intensifying concern over how its rocket technology could be used in the future, particularly if it masters how to attach a nuclear warhead to a missile.

Locklear told a Pentagon news conference that North Korea wants to "demonstrate to the world that they have the capacity to be able to build missiles and have the missile technology to be able to use it in ways of their choosing down the road."

"This would be very destabilizing not only to the region, but to the international security environment," he said.

Locklear said the U.S. is moving ships to the region to have the best "situational awareness" — and to reassure allies.

Two U.S. officials said Wednesday that no more than three or four ships, with ballistic missile defense capabilities, are being repositioned to the Western Pacific. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to speak publicly about ship movements.

In Tokyo, Lt. Gen. Salvatore Angelella, the commander of American troops in Japan said Thursday that the situation ahead of the planned launch is "very dangerous." He said American troops are working closely with the Japanese to protect the country's citizens and territory, but declined to give details.

The U.S., Japan and South Korea say they'll seek U.N. Security Council action if the launch goes ahead in defiance of existing resolutions. Key to the world body's endorsing any further punishments will be winning the support of China, which is North Korea's main ally and economic partner, and Russia.

The council condemned April's launch and ordered seizure of assets of three North Korean state companies linked to financing, exporting and procuring weapons and missile technology.

*Associated Press writers Pauline Jelinek and Lolita C. Baldor in Washington and Hyung-jin Kim in Seoul, South Korea, contributed to this report.*

<http://www.sfgate.com/news/article/US-NKorea-launch-intended-to-show-missile-tech-4096454.php>

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Korea Herald – South Korea  
December 7, 2012

## **N. Korea Preparing Fuel for Rocket: Source**

By Kim Eun-jung

SEOUL, Dec. 7 (Yonhap) -- North Korea is filling up a fuel tank at a missile launch site as it prepares to inject fuel into a long-range rocket that Pyongyang says would blast off as early as Monday, a senior military source in Seoul said Friday.

According to the source, the South Korean government has spotted increased activities near the fuel storage at the Dongchang-ri launch site in the North's northwest, where a three-stage rocket has been installed since earlier this week.

"As soon as (the North) completes injecting fuel into the storage, it is expected to supply the rocket with fuel," the source said on the condition of anonymity. "Fuel injection could begin Saturday."

An image taken by Korea's multipurpose Arirang-3 satellite Thursday afternoon shows an air compressor and a tanker standing near the 50-meter-high launch site, which is located about 80 meters away from the fuel storage tank.



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There were cars, trucks and special vehicles near the control center and the accommodation area.

The image also showed two trailers, which delivered the first and second stages of the rocket, and a tow truck were parked near the assembly line.

The source said the latest image indicates that the North is examining the rocket's body and the observation post is inspecting the communications network, noting it is hard to detect the actual fuel injection because the fuel pipeline is installed underground.

Experts say the North is expected to set a launch date depending on weather conditions as soon as the rocket is ready to go, considering severe weather conditions in the northern region in winter.

While Pyongyang announced its plan to fire off the rocket sometime between Dec. 10-22, weather agencies forecast the first day will be cloudy and next Wednesday will be clear.

Japanese media earlier reported that leader Kim Jong-un may fire off the rocket on the morning of Dec. 17, the first anniversary of the death of his father Kim Jong-il, in a tribute to the late leader.

The anniversary comes just two days before South Koreans go to polls to elect a new president.

It would be the second rocket launch attempt under the untested young leader, believed to be in his late 20s, who took power after his father died nearly a year ago. The April test failed shortly after liftoff.

Although Pyongyang says the launch aims to put a "working satellite" into space, Seoul, Washington and many other countries view it as a test of a long-range ballistic missile that would violate U.N. resolutions.

The South Korean military has stepped up intelligence gathering to prepare for the rocket launch, deploying warships with radar to the Yellow Sea to track the rocket during its launch and flight.

The Chosun Sinbo, a Tokyo-based newspaper seen as a mouthpiece of the Pyongyang regime, reported that the North is planning to build a larger rocket if the planned launch succeeds.

"(North Korea) will begin to develop an even larger rocket than the Unha-3, which will carry large loads," the paper said. (Yonhap)

<http://nwww.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20121207000236>

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Brisbane Times – Australia

## **Japan to Shoot Down North Korean Rockets**

December 7, 2012

Agence France-Presse (AFP)

TOKYO: Japan has issued an order to shoot down a North Korean rocket if it threatens the nation's territory, a government official says.

Tokyo has readied surface-to-air missiles in and around Tokyo, as well as in Okinawa, and is putting its armed forces on standby ahead of Pyongyang's planned missile launch.

It is also deploying Aegis warships in neighbouring waters.

The Defence Minister, Satoshi Morimoto, has told forces to destroy the projectile or any parts that look set to fall on Japanese territory, the Chief Cabinet Secretary, Osamu Fujimura, told reporters on Friday.

The communist North announced last week a December 10 to 22 window, its second long-range rocket launch this year after a much-hyped but botched attempt in April.

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Pyongyang insists it is a peaceful satellite launch, but the international community sees it as a poorly disguised test of ballistic missile technology, which is banned under United Nations Security Council resolutions.

Washington and Seoul have urged Pyongyang to scrap the launch while Tokyo has postponed talks originally planned this week with North Korea.

Once Pyongyang launches the rocket, the government will swiftly deliver information to local authorities and broadcasters, Mr Fujimura said.

"We would like people to carry on as normal because the missile won't fall towards Japan if all goes as expected," he said.

Japan was still hoping that North Korea would abandon its plan.

"North Korea's rocket launch clearly violates UN security council resolutions, and also contradicts the UNSC presidential statement issued after the launch in April," Mr Fujimura said.

"If the launch is forced through, Japan will regard it as extremely deplorable."

Meanwhile two US guided missile destroyers have been sent to the area ahead of the launch, an official told AFP.

The two ships were moving in to "monitor any potential missile launch by North Korea and to reassure regional allies should a launch occur," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Admiral Samuel Locklear said naval ships had been sent to the region "so we understand if they do violate the UN Security Council [resolution] and launch a missile, what kind is it? What is it about? Where does it go? Who's threatened?"

UN diplomats inside and outside the security council have started consultations behind the scenes on what action to take if Pyongyang goes ahead with the launch, Kyodo News reported.

<http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/world/japan-to-shoot-down-north-korean-rockets-20121207-2b0j9.html>

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Defense News

## **Pakistani Ballistic Missile Test Failed**

December 3, 2012

By USMAN ANSARI

ISLAMABAD — Despite the official announcement that the Nov. 28 test of the Ghauri/Hatf V (Vengeance V) ballistic missile was successful, reports in the local media indicate the missile in fact disintegrated.

The reports were accompanied by images of the missile debris that fell in and around villages in the district of Dadu in the southern province of Sind. They were reportedly quickly secured by the police and then removed by the military.

One piece of the debris was clearly marked "Flight Control Computer." Other images show a mass of wires among tubular metal pieces.

The military's Inter Service Public Relations (ISPR) media branch admitted the debris were part of the Ghauri, but reiterated its earlier claim that the test was a "complete success."

"The missile during its flight remained within the designated flight path and corridor. The metal parts found in a remote area of Dadu, as reported in media today, were part of the motor body, which separated from the missile as planned, well within the safety corridor," it stated.

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Though the incident caused some distress, but not any casualties or damage to property, the ISPR statement concluded, "It was ensured that at no point, would human life or property be at risk. There is no cause for alarm or concern."

The missile may have originated from the Tilla missile test-firing range near the Punjabi city of Jhelum. Its trajectory seems to indicate it was heading for impact in Balochistan province, (possibly the Sonmiani firing range), or the Arabian Sea.

Analyst Haris Khan of the Pakistan Military Consortium think tank does not accept the military's version of events.

"It seems there was some kind of failure here," he said.

"I'm not sure if the Ghauri has a separating warhead, but it is possible. However, the missile body clearly disintegrated and fell over a wide area. The missile was a single-stage weapon. This is unusual. The body should have stayed intact even if the warhead did separate," he added.

He does not see any reason why disintegration would be planned.

"There's no advantage to the missile body breaking up unless it was over the target to confuse an ABM defense radar. Also, I don't think the Army would choose to have pieces of missile fall out of the sky over a populated area, even if not many people were living there."

"This has never reported to have happened in any previous missile test", he said.

If this is indeed a failure, Khan says it would mark the third known incident of this kind involving the Ghauri since it was purchased from North Korea by disgraced metallurgist and former administrative head of the then-Khan Research Laboratories, Abdul Qadir Khan.

