



USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER
CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL
MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

Issue No. 972, 17 January 2012

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Press TV – Iran

'Iran Will Respond to Nuclear Killings'

Sunday, January 15, 2012

A senior Iranian commander has warned of a crushing response to the Israeli regime as well as the US and Britain for their role in the assassinations of Iranian nuclear scientists.

“The opponents of [Iran's Islamic] Revolution and the nation's progress should have no doubt that the punitive response to the US, the Zionist regime (Israel) and their criminal accomplices will be delivered in an opportune time,” said Deputy Chairman of Joint Chief of Staff of Iran's Armed Forces Brigadier General Massoud Jazayeri in a Saturday interview.

The remarks came against the backdrop of Wednesday assassination of Iranian nuclear scientist Mostafa Ahmadi Roshan in a drive-by bomb attack in the capital Tehran, when terrorists riding a motorcycle attached a bomb to his car and sped away.

Insisting that Iran's reaction would deliver a punishing response to “supporters of state terrorism,” Jazayeri vowed that activation of potentials stemming from the strategic depth of the Islamic Revolution will be on the agenda in efforts to hold the nation's enemies, “particularly the US, Britain and the Zionist regime accountable for their actions.”

The military official also emphasized that the path to progress and access to strategic technologies, such as the peaceful applications of the nuclear technology, will not be hindered by assassination of our nation's scientists and scholars. He expressed confidence that the scientific advancements of the Iranian nation will accelerate ahead with extra efforts of Iranian youth who feel additionally motivated following the latest terror attack against another Iranian scientist.

The senior commander lashed out at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as well for deliberately releasing the list of Iranian nuclear scientists and administrators, thereby facilitating the track-down and targeting of Iranian experts by intelligence and terrorist networks of the global hegemony. He then emphasized that the IAEA must be held accountable for its negligence.

Tehran has condemned the Israeli spy agency, Mossad, as well as the US and British governments for their obvious role in the assassination of Ahmadi Roshan.

The US, the Israeli regime and their Western allies have engaged in a major publicity campaign, repeating false allegations that Iran's nuclear program may have a covert military aspect and have used the accusation as a pretext to push the UN Security Council to impose four rounds of sanctions against the Islamic Republic.

Based on such accusations, they have also threatened Tehran repeatedly with the "option" of a military strike.

This is while in November 2011, a number of major US presidential hopefuls called for covert US efforts against Iran, specifically mentioning the need to assassinate Iranian nuclear scientists and launching military strikes against the country as well as sabotaging its nuclear program.

Such open calls for terror assassination of Iranian scientists do not represent idle threats as a number of them have already been assassinated over the past couple of years. Professors Majid Shahriari and Masoud Ali-Mohammadi are among the victims of such acts of terror.

On November 29, 2010, Professors Shahriari and Fereydoun Abbasi were targeted by terrorist attacks; Shahriari was killed immediately, but Dr. Abbasi, the current director of Iran's Atomic Energy Organization, only sustained injuries.

Iran says as the UN Resolution 1747, adopted against Tehran in March 2007, cited Abbasi's name as a "nuclear scientist," the perpetrators were in a position to trace their victim.

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<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/221113.html>

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Press TV – Iran

'Obama Letter Testimony to Iran Power'

Monday, January 16, 2012

A senior Iranian lawmaker says US President Barack Obama's recent letter to Iran about the Strait of Hormuz shows the effectiveness of the country's military might.

Esmail Kowsari stressed once again that if sanctions against Iran come into effect, the Islamic Republic will definitely prevent oil exports through the Strait of Hormuz.

Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Ramin Mehmanparast confirmed on Sunday that the US message has been sent to Iran via three different channels, including the US Ambassador to the UN Susan Rice, the Swiss Ambassador to Tehran Livia Leu Agosti, and Iraqi President Jalal Talabani.

"Sending the letter was natural because when someone feels threatened, they react," the lawmaker added.

Kowsari, who is also deputy chairman of the Majlis (parliament) National Security and Foreign Policy Committee, added that the letter indicates the effectiveness of Iran's might.

"Iran will increase its might so that if a threat is carried out [against the country] everyone can see Iran's power in practice; and everyone will see at that time that American armed forces are powerless," Kowsari said.

Tensions between Tehran and Washington over the Strait of Hormuz escalated after US and the European Union proposed sanctions against Iran's oil sector.

On December 27, Iran's First Vice President Mohammad-Reza Rahimi warned that imposing sanctions against the country's energy sector will prompt Tehran to prevent oil cargoes from passing through the Strait of Hormuz.

"If they impose sanctions on Iran's oil, not even a drop of oil will be allowed through the Strait of Hormuz," he warned.

Iran's Navy Commander Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari further reiterated on December 28 that Iran has complete command over the strategic waterway and that "closing the Strait of Hormuz is very easy for Iranian naval forces."

Tensions further escalated when the Bahrain-based US Fifth Fleet responded by saying it would not "tolerate" any disruption in the Strait of Hormuz.

"[The fleet] maintains a robust presence in the region to deter or counter destabilizing activities," a spokesperson for the fleet said.

The Strait of Hormuz is a shipping channel that leads in and out of the Persian Gulf between Iran and Oman.

Statistics-wise, the strait is one of the world's most important waterways, with a daily flow of about 15 million barrels of oil.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/221368.html>

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Miami Herald

Monday, January 16, 2012

Iran Makes Arrests in Killing of Nuclear Scientist

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The Associate Press (AP)

TEHRAN, Iran -- An Iranian news website is reporting several suspects have been arrested over last week's killing of an Iranian nuclear scientist.

Ali Larijani, speaker of the Iranian parliament, said the suspects are being interrogated, and the investigation is continuing. He talked to Iran's state Arabic language TV channel Al-Alam, and his comments were carried on the Tabnak.ir site.

Mostafa Ahmadi Roshan, an official in Iran's nuclear enrichment facility in Natanz, was killed in an explosion Wednesday after attackers attached a bomb to his car in Tehran.

Iran accused the U.S., Britain and Israel of involvement.

Washington denied any role in the assassination, and London condemned the killing of civilians. Israel has not commented publicly.

The West believes Iran is building nuclear weapons. Iran denies that.

<http://www.miamiherald.com/2012/01/16/2592036/iran-makes-arrests-in-killing.html>

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Xinhua News – China

Iran Says U.S. Unable to Stop Iran from Shutting Strait of Hormuz: Commander

January 16, 2012

TEHRAN, Jan. 16 (Xinhua) -- Deputy Chairman of Joint Chief of Staff of Iran's Armed Forces Brigadier General Massoud Jazayeri said Monday the United States cannot hinder Iran's efforts to shut down the strategic Strait of Hormuz if Tehran deems it necessary, the local satellite Press TV reported.

"Regardless of their publicity campaigns and propaganda efforts, the Americans are incapable of confronting Iranian actions in a number of spheres, including the potential plan (by Iran) to shut down the Strait of Hormuz," Jazayeri was quoted as saying.

The principal objective of Iran in the region is to defuse tensions, Jazayeri said, adding that however, should the country's national interests come under threat, Iran's armed forces will utilize their defensive capabilities to defend the country's sovereignty.

Iran's Foreign Ministry Spokesman Ramin Mehmanparast confirmed on Sunday that Iran had received a letter from the United States over the Strait of Hormuz.

On Friday, the New York Times reported that the United States had used a secret channel to send a letter to Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei over the country's threats of closing the strategic passage of the Strait of Hormuz. The report said that in the letter the United States warned closing the Strait would be crossing a "red line" and it would provoke a response.

Recently, some government and military officials of the Islamic republic threatened that Iran would close the Hormuz Strait if its oil exports were blocked by the West.

Following an International Atomic Energy Agency report on Iran's nuclear program in November, the United States, Britain and Canada announced new sanctions against Tehran and still are working to impose an embargo on Iran's crude exports.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2012-01/16/c_131363368.htm

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Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) – Iran
January 16, 2012

Iran Advocates Nuclear Free Middle East, Salehi Says

Tehran, Jan 16, IRNA - Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi said on Monday that the Islamic Republic of Iran is the proponent of the Middle East free from nuclear arms.

Salehi said in a meeting with Finnish Under Secretary of State Amb Jaakko Laajavaabava that none of the Middle East countries possesses nuclear arms except the Zionist regime.

'For many years, the Islamic Republic of Iran advocated the Middle East free from nuclear arms and proved its commitment to Non-Proliferation Treaty. In addition, Iran calls for the entire world to honor the Disarmament Treaty which obliges the nuclear weapons states to disarm,' Salehi said.

He said that the Zionist regime has stockpiled nuclear warheads which have jeopardized peace and security of the Middle East and at the same time it has not signed the NPT and refused to allow inspection of its nuclear activities by the UN specialized news agency, IAEA.

Salehi said that the upcoming International Conference on Disarmament in the Middle East must focus on Israeli stockpiles of warheads.

Jaako Laajava, who acts as coordinator of the upcoming Conference on Disarmament in the Middle East due to be held in 2012, offered a report on arrangements made for the conference.

The NPT review conference passed a resolution in 2010 calling for the Middle East to be free from weapons of mass destruction and decided to hold a Conference on Disarmament in the Middle East in 2012.

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon designated Finland in 2010 to host the International Conference on Disarmament in the Middle East in 2012.

<http://www.irna.ir/ENNewsShow.aspx?NID=30768204>

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Helsingin Sonomat – Finland

Nuclear Expert Olli Heinonen: Iran Ready to Make Nuclear Weapon Next Year

Leading nuclear security expert is critical of watchdogs over slowness

January 16, 2012

Iran will be able to make a nuclear weapon next year, estimates **Olli Heinonen**, one of the world's leading experts on Iran's nuclear programme.

Heinonen is currently working at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard University.

When asked the question of when Iran will have completed its nuclear deterrent, Heinonen replies: "It will be ready within a year."

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) confirmed a week ago that Iran has begun to produce 20 per cent enriched uranium at its Fordo uranium enrichment plant, located deep underground.

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According to Heinonen, Iran will have enough enriched uranium for its first nuclear weapon by the end of this year. After that, Iran will have all the construction blocks needed for the production of a nuclear device - quickly if it decides so.

Enriching weapons-grade material from the 20 per cent uranium would take one month. Building the nuclear material components of a weapon would take roughly another month, Heinonen estimates.

Iran's missile programme has progressed slowly, but if necessary, Iran could send the nuclear bomb to its destination using other means.

In Heinonen's opinion, if the international community is already expecting to see hard evidence of the production of a nuclear weapon or on its existence, it is a matter of considerable concern.

"My starting point is that at that point we have already missed the bus", Heinonen said, speaking in his study at Harvard.

In addition to ordinary young students, Heinonen also teaches officers from the US Army at Harvard. These officers aim to become generals and to specialise in international security questions.

Before joining Harvard, Heinonen was the Deputy Director-General of the IAEA.

Today, it is one of his duties to assess and develop the operation of the nuclear watchdog organisation.

There is also room for criticism. In Heinonen's view, the IAEA should have been more pro-active in the 1990s, when the first information of Iran's uranium enrichment programme leaked to the public.

Investigations into the Fordo enrichment plant also got off to slow start, when its existence was finally revealed in 2009.

Even if Iran produced a nuclear weapon already at the beginning of 2013, it would only have one weapon at hand. It would take time until the country could produce a second and a third nuclear weapon.

At present, Iran is developing a new generation of centrifuges, which would speed up the serial production of nuclear weapons.

With the current IR-1 centrifuges, the enrichment work required for each subsequent warhead would take around six months.

Iran's current stockpile of 3.5 per cent enriched uranium hexafluoride would be sufficient for about three to four bombs.

It is customary for new nuclear weapon countries to conduct nuclear trial blasts. For example North Korea conducted a trial blast in 2006.

The bomb Iran is preparing is a uranium bomb, which is simpler than a plutonium bomb. Iran may believe that it will be enough to test all of the components of the bomb.

<http://www.hs.fi/english/article/Nuclear+expert+Olli+Heinonen+Iran+ready+to+make+nuclear+weapon+next+year/1135270203343>

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Wall Street Journal

January 16, 2012

Saudi Arabia, China Sign Nuclear Cooperation Pact

By SUMMER SAID

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RIYADH, Saudi Arabia—Top oil exporter Saudi Arabia said Monday it inked an agreement with China to enhance cooperation between the two countries in the development and use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes.