The first test in 1998 led to the missile breaking up, and in a later test the Ghauri is known to have fallen in Iranian territory, leading to a diplomatic protest from Tehran.

Khan says because the design was outdated when purchased, the considerable modernization work done by the National Engineering and Scientific Commission and the National Defence Complex may not have been wholly effective.

Ultimately, he says the Ghauri missile system needs to be retired.

<http://www.defensenews.com/article/20121203/DEFREG03/312030008/Pakistani-Ballistic-Missile-Test-Failed?odyssey=nav|head>

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New Indian Express – India

## **India's First Nuke Submarine to be Ready by 2013-End**

By N C Bipindra, Environment News Service (ENS)  
05th December 2012

NEW DELHI -- India's bid to complete its nuclear triad -- the ability to fire nukes from land, air and sea -- will soon get a major boost as the Navy is planning to get its first indigenously built nuclear-powered submarine, INS Arihant, operational by the end of 2013.

The 6,000-tonne submarine, presently under harbour trials at the naval docks in Visakhapatnam, will be put through rigorous sea trials by the middle of 2013 before its commissioning.

INS Arihant is key to India's bid to have a credible second-strike capability, as enunciated in its over-a-decade-old nuclear doctrine, as the submarine-launched nuclear warhead has stealth and surprise as its USP.

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Nuclear-powered submarines can lurk deep sea closer to the enemy waters for months together without being detected, due to its long endurance levels unlike conventional diesel-electric submarines. The Navy is operating 12 diesel-electric submarines. China already has 10 nuclear submarines.

When INS Arihant joins the Navy fleet, it would be the second nuclear-powered submarine that the country will be operating, alongside the INS Chakra, a Russian-built Akula-II K-152 Nerpa submarine inducted into the Navy on a 10-year lease early in 2012.

However, INS Arihant will be one among the two vessels to be armed with the submarine-launched nuclear weapons, which are at present under development by the nation's lone defence research agency, the DRDO.

The country is under an obligation not to arm INS Chakra, in view of the international non-proliferation regimes, under its lease agreement with Russia.

"We expect to have good news for the nation very soon," Navy Chief Admiral D K Joshi said on Monday. INS Arihant was unveiled in July 2009 and it was to be inducted into the force after all the trials by 2012-end.

But, the February 2012 sea-acceptance trials could not take place due to institutional delays in readying the vessel.

However, there has been a year-long delay in the plans, resulting in a setback to its plans to have two nuclear-powered submarines operational by the end of 2012. Admiral Joshi, however, noted that in 'a majority' of the 'harbour-acceptance trials', INS Arihant would be used to test the DRDO-built 750-km K-15 submarine-launched nuke-tipped missiles and the 3,500-km K-4 submarine-launched ballistic missiles, which are under development.

Submarine-launched nuclear ballistic missiles are the most critical leg in the nuclear weapons triad. Tsurface warships, apart from air-launched missiles. India is already working on having two more Arihant class of nuclear-powered submarines in its arsenal.

<http://newindianexpress.com/nation/article1366904.ece>

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London Daily Telegraph – U.K.

## **Pakistan 'Expanding Nuclear Arsenal to Deter US Attack'**

*Pakistan is expanding its nuclear arsenal to deter an American attack on its status as an atomic power, according to India's former foreign secretary.*

By Dean Nelson, South Asia Editor  
07 December 2012

Asia's triangular arms race has traditionally reflected the rivalries between India and China and India and Pakistan, but according to an influential former adviser to Manmohan Singh, the Indian prime minister, Pakistan now regards the United States as a potential threat.

In an article for The Hindu newspaper, Shyam Saran said Islamabad had invested in a new generation of plutonium-based warheads, increased the size range of its arsenal, and improved the accuracy of its missiles.

Washington has voiced its concerns over the build-up in the region but believes it reflects Pakistan's long-standing fear of arch rival India's conventional force superiority.

But according to Mr Saran, Islamabad's burgeoning nuclear arsenal is increasingly aimed at deterring its fractious ally in the war on terror, the United States. Its fear that Washington may strike to wipe out Pakistan's nuclear capability dates back to just after the 9/11 attacks when then President Musharraf said it had been warned to support the war on terror or face being "bombed back to the stone age."

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Despite his acquiescence, relations between the two countries have been strained ever since and reached their lowest point following the 2011 special forces raid which killed Osama bin Laden at his home in the centre of Pakistan's main garrison town Abbotabad.

"While the immediate threat to its strategic assets passed, Pakistan's suspicions of US intentions in this regard have now risen to the level of paranoia," Mr Saran said.

His comments follow the latest in a series of missile tests last week when the Pakistan Army confirmed it had fired a nuclear-capable Hatf-V medium range missile capable of hitting Indian cities as far east as Bangalore.

Lieutenant-General Talat Masood, a retired senior Pakistan Army commander and nuclear expert, said Mr Saran's claims had some truth in them. "I would not say it [Pakistan's growing nuclear capability] was meant to counter America – that would be suicidal. But there has always been a fear in Pakistan's strategic community and government, in the recent past, a feeling that America is unfavourably inclined towards our nuclear programme and if things got worse it could neutralise our nuclear weapons capability, go after them," he said.

The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute voiced its concerns about the nuclear weapon build-up earlier this year after India developed a nuclear submarine and Pakistan unveiled a series of short range missiles.

Pakistan is believed to have more nuclear warheads than India – 110 to 100 – and Washington remains concerned about the security of its nuclear bases.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/pakistan/9729884/Pakistan-expanding-nuclear-arsenal-to-deter-US-attack.html>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

## **Post-Soviet Military Alliance Reaffirms Missile Defense Plans**

4 December 2012

MOSCOW, December 4 (RIA Novosti) - The Collective Security Treaty Organization, a Russian-led military alliance of six former Soviet republics, plans to build an integrated air and missile defense system, the chief of the Russian military's General Staff said on Tuesday.

"The structure of the CSTO troops will be upgraded and an integrated air defense/missile defense system will be built," Col. Gen. Valery Gerasimov said during a meeting with foreign military attachés in Moscow.

The CSTO's current members are Russia, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

Gerasimov provided no timeframe for the project, only saying that a "CSTO military committee" is to be set up before the end of the year.

Moscow has been irked by US plans to deploy missile defense elements in Europe. NATO and the United States insist that the shield would defend NATO members against missiles from North Korea and Iran and would not be directed at Russia.

Russia proposed a joint missile defense system, an idea that many experts both at home and abroad dismiss as unviable and unrealistic.

Then it demanded "legally binding guarantees" that US/NATO missiles would not be targeted at Russia. Since Moscow's proposal received a lukewarm response in the West, it has been warning of unspecified low-cost "asymmetric measures" to counter the future Western missile defense system.

Nikolai Makarov, Gerasimov's predecessor, has famously said Russia does not rule out a preemptive strike against a NATO missile defense system in Europe as a last resort.

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Last year, then-President Dmitry Medvedev announced plans to deploy Iskander missiles in Russia's westernmost Kaliningrad Region to counter the threat posed by the US system.

<http://en.rian.ru/world/20121204/177912217.html>

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Russia Beyond the Headlines – Russia

## Developing a Non-Nuclear Alternative for Winning Wars

*Nuclear missile weapons remain Russia's chief means of deterrence – the final argument in a possible large-scale military conflict. The international situation, however, which is characterized by an increasing number of localized wars, is creating a demand for non-nuclear weapons that can be used to achieve strategic objectives from time to time.*

December 7, 2012

By Andrei Kislyakov

Toward the end of November, when commander of Russia's strategic missile forces, Col. Gen. Sergei Karakayev, was commenting on the results of military training exercises in 2012, he confirmed that Russia was developing advanced missile systems, including a new intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM).

"This year, as part of the State Weapons Program for 2011–2020, we have been working on creating advanced missile systems and, in particular, a heavy-class missile," the commander said.

The military operational requirement for the development of a new heavy ICBM was approved in 2011. The lead developer for the new missile was the Makeyev State Rocket Center (Miass, Chelyabinsk Region). The military-industrial corporation NPO Mashinostroyeniya (Reutov, Moscow Region) is also involved in the development project. The missile will be manufactured by Krasnoyarsk Engineering Works.

Still, no matter what exceptional potential the new missile or nuclear warhead might have, it is impossible to fight with nuclear missiles unless the objective is to destroy all life on the planet. It is, however, still necessary to fight and to fight effectively, with minimum losses and maximum results.