The deal, signed Sunday, sets a legal framework that strengthens scientific, technological and economic cooperation between Riyadh and Beijing, according to a joint statement. It seeks to enable cooperation in areas like maintenance and development of nuclear power plants and research reactors, manufacturing and supply of nuclear fuel elements.

The pact with China is the fourth nuclear agreement signed by Saudi Arabia following similar deals with France, Argentina and South Korea. The signing came at the end of Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao's first trip to Saudi Arabia as part of a six-day tour to the Middle East.

The Gulf state has also been in discussions with the U.S., U.K., Russia and the Czech Republic over better cooperation in nuclear energy.

In the desert kingdom, a booming population and developing economy are constraining the government's ability to provide electricity and water, while keeping domestic demand for oil at bay. Some economists say that if Saudi Arabia's current energy-consumption growth rate of 7% a year continues unabated, the kingdom within 20 years will burn the equivalent of around two-thirds its total current crude production capacity of 12.5 million barrels a day.

Nuclear energy is increasingly becoming the favored alternative, one that experts say could save more valuable crude for export and help satiate local demand for power and water.

In 2010, Saudi Arabia, the Middle East's biggest economy, took a step toward building nuclear power plants, establishing the King Abdullah Atomic and Renewable Energy City devoted to research and application of nuclear technology.

Saudi Arabia plans to spend more than \$100 billion on 16 nuclear reactors planned to be built by 2030 to meet its growing domestic energy needs, the kingdom's former Saudi intelligence chief and former ambassador to Washington, Prince Turki Al Faisal, said last year.

The cooperation agreement between Saudi Arabia and China comes amid intensifying international pressure on Iran over its controversial atomic energy program, which the Islamic republic says is only for peaceful purposes, while the U.S. and other Western states suspect it's aimed at developing nuclear weapons capabilities.

China appears to be preparing to play a larger role in the global nuclear industry. In recent years it has been active in acquiring uranium assets abroad as well as obtaining advanced Western nuclear technology, which it hopes to begin exporting during the coming decades.

The Asian country has adopted advanced technology from Westinghouse Electric Co., a unit of Toshiba Corp., to develop a domestic version of the company's AP1000 nuclear reactor. The lure of the Chinese nuclear market, among the world's fastest-growing, allowed Beijing to force the U.S.-based company to trade technology and know-how for market access.

Westinghouse is helping China localize AP1000 technology, including so-called passive safety systems, which many say could have helped prevent the disaster at Fukushima in Japan. Westinghouse is working together with the Chinese to determine the feasibility of scaling up the AP1000. Early models of the reactor are expected to produce 1154 MWe, while analysts say future Chinese versions could perhaps be much larger.

Some experts have raised concerns over the pace at which China is localizing the untested AP1000 technology, and scaling up its power production capacity, potentially for export to countries with little nuclear experience. China appears to eventually want to challenge Western nuclear equipment manufacturers like Westinghouse, though it appears to be years, if not decades, away from doing so.

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At home, China hopes nuclear power will help wean its reliance on choking pollution caused by burning coal. Beijing also sees its likely cheaper reactor prices and competitive financing from Chinese banks as ways to thrust its nuclear industry onto the global stage and shore up manufacturing jobs at home.

Brian Spegele contributed to this article.

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204468004577164742025285500.html?mod=googlenews_wsj

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Globe and Mail – Canada

Iranian Regime ‘Frightens Me,’ Harper Says

By Robert Matas

Monday, January 16, 2012

VANCOUVER— Prime Minister Stephen Harper says a consensus is growing among world leaders that Iran would have no hesitation using nuclear arms once they develop the weapons and the capability to deliver them.

“I’ve watched and listened to what the leadership in the Iran regime says, and it frightens me,” Mr. Harper said in a CBC interview.

“In my judgment, these are people who have a particular, you know, fanatically religious worldview, and their statements imply to me no hesitation of using nuclear weapons if they see them achieving their religious or political purposes,” he said.

Asked why world leaders are not doing more about it, Mr. Harper said a consensus among world leaders has been growing “at least privately.”

Mr. Harper acknowledged that the current round of sanctions is not dissuading the Iranian regime from developing “the nuclear course.” However, the world remains uncertain about what exactly to do, he said.

Every country agrees on sanctions and is imposing sanctions “at some level,” he said. “Beyond that, these are not easy questions for the world,” he said.

Military action has been discussed, Mr. Harper added. “President [Barack] Obama’s said all options are on the table and I can certainly tell you that, when we talk about these issues, we talk about the full range of questions around these issues.

“But there is certainly no consensus on, you know, ultimately how to deal with this matter.”

Canada’s position on dealing with Iran is that allies should work together, Mr. Harper said. “I’ve raised the alarm as much as I can, but obviously I don’t advocate particular actions publicly. I work with our allies to see if we get consensus on actions,” he said.

Mr. Harper said he has no doubt that Iran is developing nuclear weapons. “There is absolutely no doubt they are lying,” Mr. Harper said, referring to statements by Iran that the nuclear program is for peaceful uses.

“The evidence is just growing overwhelming. This is not, as was the case of Iraq, merely the opinion of allies,” he said.

The development of nuclear weapons as one of the purposes of Iran’s nuclear program “is just beyond dispute at this point,” he said. “The only dispute is how far advanced it is and how far off it will be until they actually develop those weapons and develop the capability of delivering the weapons.”

Also during the interview, Mr. Harper linked the debate over the controversial Keystone XL pipeline from Canada to Texas with concern over Iran’s threat to blockade the main shipping route for oil in the Middle East.

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"It's pretty obvious what the right decision is ... not just from an economic and environmental standpoint, but from an energy security standpoint," Mr. Harper said.

"When you look at the Iranians threatening to block the Strait of Hormuz, I think that just illustrates how critical it is that supply for the United States be North American," Mr. Harper said.

Mr. Harper said the controversy in the U.S. over approval of the Keystone pipeline was "a wakeup call" to Canada. The issue indicates the degree to which Canada is "dependent or possibly held hostage" to decisions in the U.S.

The Conservative government is going to make "an additional push" to make sure Canada diversifies its energy markets," he said. "It puts an emphasis on the fact that we must perform our regulatory processes to get timely decisions on diversification of our markets."

Mr. Harper said he did not object to the regulatory process for the Northern Gateway pipeline from Alberta to the Pacific Coast. His concern was to have "timely" decisions made.

"We can't have processes that are just filibustered endlessly. That is not in anyone's interests," he said.

The government would seriously consider the recommendations of the environmental review, he said. "This government has in the past changed projects or even stopped projects if reviews were not favourable or indicated that changes had to be made," he said, in an oblique reference to the government's controversial decision to reject the Prosperity Mine in B.C.

He repeated his concern about foreign financed groups delaying the process. He did not agree that he was holding a double standard by not objecting to foreign companies advocating for the pipeline.

"Just because certain people in the United States would like to see Canada be one giant national park for the northern half of North America, I don't think that's part of what our review process is all about," Mr. Harper said.

"I don't object to foreigners expressing their opinion. But I don't want them to be able to hijack the process," Mr. Harper said.

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/iranian-regime-frightens-me-harper-says/article2304805/>

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Pakistan Observer – Pakistan

Tuesday, January 17, 2012

UK Warns Iran of Military Action over Nuclear Programme

By Independent News Pakistan (INP)

London—UK Foreign Secretary says all options are on table but that aim is to get Tehran round negotiating table over nuclear weapons.

Britain has not ruled out military action against Iran but London is focused on trying to secure peaceful negotiations, William Hague said.

The foreign secretary insisted all options remained on the table in relation to what he called Tehran's "increasingly dangerous" development of nuclear weapons. But he said the UK was not advocating military action and was instead intensifying sanctions in a bid to bring Tehran to the negotiating table.

"We have never ruled anything out. We have not ruled out any option, or supporting any option. We believe all options should be on the table, that is part of the pressure on Iran," Hague told Sky News. "But we are clearly not calling for or advocating military action.

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We are advocating meaningful negotiations, if Iran will enter into them, and the increasing pressure of sanctions to try to get some flexibility from Iran." Western governments, including Britain, have moved to step up sanctions over Iran's nuclear programme, threatening an embargo on vital oil exports.

Tehran has threatened to block the Straits of Hormuz oil shipment route in response. The Prime Minister, David Cameron, warned Iran during a visit to Saudi Arabia on Friday that the world would "come together" to ensure the straits remained open. Hague said: "This is an increasingly dangerous situation that Iran is developing a military nuclear programme. Our sanctions are part of getting Iran to change course and to enter negotiations and we should not be deterred from implementing those."

<http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=135739>

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Chicago Tribune

Iran Says Ready to Discuss "Any Issues" with IAEA

By Fredrik Dahl, Reuters

January 17, 2012

VIENNA (Reuters) - Iran said on Tuesday it was open to discuss "any issues" in rare talks this month with the U.N. nuclear watchdog, which wants Tehran to address mounting concerns that it may be trying to develop nuclear weapons capability.

With the Islamic state facing intensifying sanctions aimed at its oil exports, a senior Iranian official said a high-level team from the U.N. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) would hold three days of talks in Tehran from Jan 29-31. The IAEA delegation, to be headed by Deputy Director General Herman Nackaerts, is expected to seek explanations regarding intelligence information indicating Iran has engaged in research and development relevant for nuclear weapons.

It coincides with increased tension in the international row over Iranian nuclear work the United States and its allies suspect has military aims. Iran, a major oil producer, says it is aimed at generating electricity.

Western diplomats, who have often accused Iran of stalling tactics as it presses ahead with its nuclear program, have expressed doubt that the planned IAEA trip will lead to any major progress in the long-running nuclear dispute.

Asked whether Iranian officials would be ready to talk about IAEA questions of possible military links to the nuclear program, Iran's IAEA envoy Ali Asghar Soltanieh told Reuters:

"We are open to discuss any issues that the IAEA is interested to discuss, within the framework of its mandate of course ... I am optimistic that we will have a constructive, professional, technical meeting."

He did not say which Iranian officials would take part in the talks. There was no immediate comment from the IAEA.

Iran rejects accusations that it has coordinated efforts to process uranium, test high explosives and revamp a ballistic missile cone to accommodate a nuclear warhead.

SUBSTANTIVE TALKS?

While U.N. inspectors regularly monitor Iran's declared nuclear facilities, their movements are otherwise restricted, and the IAEA has complained for years of a lack of access to sites, equipment, documents and people relevant to its probe.

Iran says its nuclear work is purely peaceful, and has shown no sign of backing down in the face of international demands that it suspends its uranium enrichment program.



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It has stoked Western suspicions by starting to enrich uranium deep inside a mountain at Fordow, stepping up protection of activity that can have both military and civilian purposes.

But its leadership has come under growing pressure since the IAEA reported in November that Tehran appeared to have worked on designing a nuclear weapon and that secret research to that end may be continuing.

Referring to the nuclear dispute, Soltanieh said the discussions with the IAEA team would be aimed at "removing the ambiguities and concluding all this seemingly endless process."

The IAEA visit showed Iran's "determination for cooperation and engagement with the IAEA in a constructive and transparent manner," the Iranian ambassador added.

Iranian officials have used similar language before, and Western diplomats say they remain skeptical about Iran's willingness to seriously answer the agency's questions.

The IAEA wants it "to be a substantive meeting where Iran is actually responding to the questions and not talking about how to respond to the questions in the future," one diplomat said.

"And I think Iran has no intention of responding substantively to the questions," the envoy added.

Additional reporting by Zahra Hosseinian

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/sns-rt-us-nuclear-iran-iaeatre80g13e-20120117,0,1266976.story>

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Arirang News = South Korea

Illicit Trafficking of Nuke Materials Documented: Interpol Chief

January 15, 2012

The head of Interpol says his organization has documented illicit trafficking of nuclear materials in more than 2,500 cases.

In a written interview with the Seoul-based Yonhap News Agency, Interpol chief, Ronald Noble, said Sunday that Interpol is sharing the data with its 1-hundred-90 member nations to better combat threats of nuclear terror worldwide.