The Iranian "nuclear crisis" (and the possible use of non-nuclear weapons to resolve the issue by force), as well as the latest Israel-Palestine confrontation serve as graphic confirmation of the fact that strategic objectives can also be achieved with non-strategic weapons.

In the final decade of the last century alone, the world experienced 34 major and minor wars, including an international war in the Persian Gulf, two campaigns in Chechnya and a large-scale war in Yugoslavia.

There were also unseen terrorists, whom the fight against has become a super-objective for the entire planet. In other words, there is no way to get by without weapons. Recent armed conflict has been characterized by brief combat operations that take place within a limited area and without a clearly defined front line, and this trend is likely to continue in the future.

It must be said that, in both America and Russia, there is a heightened emphasis on improving conventional weapons. Thus, the U.S. decided a few years ago to focus on plans to create penetrating ammunition capable of dealing a guaranteed blow against highly defended underground enemy targets.

In anticipation of possible combat operations in Iran, the U.S. Air Force armed itself with the so-called Massive Ordnance Penetrator. This penetrator turned out to be a 15-ton monster, designed to destroy the underground structures where Americans think Iranian nuclear weapons might be housed.

Incidentally, its "parent," the GBU-28 bomb, developed at the end of the 1980s, very nearly blew Gaddafi himself, in his bunker residence in Bab al-Azizia, to kingdom come in August 2011. According to NATO intelligence, the leader was supposed to be there, having been lured there by his treacherous deputy head of intelligence, Khalifa Muhammad Ali. Thirty minutes before the attack, however, Gaddafi left the bunker with his sons and his closest associates.



Russia, for its part, decided to strengthen its position in the area of so-called "vacuum" bombing. Resonance testing of what is still the most powerful vacuum bomb in the world was carried out in fall 2007.

The U.S. used vacuum munitions as far back as the 1960s in Vietnam. Russia fired shells from its TOS-1 flamethrower rocket-firing vehicle at mujahedeen positions in Afghanistan; the shells contained a thermobaric mixture that operated on the same principle as the U.S munitions. Russia later used the same shells in a conflict against Chechen separatists.

The aerial thermobaric bomb features a container (or containers) of an explosive mixture based, for example, on volatile hydrocarbons. When it hits the target, or when the ammunition explodes above the surface, the mixture is released. When the mixture combines with oxygen in the atmosphere, it forms a very powerful explosive cloud that detonates within 100-140 milliseconds of being released.

In such an explosion, excess pressure, which can reach 6.1 pounds per square foot, is created by the shock wave as it advances at a supersonic speed of 1.8 miles per second. Conversely, a deep vacuum is formed in the wake of this wave, capable of sucking in air and solid particles like a vacuum cleaner.

The ability of the fuel-air mix to damage or destroy an obstacle is very low. However, for a person, it is probably difficult to imagine a more deadly weapon. When it explodes, anyone who does not die in the flames is subjected to the effect of a very powerful shock wave and vacuum.

This kind of weapon is becoming the main mode of fighting enemy troops. It will, perhaps, be prioritized by those who are drawing up future military plans.

[http://rbth.ru/articles/2012/12/07/developing\\_a\\_non-nuclear\\_alternative\\_for\\_winning\\_wars\\_20917.html](http://rbth.ru/articles/2012/12/07/developing_a_non-nuclear_alternative_for_winning_wars_20917.html)

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London Daily Telegraph – U.K.

## **France Denies Claims it will Ditch Year-Round Seaborne Nuclear Deterrent**

*France has been forced to deny claims it will no longer possess a year-round seaborne nuclear deterrent under draft plans to reduce its nuclear submarine fleet as part of a defence "revolution".*

By Henry Samuel, Paris

06 December 2012

The idea is among several "shock proposals" being discussed ahead of France's much-awaited Defence White Paper for 2014-2019, due for release late January in a time of austerity, according to Le Parisien newspaper.

Citing "several experts on the (White Paper) commission", the newspaper claims the country's nuclear budget, which at 3.4 billion euros accounts for 10 per cent of overall defence spending, could be "de-sanctified".

One reported idea to save an estimated 2.6 billion euros (£1.6 billion) is to scrap carrying airborne nuclear warheads on Mirage 2000 and Rafale jets.

Equally radical, Le Parisien reported, were proposals to reduce its nuclear submarine fleet from four to three vessels. "Given maintenance needs, France would no longer be able to be present at sea 365 days a year," wrote the paper.

Other cost-cutting proposals cited include cutting the number of military bases in France from 60 to 20, and army recruits by up to 10,000 men per year.

Another controversial idea mooted by the commission, the paper said, was to employ private military companies – increasingly used by the US in hot spots like Afghanistan – but not by France.

A French defence ministry spokesman slammed the reported proposals as "fanciful".



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"These appear to come from very partial military sources discussing working scenarios for the future rather than documents from the defence ministry, and have nothing to do with the White Paper," he told The Daily Telegraph.

"The Paper outlines political and military strategy for the coming years, not military restructuring.

"Questions about allocating means will only come afterwards in a military programmatic law sometime next June," he said.

The spokesman also insisted that the two pillars of France's nuclear deterrent – seaborne and airborne – were non-negotiable and would be "maintained during President François Hollande's entire (five-year) mandate."

If the reports prove founded, they could impact Britain's defence relationship with France, which got much closer after the recent Lancaster House accords, where the two countries agreed to share military capabilities.

Together, the two nations make up for 40 per cent of defence spending in the European Union.

Sir Peter Ricketts, Britain's ambassador to France, is on the White Paper commission but declined to comment.

However, at least one French commission member dismissed the reported proposals as "bunkum".

François Heisbourg, special adviser to the Foundation of Strategic Research, a Paris-based think-tank, said the report was "idiotic" and the product of a "very lively imagination" as the White Paper had not yet been drafted.

He did concede, however, that with just weeks to go before its release, the commission had precious little time to finalise proposals.

"That's the thing I'm not happy about."

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/france/9727414/France-denies-claims-it-will-ditch-year-round-seaborne-nuclear-deterrent.html>

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Los Angeles Times

## **Obama Seeks Renewal of Nuclear Arms Control Deal with Russia**

*He offers to renegotiate terms of the Nunn-Lugar program that helped rid the world of more than 7,500 nuclear warheads and related weaponry.*

December 03, 2012

By Christi Parsons and Paul Richter, *Los Angeles Times*

WASHINGTON — Hoping to salvage his arms control legacy, President Obama called Monday for the renewal of a major post-Cold War agreement between the United States and Russia to secure and dismantle nuclear weapons left over from the former Soviet Union.

In an appeal aimed at Moscow, Obama offered to renegotiate terms of the 20-year-old threat-reduction initiative known for its chief sponsors, former Sen. Sam Nunn and outgoing Sen. Richard G. Lugar, and use it as a template for future U.S. cooperation with Russia.

"Let's update it," Obama told an arms control symposium at the National War College in his first comments on foreign policy since he was reelected. "Let's work with Russia as an equal partner. Let's continue the work that's so important to the security of both our countries, and I'm optimistic that we can. And we have to keep creating new partnerships."

Russian officials have said they want to end their participation in the Nunn-Lugar program, which helped rid the world of more than 7,500 nuclear warheads, plus hundreds of intercontinental missiles, bombers and submarines, from a half-dozen former Soviet republics.

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The pact was forged after the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union, which splintered into smaller independent states and left behind a widely scattered nuclear arsenal. Russian officials complain that the agreement hasn't kept pace with changing relations between Washington and Moscow. They object to requirements for Western financing and inspections, for example.

The president didn't provide any details, or hint at whether he would push to negotiate deeper cuts in the nuclear arms stockpiles or seek Senate ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. Congressional resistance has grown since President Clinton failed to win passage.

The Nunn-Lugar program has been a crucial part of U.S.-Russian relations over the last two decades, and its collapse would be a serious blow to Obama's attempts to improve relations with Moscow and his own attempts to reduce the threat of nuclear war.

Obama advocated for a world without nuclear weapons when he served in the U.S. Senate, but he failed to achieve significant progress during his first term in the White House. His comments Monday reassured the arms control community that he remains committed to the objective, even though he did not provide a road map or new set of policy goals for his second term.

"I assume the president has a more ambitious arms control agenda for his second term," said Steven Pifer, a veteran State Department and National Security Council staffer who is now director of the arms control initiative at the nonpartisan Brookings Institution think tank in Washington.