Saying that a great calamity will ensue if terrorists obtain nuclear materials, Noble stressed the importance of cooperation among nations.

Interpol will attend the 2012 Seoul Nuclear Security Summit, slated for March 26 through the 27th.

Ahead of the Seoul summit, Noble is set to attend a preparatory meeting in New Delhi this coming Monday and Tuesday.

http://www.arirang.co.kr/News/News_View.asp?nseq=124756&code=Ne8&category=1

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Wired.co.uk

Satellite Snaps Show North Korea's Nuclear Progress

By Adam Rawnsley

16 January 2012

Kim Jong Il may be dead, but his legacy in North Korea lives on through the nuclear program he left behind. New satellite images now offer a more detailed view of the work that went into North Korea's nuclear facilities in Kim's final years.

Issue No. 972, 17 January 2012

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The satellite pictures and the simulated models based on them show that North Korea has made notable progress building out its uranium enrichment facilities and accompanying experimental light water reactor since 2009. That progress is noted in a new article by Siegfried Hecker, Robert Carlin and Niko Milonopoulos in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*.

In November 2010, Hecker and Carlin were part of a group of professors invited by North Korea to take a stroll through the country's nuclear facilities at Yongbyon. To the group's surprise, their hosts showed off what could be a new potential path to the bomb for the Hermit Kingdom: a recently-finished, gleaming uranium enrichment facility packed with 2,000 centrifuges. Prior to this point, the North's route to nuclear weaponry had come from its plutonium reactor. Kim Jong Il and his minions swore the latest uranium enrichment facility was built only to provide fuel for an electricity-generating light water reactor. Nonetheless, it raised proliferation concerns since the enrichment facility could also be used to make the fuel for a nuclear weapon.

The pictures of the Yongbyon uranium enrichment facility published in the Bulletin show that the North Koreans have spruced up a number of buildings since June 2009. Hecker, Carlin and Milonopoulos can identify two of the structures in the photos. Building 4, the blue-roofed building in the photo below, houses the centrifuge facility that the North showed off back in 2010. The building in the lower left hand corner is a recreational facility for the staff.

The image of the enrichment facilities from April 2009 doesn't match North Korea's September 2009 announcement that it had successfully enriched uranium. When Hecker and Carlin visited the centrifuge facility (Building 4) in November 2010, the North Koreans claimed the recently retrofitted building had only been up and running for a few days. According to Hecker and his colleagues, whatever enrichment the North may have achieved in September 2009 had to have been at another site. The facilities in Building 4 simply weren't ready to do the work at that time, raising the possibility of another clandestine enrichment site.

The photos show more progress on a nearby light water reactor (below) intended for electricity generation, the ostensible destination for the North's enriched uranium. Hecker and his coauthors note quite a bit of progress on the facility's exterior components. That tracks with the North Korean Foreign Ministry's November 2011 claim that construction was "proceeding apace". However, the authors say the more challenging work of constructing the interior will likely push back the reactor's completion date past 2012. As the image below shows, the North Koreans have laid pipes to draw water from the nearby Kuryong River and done significant work on a turbine generator hall. The reactor's containment dome is almost finished, too.

Safety is also an issue. In the satellite photos, North Korea is showing it can build a light water reactor. But Hecker, Carlin and Milonopoulos wonder aloud whether their ability to build and operate one without a nuclear accident is a different challenge altogether.

Source: *Wired.com*

<http://www.wired.co.uk/news/archive/2012-01/16/satellite-snaps-north-korea>

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Wall Street Journal
January 16, 2012

Questions Surround Leadership in Pyongyang

By EVAN RAMSTAD

SEOUL—As North Korea on Tuesday marks one month since the death of Kim Jong Il, the most important question for outsiders trying to deal with the country remains unanswered: Is his young son Kim Jong Eun really in charge?

North Korea has projected an image of a successful transition and stability in its authoritarian government. State media calls the younger Mr. Kim "supreme commander" and produced TV and newspaper reports praising him. It reported several visits he made to military installations and cultural events.

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But the regime's New Year's statement, a lengthy message that traditionally contained an exhortation from Kim Jong Il, had no quotations from Kim Jong Eun. The young leader's birthday on Jan. 8—he turned 28 or 29, though outsiders don't precisely know his birth year—passed with little notice in North Korea. That was far different from the national celebrations held on the birthdays of his father and grandfather Kim Il Sung, North Korea's founder and ruler for 46 years.

As well, Kim Jong Eun hasn't met anyone from outside of the country who could provide an assessment of his role.

Diplomats from North Korea's neighbors and other interested countries, such as the U.S., are taking a wait-and-see approach. "It's unclear what kind of attitude North Korea will take" in diplomacy, South Korea Foreign Minister Kim Sung-hwan said earlier this month. "Even China is also waiting," he added, referring to the North's chief ally.

And with so little information, analysts who watch North Korea are reluctant to draw any conclusions about the direction of the regime and the viability of Kim Jong Eun as leader.

"I can't point to clear evidence of instability in Pyongyang," said Gordon Flake, executive director of the Mansfield Foundation, which studies and promotes U.S.-Asia relations. "But I would be reluctant to assume it is business as usual."

In 1994, when Kim Jong Il took over control of North Korea after the death of his father, he also maintained a low profile for weeks. North Korea sent a special envoy to Beijing seven weeks after Kim Il Sung's death to assure the Chinese that Kim Jong Il was in charge. But there was another sign of action in Pyongyang at that time: The North resumed disarmament talks with the U.S. a month after Kim Il Sung's death.

The behavior of the North Korean regime over the past month closely resembles the period in August and September 2008 when Kim Jong Il was stricken with a stroke-like illness.

In both instances, no meetings or contacts were made with diplomats of other countries. Legal border crossings stopped temporarily and authorities appeared to crack down on illegal ones.

Externally, the most visible activity in both times was the state media's numerous accounts praising Kim Jong Il's actions and steady criticism of countries it routinely portrays as enemies to North Korean citizens: South Korea, Japan and the U.S.