"He needs to set out his agenda sooner rather than later," Pifer said. "If he wants another treaty as part of his legacy, it has to be done in time for a ratification debate in 2015, not in the 2016 election year."

Despite the Russian threat to let the program expire next spring, U.S. officials believe Russia may prefer to reshape the joint effort rather than abandon it. The initiative brings in money for the work of disarmament, and gives Russia valuable contacts in Washington.

Russian officials are likely to strongly resist U.S. efforts to reduce their so-called tactical nuclear weapons, designed for use on a battlefield. Russia also is looking for leverage to stop U.S.-backed plans to build missile defense systems in Eastern Europe, which it views as a threat to its military deterrence capabilities.

Obama compared the work ahead to the task he and Lugar saw when they visited Ukraine together in 2005. Lugar, a veteran of the Foreign Relations Committee, was showing Obama, then a new senator, the ropes on arms control.

As they toured a factory, Obama said, they watched women working at a table filled with old artillery shells.

"The women were sitting there taking them apart by hand, slowly, carefully, one by one," Obama recalled.

"It took decades and extraordinary sums of money to build those arsenals," Obama said. "And it's going to take decades and continued investments to dismantle them."

<http://articles.latimes.com/2012/dec/03/world/la-fg-obama-nukes-20121204>

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The Washington Times

## **Inside the Ring: China Military Report Upgraded**

By Bill Gertz, *The Washington Times*

Wednesday, December 5, 2012

The Senate version of the fiscal 2013 defense authorization bill contains language that would require the Pentagon to highlight China's growing cyberwarfare and strategic nuclear capabilities.

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A section of the legislation calls for adding language to the annual report on Chinese military power on “China’s asymmetric capabilities, including efforts to develop and deploy cyberwarfare and electronic warfare capabilities, and associated activities originating or suspected of originating from China.”

If contained in the final law, the Pentagon will be required to describe in detail China’s cyberwarfare and cyberespionage activities and “an assessment of the damage inflicted on the Department of Defense by reason thereof, and the potential harms.”

Also, China’s strategy and potential targets for offensive cyberwarfare would be added, along with details of “the number of malicious cyber incidents emanating from Internet Protocol addresses in China, including a comparison of the number of incidents during the reporting period to previous years.”

Lastly, the Pentagon would have to include details on specific cyberwarfare efforts by China’s People’s Liberation Army, state security and other entities.

On China’s space activities, new additions to the annual report would identify the strategy and capabilities of Chinese space programs.

China’s nuclear forces also would be highlighted under the bill, including the size and state of China’s nuclear stockpile, its nuclear strategy, and data on its missile and warhead developments.

Also, for the first time, the Pentagon would include details on Chinese efforts to develop electromagnetic pulse weapons – the disabling electronic effect of a nuclear blast that China is thought to be developing as a dedicated weapon.

The Senate bill is seeking “a discussion of any significant uncertainties or knowledge gaps surrounding China’s nuclear-weapons program and the potential implications of any such knowledge gaps for the security of the United States and its allies.”

That provision was disclosed through a Georgetown University arms-control project studying China’s so-called Underground Great Wall that includes 3,000 miles of tunnels dedicated for nuclear weapons.

The legislation appears to be a response to the Obama administration decision to shorten the latest Pentagon annual report to avoid upsetting Beijing, which routinely protests the report for highlighting the threat posed by China’s military.

The annual report was cut from 96 pages in 2011 to 56 pages last year, prompting protests from some lawmakers.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/dec/5/inside-the-ring-asia-pivot-questioned/?page=3>

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The Epoch Times

## **Electronic Weaponry Changing Modern Warfare**

*Microwave and EMP armaments highlight vulnerabilities*

By Joshua Philipp, Epoch Times Staff

December 6, 2012

At the beginning of the Gulf War in 1991, the United States quickly destroyed Iraq’s command and control systems, knocking out communications and leaving the Iraq army scurrying aimlessly. Achieving this required more than 100,000 flight missions and close to 88,500 tons of explosives.

Nearly 20 years later, achieving similar results would require just one bomb. Or, as Boeing recently demonstrated, a handful of drones that would leave nothing destroyed other than electronics.





A drone flew over the Utah Test and Training Range, its target a building filled with rows of computers far below. Their screens flickered and went black, the camera monitoring the damage soon to follow as the systems were hit with invisible microwaves. Following the Nov. 22 test, Boeing announced its first Counter-electronics High-powered Microwave Advanced Missile Project (CHAMP) weapon to the public.

“This technology marks a new era in modern-day warfare,” said Keith Coleman, CHAMP program manager for Boeing Phantom Works, in a post on Boeing’s website.

Coleman couldn’t be more right. The CHAMP is among the first of many weapons that use high-power microwaves (HPM) to permanently destroy electronics used in communications systems, computers, generators, and even bombs. CHAMP works similarly to an electromagnetic pulse (EMP), both falling under the category of electronic warfare systems.

Soon such electronic warfare systems could even appear in the public sphere. A recent Army document requested EMP grenades for soldiers and EMP munitions for Stinger, Hydra, and Javelin missiles that could disable roadside bombs. The document noted “these same non-lethal munitions would benefit the bomb squads of local, state, and federal law enforcement.”

EMP and HPM weapons are hailed as being capable of destroying systems without loss of human life, as opposed to explosives once used to achieve similar objectives. Yet hanging on the cusp of the new form of warfare are new threats that the world—not to mention the United States—is unprepared for.

“In the long run it’s probably going to save the military lots of money, it’s going to save people on the battlefield. But how long before it’s used on us?” said David Bellavia, president of EMPact America, a bipartisan, non-profit organization concerned with protecting the American people from nuclear or natural EMP.

“Once the technology is mass produced, it can be used by anyone,” Bellavia said.

The EMP from a nuclear warhead detonated 15 miles above the earth’s surface could destroy electronics across the entire United States.

The aftermath would be similar to what was seen in New York and New Jersey after millions lost power following Hurricane Sandy—only across the whole country. With logistics dependent on electronics and logic circuitry, food supplies would be cut off, heat would be gone, and information obtained through any means but word of mouth would be lost.

Under such an EMP attack, even the electronics inside cars would be fried.

The military has systems for defending against electronic warfare, but high costs and veiled information keep it from the public. “There is a lot of stuff that’s used that’s classified, so it’s very hard to find out how to fight an EMP,” said Terry Minarcin, a retired Air Force cryptologist who was assigned to the NSA.

The challenge, according to Minarcin, is that since an EMP travels at the speed of light while traveling through wires and cables, electronic systems can’t adjust to the power surge in time to resist it. “If you see the event taking place, it’s already past you,” Minarcin said. “Then it becomes a cascade effect when it starts knocking out your electrical relays.”

Bellavia said he believes something can be done, and the answer could rest in the H.R.668 SHIELD Act (Secure High-voltage Infrastructure for Electricity from Lethal Damage). The bill was introduced by Rep. Trent Franks (R-Ariz.), and referred to the House Energy and Commerce Committee on Feb. 11, 2011.

The Shield Act would place a system similar to a circuit breaker on each of the 300 critical transformers within the U.S. electric grid. “It would stop a surge right in its place,” Bellavia said. “So instead of going down the grid like a domino, it would just kill it there at its source.”



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The only two companies that manufacture the circuit breakers are located in Germany and South Korea, and manufacturing time is an estimated 18 months. Setting up the circuit breakers would cost close to \$2 billion, but losing the transformers on the grid would be no simple matter.

"It's not about science fiction," Bellavia said, noting that while "we can do everything we can to eliminate the threat of a nuclear EMP," solar flares such as those in 1989 that took out power stations in Quebec, Canada, and along the U.S. east coast will still be a threat.

<http://www.theepochtimes.com/n2/united-states/electronic-weaponry-changing-modern-warfare-322306.html>

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National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA)  
Press Release

## **NNSA Conducts Pollux Subcritical Experiment at Nevada National Security Site**

December 06, 2012

LAS VEGAS – The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) today announced that Pollux, a subcritical experiment, was successfully conducted yesterday at its Nevada National Security Site (NNSS).

The experiment, conducted by staff from NNSS, Los Alamos National Laboratory and Sandia National Laboratories, gathered scientific data that will provide crucial information to maintain the safety and effectiveness of the nation's nuclear weapons.

"Challenging subcritical experiments maintain our capabilities to ensure that we can support a safe, secure and effective stockpile without having to conduct underground testing," said NNSA Administrator Thomas D'Agostino. "I applaud the work done by the men and women who worked to make this experiment successful. Experiments such as this help deliver President Obama's nuclear security agenda."

Pollux was the 27th subcritical experiment to date. The previous subcritical experiment, Barolo B, was conducted on Feb. 2, 2011. Pollux employed a superb new diagnostic that recently won an R&D 100 award.

"Diagnostic equipment fielded by our scientists resulted in more data collected in this single experiment than all other previous subcritical experiments," said NNSA Deputy Administrator for Defense Programs Don Cook. "This type of data is critical for ensuring our computer simulations can accurately predict performance, and thus continued confidence in the safety and effectiveness of the nation's stockpile."

Christopher Deeney, NNSA Assistant Deputy Administrator for Stockpile Stewardship said, "Pollux will provide a significant data set to verify codes important to laboratories' stockpile missions."

Subcritical experiments examine the behavior of plutonium as it is strongly shocked by forces produced by chemical high explosives. Subcritical experiments produce essential scientific data and technical information used to help maintain the safety and effectiveness of the nuclear weapons stockpile. The experiments are subcritical; that is, no critical mass is formed and no self-sustaining nuclear chain reaction can occur; thus, there is no nuclear explosion.

<http://nnsa.energy.gov/mediaroom/pressreleases/pollux120612>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

## **Navy Veteran Charged in 'Russia Spying' Sting: US Officials**

7 December 2012

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December 6 (RIA Novosti) A retired 20-year-veteran of the US Navy was arrested Thursday and charged with attempted espionage after trying to provide classified information on methods used to track US submarines to people he believed were from Russia, US authorities announced.

The secret information however was in reality turned over to FBI agents in an undercover operation and there was no suggestion of any wrongdoing by Russia itself, according to the FBI and the grand jury indictment from the US District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia.

The suspect, Robert Patrick Hoffman II, “unlawfully and knowingly did attempt to communicate, deliver and transmit to a foreign government, namely, the Russian Federation ... information classified as SECRET that revealed and pertained to methods to track US submarines,” the indictment stated.

“In fact, the defendant delivered the classified information to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which was conducting an undercover operation,” it said, adding that the transfer of the information took place “on or about” October 21 of this year.

The grand jury indictment made no mention of any effort by Russia to acquire information from Hoffman and in a statement the FBI noted that the indictment “does not allege that the Russian Federation committed any offense under U.S. laws in this case”.

The FBI described Hoffman as a 39-year-old US citizen born in Buffalo, New York who spent 20 years serving in the US Navy before retiring on November 1, 2011. During his career, he had access to classified and national defense information, the FBI said.

“Hoffman attempted to deliver to the Russian Federation classified documents that revealed national security information. He is alleged to have carried out this activity with the intent to cause injury to the United States and to give an advantage to the Russian Federation,” the FBI statement added.

It said he was arrested Thursday “without incident” and was scheduled to appear in court later in the day. If convicted, Hoffman could receive a sentence of up to life in prison.

<http://en.rian.ru/world/20121207/177968115.html>

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Global Times – China

OPINION/Editorial

## **Satellite Launch Stirs up Peninsula Politics**

December 3, 2012

By Global Times

Only two days after South Korea canceled the launch of its first space rocket, the Naro, due to technical problems, North Korea announced that it would launch a rocket carrying a satellite between December 10 and 22.

The US, Japan and South Korea responded quickly, with Japan reacting very strongly by warning that it might shoot down the satellite.

Amid these reactions, China has been striving to maintain the stability of the Korean Peninsula. It has publicly stated that North Korea has the right to the peaceful use of outer space, and it has also urged North Korea to abide by UN Security Council resolutions to avoid escalating conflicts in the region. But it seems that no side is listening.

Northeast Asia has gotten used to the failures of North Korea's satellite launches and Japan's aggressive responses.

If a satellite is successfully launched by North Korea and Japan shoots it down, the situation in the Korean Peninsula is bound to intensify.

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There's little leverage that China can use to modify the behavior of the Koreas and Japan. With a Cold War mentality still lingering in the geopolitics of Northeast Asia, there remain some troublemakers. North Korea has been cast as the provocateur, but its vulnerabilities are obvious. Japan and South Korea appear deeply worried about possible attacks by North Korea.

A North Korean attack on Japan would fly in the face of common sense, as Pyongyang would face massive retaliation.

Japan and South Korea have been claiming the North Korean regime is unstable and unpredictable; however, the reality is that the Korean Peninsula has remained largely at peace for almost 60 years and the influence of pragmatism on North Korea is increasing.

Outside observers believe that Japan and South Korea are expanding their military influence or covering up their radical policies by exaggerating the threat from North Korea.

Japan, especially, has been constrained by its Peace Constitution. It wants to get rid of this constraint by making use of the situation on the Korean Peninsula.

The three sides have made the situation less and less favorable to all sides, and it is these three countries that will suffer in the end.

Reconciling all sides will mean that China must maintain a presence in Korean Peninsula diplomacy. Though it may not be effective, China will continue this role. China should try to prevent the situation there from being ruined by exaggeration and misjudgments.

The changing situation in the Peninsula also adds to the strategic mistrust between China and the US. The main reason comes from the pressure of the US' pivot to Asia and the intensified situation on the Peninsula.

If China and the US strive to make the situation there beneficial for strategic communication and cooperation between the two, Northeast Asia will embrace a better future.

The US should be clear that the tricks it has played in Northeast Asia have had little benefit on the long-term strategic prospects of the two sides.

<http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/747796.shtml>

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Los Angeles Times  
OPINION/Global Focus

## **North Korea Rocket Launch Plans: Little to Gain, Nothing to Lose**

By Carol J. Williams

December 4, 2012,

Since North Korea announced plans to launch a rocket this month, the threats of retaliation have been swift and global.

South Korea has called the mission, ostensibly to put a satellite into orbit, "a full-frontal challenge" to regional peace and stability. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said Tuesday that the United States is "deeply concerned" and urged NATO allies to press the government in Pyongyang to abandon its provocative plans. Japan has threatened to shoot down any North Korean projectiles over its air space and ordered the deployment of Patriot anti-missile defenses to Okinawa.

Even allies China and Russia have made their opposition clear, with Beijing appealing for its neighbor to "exercise calmness" and Moscow "emphatically" asking the North Korean government to reconsider.



The international community has been on the same page in warning of what's at stake if new leader Kim Jong Un goes through with the controversial launch and its presumed aim of demonstrating that North Korea may now be able to reach the U.S. mainland with a nuclear warhead.

But the community of nuclear security experts that monitors the communist-ruled state is equally united in the expectation that the warnings will be ignored and North Korea will fire off another Unha-3 rocket like the one sent aloft -- for all of 90 seconds -- in April.

The launch has been cast as a commemoration of the Dec. 17, 2011, death of Kim Jong Il, father of North Korea's nuclear programs and the country's twentysomething leader who succeeded him. It was also presumably intended to match South Korea's planned satellite launch, a Nov. 29 mission scrapped at the last minute "for technical reasons."

Why impoverished and underdeveloped North Korea needs its own satellite deployment system when foreign commercial ventures could loft its Earth-observation technology for a fraction of the cost is a question on which Korea watchers can only speculate.

"Clearly it's a prestige issue to people in the region. If South Korea wants to do this, it's not surprising that North Korea wants to keep up with the Joneses," said David Wright, an arms control expert with the nonprofit Union of Concerned Scientists.

He doubts Pyongyang scientists have had adequate time to correct whatever caused the rocket launched April 13 to explode shortly after blastoff and plummet into the Yellow Sea.

"But if it should work, if they were able to put a satellite up, they could say they beat South Korea," Wright said. "And that could be a real feather in their cap."

Wright argued for seeking diplomatic solutions to a standoff partly of the West's own making. Concessions made by Pyongyang during the Clinton administration allowed more than a decade of international inspection of North Korea's nuclear programs. But the promised payoff of aid and engagement was blocked by a Republican-controlled Congress, Wright recalled.

"They feel burned and that they are held to a double standard vis-a-vis South Korea," Wright said of the North's seeming intransigence.

Stephan Haggard, a North Korea expert at UC San Diego's School of International Relations and Pacific Studies, surmises that Pyongyang is trying to get some attention after being ignored through the U.S. presidential campaign and more pressing Middle East crises.

He also sees domestic political pressure compelling Kim to make a brash show of technological achievement, to placate the military and fulfill his late father's aim of deploying a satellite in this centenary year of North Korea's founder, Kim Il Sung.