Such adherence to orthodox behavior is typical in authoritarian regimes in a leadership vacuum. And almost no one expects a major change from Kim Jong Il's policies. Rhee Bong-jo, a former vice minister of South Korea's Unification Ministry, said the son's authority derives completely from family heritage. "Kim Jong Eun has no choice but to uphold his father's legacy," Mr. Rhee said.

But Kim Jong Il's death poses a dilemma for the North Korean regime that will be harder to resolve with the usual diet of adulation for the leader and diatribes for outsiders.

The problem is that relying on the young Kim Jong Eun to lead and balance two massive forces—the political party and military—conflicts with a centuries-old tradition in Korea of deference to older people.

Though Kim Il Sung was in only his mid-30s when he became the country's leader, he was operating in a tumultuous period of instability after World War II and overcame the cultural barrier against youth by getting support from the then-Soviet Union and China.

His grandson Kim Jong Eun is several years younger and operating in an environment of where power networks and alliances are more entrenched. As a result, some analysts speculate North Korea will form a collective leadership in which Mr. Kim will share power, most likely with an aunt and uncle and several generals who were all close to his father.

But if that were true, it would signal a broader change in the operations of North Korea's leadership structure, which has for decades been designed in a way that only the leader had full access to all information. "Even if there



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is some dispersion of power or a committee, there's always a first among equals," said Dan Pinkston, analyst at the International Crisis Group in Seoul.

In the coming weeks, clues in the direction and shape of the North Korean regime are likely to emerge in the way it responds to the mid-February birthday of Kim Jong Il, mid-April birthday of Kim Il Sung and the annual spring training exercise by U.S. and South Korean militaries, which begins late next month.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204555904577164351728575914.html>

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Hindustan Times - India

Nukes Are for Strategic Purposes Only: Army Chief

Press Trust of India (PTI)

New Delhi, January 15, 2012

In the midst of reports of China and Pakistan bolstering their nuclear arm, Army chief General VK Singh on Sunday said such weapons are not for fighting war but to have a strategic capability.

"Nuclear weapons are not for war fighting, let's be quite clear on it. They have got a strategic capability and that is where it should end. Me and my Army are not bothered about who has nuclear weapons. We have our task cut out and we will progress along that," he told reporters in New Delhi.

The Army chief said this in response to a query on any possible nuclear eventuality from China in wake of the new Mountain Strike Corps being raised by the Indian Army.

China has been reportedly helping Pakistan in its nuclear power programme and has supplied reactors to that country. Beijing is also believed to have been tacitly assisting Islamabad in the nuclear weapons front.

On reports claiming that Pakistan may deploy its forces along its borders with India as a defensive measure in case of any terror strike here, he said, "It does not affect our options in anyway. Those are their options, what they want to do, they are most welcome to do."

Replying to a question whether the finance ministry has put a stop on some of the procurement plans of the Army, Gen Singh denied any knowledge and said the country's leadership was quite alive to the needs of the armed forces.

"I don't know. Every ministry has its own procedure. I am quite sure they are following their own procedure and the country's leadership is quite alive to what the needs of the armed forces are," he said and hoped that procurement plans will be accordingly put into motion.

On the Gujarat high court's recent order to release a list of Indian prisoners of war (PoWs) in Pakistan, he said, "Discussion is going on this issue since 1965 and 1971. Government is trying its best for this. The court's decision will be added to it."

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/India-news/NewDelhi/Nukes-are-for-strategic-purposes-only-Army-chief/Article1-797578.aspx>

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Times of India – India

India Placed at Bottom of Nuclear Safety Index Compiled by US Thinktank

By Indrani Bagchi, Tamil News Network (TNN)

Issue No. 972, 17 January 2012

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January 15, 2012

NEW DELHI: Weeks ahead of the nuclear security summit in Seoul, India has been dealt a blow on its famed nuclear reputation. In the first-ever index of security of nuclear materials, India almost brings out the rear - just above Iran, Pakistan and North Korea.

The index, compiled by a US nuclear think-tank Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI) and Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), "is the first Nuclear Materials Security Index, a rating and ranking of the security framework in 32 nations that possess one kilogram or more of weapons-usable nuclear materials."

In its summary, the study says this index "is not a facility-by-facility review of "guns, guards, and gates". Instead, the authors of the study say they assessed each state on "publicly available indicators of a state's nuclear materials security practices and conditions".

The index is an embarrassment when India is hosting the sherpas for the nuclear security summit here on Monday. India takes a leading position on nuclear security issues, and is scheduled to establish a centre of excellence for nuclear security in Haryana.

While many in the Indian nuclear sector may scoff at the index, it is being used as a pressure point - the think-tank is even asking Australia to reconsider its decision to sell uranium to India because of New Delhi's score. Australia and the UK have the highest scores in the index.

Countries were scored on the following indicators: quantities and sites, which included material production and transportation; security measures particularly on-site protection; accession to global norms, including taking on voluntary commitments; domestic commitments and capacity.

The list may prove to be a trifle controversial because it judges countries on "societal factors", which include political instability and corruption.

India scored well in keeping with its international commitments, on-site physical protection, response capabilities and accounting procedures. It seems to score poorly on political stability and because of the lack of domestic legislation.

Professor R Rajaraman, emeritus professor of theoretical physics, JNU, acknowledged that for the researchers of EIU, "Their judgments do come into play at this stage.

In their evaluation, the main negative factors against India seem to have been the absence of an institutionally independent regulatory agency, our continued production of weapon material and overall corruption."

The problem Indians will have with this index is the fact that there is clearly a lot of value judgment that has gone into putting a score on a country. Anil Kakodkar, former chairman of DAE, said, "Nuclear security, by definition, is confidential. How do they expect to assess us on what they don't obviously know?"

Rajaraman was one of the four Asians in an international experts' panel, who prepared the various factors and their relative weights for the NTI index. He said, "I believe the resulting package of indicators is objective and very transparent. Apart from "rating" countries, it also provides tangible criteria for any country, even if it disagrees with its own score, to constructively examine and enhance the security of its material."

India, Pakistan and Israel are still publicly declared manufacturers of fissile material, which was a negative for the study. India scored zero on "security of materials during transportation" a score the Indian government is unlikely to agree with.

Judging India's nuclear security by corruption will raise eyebrows as well. Though corruption in India cannot be denied, the fact that only one department is in charge is seen to be an insulating factor.

Explaining the methodology, the authors of the study say, "It is not obvious that corruption, which is typically driven by economic gain, is an indicator of the potential risk of nuclear materials theft, although past studies by



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the EIU and other organizations have shown a high correlation between corruption and most other societal and public policy shortcomings, including poverty and environmental degradation. For that reason, we have included corruption as an indicator."

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/India-placed-at-bottom-of-nuclear-safety-index-compiled-by-US-thinktank/articleshow/11492735.cms>

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Hindustan Times – India

Agni-V in Final Phase of Testing, Launch Soon: DRDO

Press Trust of India (PTI)

Chandigarh, January 15, 2012

Agni-V, the 5,000-km version of the nuclear capable missile, is in the final phase of testing and is soon set for launch, a senior DRDO official said in Chandigarh on Sunday.

"Agni-V is in the final phase of testing. I cannot predict the exact date of its launch, but it will be launched shortly," Chief Controller R and D (Missiles and Strategic Systems) at DRDO, Avinash Chander, said.

He was addressing a press conference at the Terminal Ballistics Research Laboratory to mark the conclusion of its year-long golden jubilee celebrations.

Agni-V, touted as India's most ambitious strategic missile, will follow last year's test of the country's most advanced surface-to-surface missile Agni-IV.

The three-stage Agni-V and the two-stage Agni-IV are poised to add credible deterrence against countries which have missiles like the 11,200-km Dong Feng-31A, Chander said.

Agni-V will feature Multiple Independently-Targeted Re-entry Vehicles (MIRVs) with each missile being capable of carrying 3-10 separate warheads.

To a question, Chander said "we have Rs 20,000 crore worth production orders for Akash missile."

"By 2020, India will be among the leading countries in the missile development," he said.

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/India-news/Chandigarh/Agni-V-in-final-phase-of-testing-launch-soon-DRDO/Article1-797580.aspx>

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Economic Times – India

'India to Exercise Nuke Option Only If Attacked by N-Weapons'

16 January 2012

Press Trust of India (PTI)

NEW DELHI: Navy Chief Admiral Nirmal Verma today said the country will exercise the option of carrying out nuclear strikes if somebody does the "foolhardy" act of attacking it with atomic weapons.

"Only time this (India using nuclear weapons) could happen is when somebody who possesses nuclear weapons does something as foolhardy as to use them. That will be the only occasion when our country would be involved in (its) utilisation," the Navy Chief told reporters here.

Admiral Verma was responding to a media query on Army Chief Gen V K Singh's statement yesterday that nuclear weapons are not for fighting war but to have a strategic capability.

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Noting that India had a 'no first use' policy with regard to nuclear weapons, Verma said, "It means there will be no occasion where we will use it (the weapons) first."

He said this policy was a "good one" and met all the requirements of the country.

Asked if the stand-off between the Army Chief and the government over the age issue was affecting the relationship between armed forces and defence ministry, the Navy Chief said, "No, why should...I mean why do you have these doubts."

Admiral Verma is also the Chairman, Chiefs of Staffs Committee (COSC), which includes the three Services chiefs.

Asked to comment on an incident where a young officer drowned in the sea during an exercise, he said, "There is an inquiry on and whatever the recommendations in terms of the attributability of the individuals concerned, those will be reviewed at appropriate level and whatever action is required, will be taken."

Sub Lt Bipin Kumar had died during a sea swimming drill off the coast of Gujarat on December 20 after which the Navy sacked the Captain of warship INS Talwar from his command responsibilities.

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics/nation/india-to-exercise-nuke-option-only-if-attacked-by-n-weapons/articleshow/11511379.cms>

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Times of India – India

Agni-V's Detonator Developed in Chandigarh Lab

By Shimona Kanwar, Tamil News Network (TNN)

January 16, 2012

CHANDIGARH: A DRDO lab in the city, Terminal Ballistics Research Laboratory (TBRL) has developed the detonator which can trigger the explosive in a nuclear warhead and account for the successful take off of Agni-V -- a 5,000km range nuclear missile. This was announced by Avinash Chander, the scientist who has developed the missile which will be launched next month. Agni has already created ripples in South Asia with its long range capability.

"The missile has a wide range and with this our defence strategies will become enhanced. It is not to scare countries like China, but to become capable of self-defence. The TBRL has a major role in the development and testing of Agni-V. The detonator, which will trigger explosion in the warhead of the missile, has been tested in Chandigarh," said Chander.

The 50 tonne missile has a longer range than its previous versions. Though not much ambitious about entering the elite inter-continental ballistic missile (ICBM) club, which includes the US, Russia and China, Chander added, "We do not need the ICBM, as we do not perceive such a threat. But Agni-V shows our capability in marching towards this way."

DRDO is also working on augmenting the power of laser weapons from 10 kilowatt to 20 kilowatt. "The major area of thrust will be laser technology and its role in weapons. We are working in this area. This includes miniaturizing warheads while maintaining the lethality," said Chander.

Also, a precise missile guided weapon, Prahar, with a short range of 90-50km will soon be inducted in the Army. The warhead of this weapon has its genesis in the TBRL, Chandigarh. Dr W Selvamurthy, Chief Controller (R&D), DRDO, ministry of defence, said, "This indigenous missile is very promising and precise."

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chandigarh/Agni-Vs-detonator-developed-in-Chandigarh-lab/articleshow/11505859.cms>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

Repair, Modernization of Fire-Damaged Sub May Cost \$30 Mln

16 January 2012

The cost to repair and modernize the Yekaterinburg, a Russian nuclear submarine damaged by fire late last December, could total 900 million rubles (\$30 million), a representative of United Shipbuilding Corporation said on Monday.

“Preliminary costs of repairs and modernization of the Yekaterinburg nuclear powered submarine are estimated between 600 million and 900 million rubles, depending on the price of the instruments and mechanisms that will be installed in the new hydro acoustic complex,” the USC representative said.

Some media reports previously said the costs would exceed 1 billion rubles but Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin denied the reports.

Rogozin said the submarine would be repaired and re-enter service in summer 2014.