The launch, announced by state-run media on Saturday to occur between Dec. 10 and Dec. 22, follows a recent revision in the U.S.-South Korea defense pact allowing Seoul to expand its missile range from 300 to 800 kilometers, or up to 500 miles, to defend against any hostile action by North Korea.

"They're in an arms race with South Korea. They may have felt they had to push back," Haggard said of Pyongyang's unusual decision to stage a winter launch.

He is also puzzled by the timing, with elections this month in Japan and South Korea. Whether successful or not, the launch would be seen as a belligerent act and likely spur voters to back hardliners instead of candidates who favor improved relations.

Others see North Korea's vowed defiance as in keeping with a cultivated rogue posture.



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“They don’t care” about the potential consequences of further isolation, said Joel Wit, a visiting fellow at the U.S.-Korea Institute at Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies. “All the sanctions we have already haven’t forced them to change direction.”

Sanctions are already as severe as the international community can manage, given China’s resistance, said Wit, frequent contributor to the institute's 38 North blog. “As a result, we don’t have any leverage with the North Koreans at this point.”

The launch will go forward, Wit said with certainty, leaving open only the question of how far the rocket will fly.

“Any country starting out testing long-range missiles has a lot of flops,” Wit said. “What is interesting to speculate about here is, what happens if this time it succeeds?”

*A foreign correspondent for 25 years, Carol J. Williams traveled to and reported from more than 80 countries in Europe, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America.*

<http://www.latimes.com/news/world/worldnow/la-fg-wn-north-korea-rocket-stakes-20121204,0,298901.story>

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Wall Street Journal

OPINION/REVIEW & OUTLOOK

## **From Bushehr to the Bomb**

*Add plutonium to Iran's nuclear weapons risks*

December 6, 2012

Last Sunday marked the 70th anniversary of the world's first controlled nuclear reaction, which took place under the bleachers of the old Stagg Field at the University of Chicago. Also last Sunday, the Journal reported that the U.S. had stepped up its spying on Iran's nuclear reactor at Bushehr after Iran had unexpectedly removed fuel rods containing between 22 and 220 pounds of weapons-grade plutonium.

The distance between civilian nuclear power and an atomic weapon, as the early nuclear pioneers understood, can be short. Now the Obama Administration is being forced to learn that lesson all over again.

For years, U.S. officials have insisted that the Russian-built reactor at Bushehr posed a negligible proliferation risk. Instead, they concentrated nearly all their attention on Iran's efforts to enrich uranium. At the same time, the U.S. bought Iran's argument that the country was within its legal rights to operate "peaceful" facilities such as Bushehr, never mind the question of why an oil-rich state would spend billions on a reactor it didn't need.

Far be it for us to suggest the world should be less alarmed by the strides Iran has made in enriching uranium—close to eight tons to reactor-grade level of 5%, along with 238 kilos to a near-bomb grade level of 20%, according to a report last month by the International Atomic Energy Agency. With some additional enrichment, those quantities suffice for probably six bombs.

But uranium is not the only route to a bomb. There's also plutonium, and Iran has long been at work on a plutonium-breeding heavy-water reactor in the city of Arak. The Iranians say the reactor is solely for research, yet IAEA inspectors have not been given access to the plant since August 2011.

Then there's Bushehr. Under the terms of Iran's agreement with Russia's State Atomic Power Corporation, or Rusatom, Iran is supposed to return all of the reactor's spent fuel rods to Russia for storage. Now it transpires that Iran removed the fuel rods in October, a mere two months after the reactor became fully operational. Iran claims the fuel rods have since been returned to the reactor core, though we are not aware of any independent corroboration of that claim.

The official reason for the transfer of the fuel was a safety test, and Rusatom has denied a report that the move was prompted by the discovery of loose bolts that could have caused a major accident. But as the Journal suggested in its

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story, the transfer could also have been a test run for the Iranians should they decide to reprocess those rods into weapons-grade plutonium. As many as 24 Nagasaki-type bombs could be produced with 220 pounds of plutonium.

So much, then, for the notion that the Bushehr reactor is "proliferation resistant," an idea that largely boils down to the fact that IAEA inspectors are routinely at the site. Yet legally the IAEA is only permitted to inspect Bushehr once every 90 days, and Iran has forbidden the agency from installing video cameras with near-real time surveillance capacity.

That means Iran could contrive an excuse to move the fuel rods without the agency knowing about it in time. And while Western intelligence agencies do not believe Iran has a reprocessing capability, experts tell us that the rapid extraction of weapons-usable plutonium from spent fuel rods is a straightforward process that can be performed in a fairly small (and easily secreted) space.

All of which goes to show that, contrary to Joe Biden's cavalier assurances during his debate with Paul Ryan that the U.S. would have adequate foreknowledge of any Iranian plans to build a bomb, U.S. intelligence on Iran's nuclear capabilities remains fragmentary at best. At the same time, Iran is increasing the number of routes it can take to race toward a bomb.

These columns have been warning of the proliferation risk posed by Bushehr since May 2002. As always with Iran's nuclear ambitions, the worst suspicions come true.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324355904578159550372337228.html>

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The Nation – Pakistan

OPINION/Editorial

## **India's Aggressive Posture**

December 06, 2012

To those who had been led to believe that Indian Foreign Minister Salman Khurshid had tried to befriend Pakistan by saying that it was time for the two countries to walk hand in hand, he quickly, barely a day later, made a volte face by adopting an aggressive posture towards Pakistan. Talking to a private TV channel, he proudly, rather defiantly, declared that New Delhi could make Islamabad "understand the language of war, cricket as well as negotiations". It is hard to fathom the logic behind such a belligerent boast. Otherwise, looking back at the peaceful manner in which relations between the two countries have, in the recent past, been progressing in line with the Indian wishes, there appears little justification for such a militarist outburst. In the world of today, it is difficult to image that a nuclear power would dare challenge another nuclear power using war terminology. The most myopic of politicians would desist from going that far for reasons of the consequences of war between two such nations; neither could possibly escape a holocaust, crippling both for decades. Pakistan is, no doubt, surrounded by difficult problems these days, but the Indians should know that it can defend itself well. The possession of atomic weapons is very much a viable deterrence against any foolhardy attack.

Clearly, Mr Khurshid misses the lesson of the 10-month-long massive concentration of Indian troops on the international borders with Pakistan in 2002 when finding President Musharraf firm in his stand that Pakistan would use all resources at its disposal, and that implied the use of nuclear weapons as well, to defend the country, the Indian forces quietly beat a retreat, with all the war paraphernalia they had brought to the front. And suddenly all the sabre-rattling of Indian leaders during the period of the massing of forces, came to end.

Nevertheless, the significance of the Indian Foreign Minister's remark is that it reflects the thinking of his government, which is somehow not satisfied with the concessions Pakistan has been making it. With one stroke Mr Salman Khurshid has rubbished our singular favour to his country – the grant of most favoured nation status – that, as many a perceptive analyst has warned, would work against our interests. Our leaders, both in the seat of power and in the



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opposition, the so-called civil society members and peaceniks who want to go all-out for gaining the goodwill of India, need to reset their focus on the reality of the situation. We ought to make it clear to India that improvement in relations between the two countries has to be a reciprocal adjustment, a quid pro quo that demands the settlement of disputes, with Kashmir as the first priority, in a just manner in response to any concession that we make. Trusting New Delhi to respond to our friendly gestures in equal measure on its own would prove suicidal!

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/editorials/06-Dec-2012/india-s-aggressive-posture>

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Washington Post  
OPINION/Opinion Writer

## End the War on Terror and Save Billions

By Fareed Zakaria  
December 6, 2012

As we debate whether the two parties can ever come together and get things done, here's something President Obama could probably do by himself that would be a signal accomplishment of his presidency: End the war on terror. Or, more realistically, start planning and preparing the country for phasing it out.

For 11 years, the United States has been operating under emergency wartime powers granted under the 2001 "Authorization for Use of Military Force." That is a longer period than the country spent fighting the Civil War, World War I and World War II combined. It grants the president and the federal government extraordinary authorities at home and abroad, effectively suspends civil liberties for anyone the government deems an enemy and keeps us on a permanent war footing in all kinds of ways.

Now, for the first time since Sept. 11, 2001, an administration official has sketched a possible endpoint.

In a thoughtful speech at the Oxford Union last week, Jeh Johnson, the outgoing general counsel for the Pentagon, recognized that "we cannot and should not expect al-Qaeda and its associated forces to all surrender, all lay down their weapons in an open field, or to sign a peace treaty with us. They are terrorist organizations. Nor can we capture or kill every last terrorist who claims an affiliation with al-Qaeda."

But, he argued, "There will come a tipping point . . . at which so many of the leaders and operatives of al-Qaeda and its affiliates have been killed or captured, and the group is no longer able to attempt or launch a strategic attack against the United States, such that al-Qaeda as we know it, the organization that our Congress authorized the military to pursue in 2001, has been effectively destroyed." At that point, "our efforts should no longer be considered an armed conflict."

Phasing out or modifying these emergency powers should be something that would appeal to both left and right. James Madison, father of the Constitution, was clear on the topic. "Of all the enemies to public liberty," he wrote, "war is, perhaps, the most to be dreaded, because it comprises and develops the germ of every other. War is the parent of armies; from these proceed debts and taxes. . . . No nation could preserve its freedom in the midst of continual warfare."

If you want to know why we're in such a deep budgetary hole, one large piece of it is that we have spent around \$2 trillion on foreign wars in the past decade. Not coincidentally, we have had the largest expansion of the federal government since World War II. The Post's Dana Priest and William Arkin have described how the U.S. government has built 33 new complexes for the intelligence bureaucracies alone. The Department of Homeland Security employs 230,000 people.

A new Global Terrorism Index this week showed that terrorism went up from 2002 to 2007 – largely because of the conflicts in Afghanistan/Pakistan and Iraq — but has declined ever since. And the part of the world with the fewest

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incidents is North America. It could be our vigilance that is keeping terror attacks at bay. But it is also worth noting, as we observe the vast apparatus of searches and screening, that the Transportation Security Administration's assistant administrator for global strategies has admitted that those expensive and cumbersome whole-body scanners have not resulted in the arrest of a single suspected terrorist. Not one.

Of course there are real threats out there, from sources including new branches of al-Qaeda and other such groups. And of course they will have to be battled, and those terrorists should be captured or killed. But we have done this before, and we can do so in the future under more normal circumstances. It will mean that the administration will have to be more careful — and perhaps have more congressional involvement — for certain actions, such as drone strikes. It might mean it will have to charge some of the people held at Guantanamo and try them in military or civilian courts.

In any event, it is a good idea that the United States find a way to conduct its anti-terrorism campaigns within a more normal legal framework, rather than rely on blanket wartime authority granted in a panic after Sept. 11.

No president wants to give up power. But this one is uniquely positioned to begin a serious conversation about a path out of permanent war.

*Fareed Zakaria writes a foreign affairs column for The Post. He is also the host of CNN's Fareed Zakaria GPS and editor at large of Time magazine.*

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/fareed-zakaria-end-the-war-on-terror-and-save-billions/2012/12/06/a468db2a-3fc4-11e2-ae43-cf491b837f7b\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/fareed-zakaria-end-the-war-on-terror-and-save-billions/2012/12/06/a468db2a-3fc4-11e2-ae43-cf491b837f7b_story.html)

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The Hindu – India  
OPINION/Commentary  
December 7, 2012

## **Dealing with Pakistan's Brinkmanship**

By Shyam Saran

Islamabad's expanding nuclear capability is no longer driven solely by its oft-cited fears of India but by the paranoia about U.S. attacks on its strategic assets

During the past decade, there have been notable shifts in Pakistan's nuclear doctrine, away from minimum deterrence to second strike capability and towards expanding its nuclear weapons arsenal to include both strategic and tactical weapons. Islamabad has described these developments as "consolidating Pakistan's deterrence capability at all levels of the threat spectrum." These shifts are apparent from the following developments:

- (1) There is a deliberate shift from the earlier generation of enriched uranium nuclear weapons to a newer generation of plutonium weapons.
- (2) This shift has enabled Pakistan to significantly increase the number of weapons, which now appears to have overtaken India's nuclear weapon inventory and, in a decade, may well surpass those held by Britain and France.
- (3) Progress has been made in the miniaturisation of weapons, enabling their use with cruise missiles, both air and surface-based (Ra'ad or Hatf VIII and Babur or Hatf-VII respectively) as also with a new generation of short range and tactical missiles (Abdali or Hatf II with a range of 180 km and Nasr or Hatf-IX with a range of 60 km).
- (4) Pakistan has steadily improved the range and accuracy of its delivery vehicles, building upon the earlier Chinese models (the Hatf series) and the later North Korean models (the No-dong series). The newer missiles, including the Nasr, are solid-fuelled, which are quicker to launch than the older liquid-fuelled versions.

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### **Not under safeguards**

This rapid development of its nuclear weapon arsenal has been enabled by the setting up of two plutonium production reactors at Khusab with a third and fourth under construction. These have been built with Chinese assistance and are not under safeguards. The spent fuel from these reactors is reprocessed at the Rawalpindi New Labs facility, where there are reportedly two plants each with a capacity to reprocess 10 to 20 tonnes annually.

Olli Heinonen, a former Director of Safeguards at the IAEA has observed: "Commissioning of additional plutonium production reactors and further construction of reprocessing capabilities signify that Pakistan may even be developing second-strike capabilities".

These developments are driven by a mix of old and new set of threat perceptions and, equally, political ambitions. The so-called existential threat from India continues to be cited as the main driver of Pakistan's nuclear compulsions. The rapid increase in the number of weapons is justified by pointing to India having a larger stock of fissile material available for a much more numerous weapons inventory, thanks to the Indo-U.S. civil nuclear agreement. Tactical nuclear weapons are said to be a response to India's so-called "Cold Start" doctrine or its suspected intention to launch quick response punitive thrusts across the border in case of another major cross-border terrorist strike.

Pakistan's strategic objective has been expanded to the acquisition of a "full-spectrum capability" comprising a land, air and sea-based triad of nuclear forces, to put it on a par with India.

However, the focus on India has tended to obscure an important change in Pakistan's threat perception which has significant implications. The Pakistani military and civilian elite is convinced that the United States has also become a dangerous adversary, which seeks to disable, disarm or take forcible possession of Pakistan's nuclear weapons.

This threat perception may be traced to the aftermath of 9/11, when Pakistan, for the first time in its history, faced the real prospect of a military assault on its territory by U.S. forces and the loss of its strategic assets. In his address to the nation on September 15, 2001, President Pervez Musharraf justified his acquiescence to the U.S. ultimatum to abandon the Taliban and support U.S. military operations in Afghanistan, on account of four over-riding and critical concerns — "our sovereignty, second our economy, third our strategic assets and fourth our Kashmir cause." Pakistan once again became a "front-line state," this time in the U.S. war on terrorism in Afghanistan in contrast to the U.S.-led war against the Soviet forces in that country in the 1980s. But this time round, Pakistan became an ally by compulsion rather than by choice.

While the immediate threat to its strategic assets passed, Pakistan's suspicions of U.S. intentions in this regard did not diminish and have now risen to the level of paranoia. The American drone attacks against targets within Pakistani territory and, in particular, the brazenness with which the Abbotabad raid was carried out by U.S. Navy Seals in May 2011 to kill Osama bin Laden, have only heightened Pakistan's concerns over U.S. intentions. These have overtaken fears of India, precisely because the U.S. has demonstrated both its capability and willingness to undertake such operations. India has not.

### **Recent shifts**

Thus the recent shifts in Pakistan's nuclear strategy cannot be ascribed solely to the traditional construct of India-Pakistan hostility. They appear driven mainly by the fear of U.S. assault on its strategic assets. The more numerous and compact the weapons, the wider their dispersal and the greater their sophistication, the more deterred the U.S. would be from undertaking any operations to disable them or to take them into its custody. The U.S. finds it as difficult to acknowledge this reality as it has, until recently, Pakistan's complicity in terrorism directed against its forces in Afghanistan. This permits putting the onus on India to reassure Pakistan through concessions rather than admitting that the problem lies elsewhere. There is also a strong non-proliferation lobby in the U.S. which believes it could leverage the threat of an India-Pakistan nuclear exchange to reverse some of the concessions made to India in the civil nuclear deal. More recently, it is being argued that since the U.S. is finding it difficult to get its promised share of the civil nuclear business in India due to concerns over the country's Nuclear Liability legislation, a major rationale behind



the agreement no longer exists. And meanwhile, it is further claimed, the civil nuclear agreement has only heightened the danger of India-Pakistan nuclear war by feeding into Pakistani fears of India's enhanced nuclear capabilities.

In this context, I wish to recall an exchange over dinner hosted by President George Bush for Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in November 2008 in Washington. The then Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice remarked that after the "heavy lifting" the U.S. had done to get the nuclear deal through, she hoped India would ensure that U.S. companies got a share of the orders for new reactors. Before our Prime Minister could reply, Mr. Bush stated categorically that he was not bothered if India did not buy even a single reactor from the U.S., since he regarded the agreement as confirming India as a long-term strategic partner rather than a mere customer for U.S. reactors.

Pakistan encourages the arguments of the U.S. non-proliferation lobby since this keeps the pressure on India and enables the camouflage of Pakistan's real motivations. It would not wish to project, as an adversary, a much more powerful U.S., and lose out on the economic and military support it receives, however transactional these deals may have become.

### **The implications**

What are the implications of these recent developments?

One, it is not through "strategic restraint" or security assurances by India that Pakistan would be persuaded to change its behaviour and revise its strategy. India and Pakistan have some nuclear CBMs in place and India would be prepared to go further. The main levers for such persuasion lie in Washington and in Beijing, not in New Delhi.

Two, whatever sophistry Pakistan may indulge in to justify its augmented arsenal and threatened recourse to tactical nuclear weapons, for India, the label on the weapon, tactical or strategic, is irrelevant since the use of either would constitute a nuclear attack against India. In terms of India's stated nuclear doctrine, this would invite a massive retaliatory strike. For Pakistan to think that a counter-force nuclear strike against military targets would enable it to escape a counter-value strike against its cities and population centres, is a dangerous illusion. The U.S. could acquaint Pakistan with NATO's own Cold War experience when tactical nuclear weapons were abandoned once it was realised that use of such weapons in any conflict would swiftly and inexorably escalate to the strategic level. Instead of urging India to respond to Pakistani nuclear escalation through offering mutual restraint, the U.S. should convince Islamabad that a limited nuclear war is a contradiction in terms and that it should abandon such reckless brinkmanship. The U.S. knows that India's nuclear deterrence is not Pakistan-specific. Any misguided attempt to constrain Indian capabilities would undermine, for both, the value of Indo-U.S. strategic partnership in an increasingly uncertain and challenging regional and global security environment.

Three, Pakistan is no longer India's problem. Its toxic mix of jihadi terrorism and nuclear brinkmanship poses a threat to the region and to the world. Even China, whose culpability in continuing to assist Pakistan in developing its nuclear and delivery capabilities is well documented, is not exempt. It needs to reassess its own policies. An apparently low-cost and proxy effort to contain India may well become China's nightmare, too, in the days to come.

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<http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/dealing-with-pakistans-brinkmanship/article4171664.ece>

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Foreign Policy  
OPINION/National Security

## **The Fissile Cliff**

*The bomb that could save the Pentagon.*

BY TOM Z. COLLINA

December 7, 2012



Fiscal reality is catching up with the Pentagon. On Wednesday, the White House Office of Management and Budget directed the Defense Department to start planning for life after the fiscal cliff. Specifically, defense planners must now come up with \$500 billion in spending cuts over the next decade.

A good place to start is the U.S. nuclear weapons budget, which at roughly \$31 billion per year supports a nuclear stockpile of 5,000 weapons. We don't need that many, according to the Pentagon, and the White House is preparing new guidance on how low we can go. But even before that decision gets made, there is one glaring example of a project that is ripe for pruning: the B61 bomb.

The B61 is mainly based in Europe -- a so-called "tactical" nuclear weapon designed to be used against invading conventional forces -- and the Pentagon and the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) want to extend its service life until 2040 or so. This may sound simple, but it's an expensive proposition. NNSA estimates that the program will cost about \$7 billion and produce its first rebuilt bomb in fiscal year 2019. But in July, a Defense Department review projected that the program would cost \$10.4 billion and would not produce the first rebuilt bomb until fiscal year 2022. With 400 bombs reportedly planned for upgrades, each B61 would cost roughly \$25 million.

When this was first revealed in July, Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), who chairs the Senate Appropriations subcommittee that controls NNSA funding, said the new price tag requires the NNSA to find billions of additional dollars "at a time when budgets are shrinking."

But cost is far from the B61s only challenge. The B61 life extension program, or LEP, has become an unaffordable solution to a problem that does not appear to exist.

The United States currently keeps about 180 B61s in Europe to assure allies of the U.S. commitment to NATO. However, U.S. and NATO military leaders acknowledge that it is U.S. *strategic* forces -- that is, the larger nuclear weapons based in the United States and on American submarines -- that provide the ultimate guarantee of NATO security, not the tactical versions of the B61 bomb stored in bunkers on European air bases.

Some NATO members, such as Germany, have called for the B61 to be removed from Europe. It is also possible that a future agreement between Russia and the United States to account for and reduce tactical nuclear bombs would require that the United States remove B61s from NATO. This raises the awkward possibility that most B61 bombs might not be needed a decade from now, when the proposed rebuilding program would be complete.

That issue aside, it is not clear why the bombs need a full-scale life extension now. The Pentagon and NNSA have asserted that B61 bomb parts need to be replaced soon or the bombs would no longer meet operational requirements, such as the ability to produce a specific explosive yield. NNSA had planned to complete the program by 2022, but the Pentagon review suggests this deadline would be missed by a few years.

The B61, like all modern nuclear weapons, has two components that have a limited lifespan and are replaced on a regular basis (neutron generators and gas transfer systems). However, NNSA's plans for the B61 go well beyond these limited-life components and involve replacing thousands of other non-nuclear parts, such as switches, foams, and cables, as well as the bomb's uranium secondary. The bomb's plutonium "pit" would not be changed.

These parts are continually assessed by the stockpile surveillance program, run by Sandia National Lab, which inspects 11 warheads of each type in the U.S. arsenal each year to look for problems. Yes, the warhead parts are getting older, but there is no evidence that they are about to fail. B61s have no moving parts and components do not "wear out." Besides the limited-life parts, it is not clear why the B61 LEP must be completed by 2022.

Bob Peurifoy, a former director of weapons development at Sandia, said in a Nov. 15 interview that, aside from the limited-life parts, the B61 "should be left alone until the stockpile surveillance process finds a problem."

In addition to extending the service life of the B61, NNSA and the Pentagon considered many new concepts to increase the weapon's safety against accidental detonation and security against unauthorized access and use, known together as "surety." But after conducting cost-benefit analyses, major surety upgrades were found to be not worth the price. For example, the rebuilt B61 bomb would not have multi-point safety, a fire-resistant pit, or an optical initiator. The



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B61 already has many of the most modern surety features, including insensitive high explosives, and the LEP would not add major new ones.

Tactical versions of the B61 stored in Europe, which can be delivered on U.S. and NATO fighter jets, are potentially more vulnerable to theft than the strategic B61 bombs based in the United States. NNSA has proposed to address this concern, in part, by folding four of the B61 versions into a new one, the B61-12, whose design would be based on that of the B61-4. The B61-4 has the lowest maximum yield of the B61 series, meaning it has the smallest amount of fissile material.

The planned B61-12 would be used as both a tactical and strategic bomb, and it would have to meet the military specifications of the higher-yield B61-7 strategic bomb. To do that, the Pentagon proposes to make the B61-12 more accurate than the B61-4 by replacing the parachute with an \$800 million guided tail kit for ground detonation.

But rather than pursue this complicated and expensive consolidation, the physical security of forward-deployed B61s could be addressed in other ways, such as by providing more secure storage in Europe, or by stationing these bombs in the United States.

The Pentagon has time to explore alternatives to a \$10 billion B61 life extension. One option would be to scale-back the program by replacing only the parts that are known to be at the end of their lives and only for the weapons that are likely to still be deployed a decade from now. For example, NNSA could only upgrade the strategic B61-7, of which there are an estimated 120 in service, and replace only the limited-life parts and possibly the radar (which is an old model that still uses vacuum tubes). The B61-7 already had significant upgrades in 2009. As for the roughly 180 tactical bombs based in Europe, such limited upgrades could be made only for the number planned to be deployed ten years from now.

This scaled-back approach to the B61 LEP would save billions of dollars. If the Pentagon does not go for it, Congress could require a public, independent program review to explore viable alternatives before it makes a \$500 million down payment on the program next year.

*Tom Z. Collina is research director at the Arms Control Association in Washington D.C.*

[http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/12/06/the\\_fissile\\_cliff?page=full](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/12/06/the_fissile_cliff?page=full)

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