On December 29, the outer hull of the Yekaterinburg, a Delta-class nuclear submarine, caught fire during repairs at a shipyard in northwest Russia's Murmansk Region. Seven crewmembers and two responders were injured as they battled the fire, which was put out the following day.

There was no radiation leak because the reactors had been shut down before repairs began.

The submarine's hydro acoustic system was disabled by the fire and will need to be replaced before it is brought back into service.

Delta-class submarines have an outer skin of anechoic rubber, designed to absorb sound from sonars to make the boat harder to detect, that can burn in a dry environment. The boat has a double hull of thick steel, however, which would protect its interior from external fire.

The repairs are scheduled to start this summer.

MOSCOW, January 16 (RIA Novosti)

<http://en.ria.ru/russia/20120116/170781121.html>

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The Moscow Times – Russia

Russia to Test If U.S. Radar Affected Failed Space Probe

17 January 2012

The Moscow Times

Russian scientists will test whether radiation from a U.S. radar accidentally affected the failed Fobos-Grunt space probe that plummeted to Earth on Sunday, RIA-Novosti reported.

Russian space official Yury Koptev, who heads a commission responsible for analyzing the probe's flight, said an experiment will be run in the coming days in which a device with equipment similar to that on board the Fobos-Grunt probe will be exposed to the same level of radiation emitted by U.S. radars that may have affected the Russian device.

"The results of the experiment will allow us to confirm or refute the version of possible radar influence," Koptev said, RIA-Novosti reported.

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A source in the space industry told business daily Kommersant on Tuesday that one of the versions being examined by space officials in determining the reason for the probe's failure is "outside influence on the probe" by a U.S. radar in the Marshall Islands.

The unmanned Fobos-Grunt probe fell Sunday after being stranded in Earth's orbit for two months. The device was designed to travel to one of Mars' twin moons, Phobos, to collect soil samples in one of the most daunting interplanetary missions ever.

<http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/russia-to-test-if-us-radar-affected-failed-space-probe/451173.html>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

Russian Scientists Mock U.S. Radar Theory on Mars Probe

17 January 2012

The theory that Russia's Mars mission failed due to a U.S. radar is extremely "exotic," Russian scientists said on Tuesday.

Phobos-Grunt, Russia's most ambitious planetary mission in decades, was launched on November 9 but it was lost due to a propulsion failure and fell back to Earth on Sunday.

The crash could have been caused by a powerful electromagnetic emission from a U.S. radar in the Pacific Ocean, the Kommersant daily reported earlier on Tuesday citing an unnamed source in the Russian space industry. The source stressed that it was more likely an accident rather than an act of sabotage.

"Consider the power of the impact. I don't think the Americans have radars capable of ensuring such power at such an altitude [about 200 kilometers]," said Alexander Zakharov of the Russian Academy of Sciences Space Research Institute, where the Phobos equipment and research program were developed.

He suggested the theory was just a blind to cover up some people's mistakes.

"I simply think that is disingenuous. It is convenient to find the cause of the failure on the outside," he said, adding that "external impact hypotheses" were "far-fetched."

"The spacecraft itself should be examined first. There are problems there," he said.

His view was echoed by Viktor Savorsky, a researcher at the Russian Academy of Sciences Institute of Radio Technology and Electronics.

"The electronic equipment [of spacecraft] is usually protected very well against radiation and sheltered against external fields," he said.

Federal Space Agency Roscosmos chief Vladimir Popovkin suggested on Monday that certain forces in the Western Hemisphere, which is a shadow zone for Russia, might be shooting down Russian spacecraft.

"I don't want to make any accusations, but at present there are powerful technologies that can impact spacecraft, and their usage cannot be ruled out," Popovkin said in an interview with the Izvestia daily.

According to NASA, Russia has failed in all 17 of its attempts to study the Red Planet close-up since 1960. The most recent failure before November 2011 occurred in 1996, when Russia lost its Mars-96 orbiter during launch.

MOSCOW, January 17 (RIA Novosti)

<http://en.rian.ru/world/20120117/170802615.html>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

Russian Missile Forces Hold High Alert Drills

17 January 2012

Russia's Strategic Missile Forces are holding a series of exercises to practice putting road-mobile missile systems on high alert, SMF spokesman Col. Vadim Koval said.

The exercises involve Topol (SS-25 Sickle), Topol-M (SS-27 Sickle B) and Yars (RS-24) mobile systems stationed in central Russia and Siberia.

"SMF units armed with Topol, Topol-M and Yars road-mobile missile systems will practice patrolling, camouflaging and launch preparation procedures during high alert drills from January 16 to February 3," Koval told reporters on Monday.

The SMF are planning to hold over 100 tactical drills in the first half of 2012.

As of January 2012, the SMF operated at least 162 mobile Topol systems, 18 mobile Topol-M and 15 mobile Yars systems.

MOSCOW, January 17 (RIA Novosti)

http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20120117/170790557.html

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Financial Times – U.K.

January 13, 2012

Scots' Breakaway Plan Threatens Nuclear Base

By James Blitz, Defence and Diplomatic Editor

Contingency plans to transfer Britain's nuclear deterrent to England if Scotland declares independence are being examined by the Ministry of Defence.

Officials warn that London would demand billions in compensation from Edinburgh to fund the move.

As Scotland prepares for a referendum on independence in the autumn of 2014, MoD officials said they had been studying the implications of a Yes vote for the deterrent – Trident nuclear missiles, carried by four Vanguard class submarines that operate from Faslane Naval Base in the Firth of Clyde.

Officials warn that the costs of moving the four submarines from Scotland to England would be immense, mainly because the London government would need to build a new storage facility for the nuclear warheads carried by the Trident D5 missile.

The warheads are currently stored at a facility at Coulport, near Faslane. "Coulport is a major piece of infrastructure and it would cost billions to replace," an MoD official said. "There would certainly have to be discussions about the cost of moving that infrastructure, which would be phenomenal."

The MoD's plans to base a new fleet of seven Astute class submarines at Faslane from 2017 would also have to be scrapped if Scotland were to break away. The MoD is building a new jetty at Faslane for the Astute submarines and would seek compensation from Edinburgh for this as well.

A second Whitehall official said the implications of Scottish independence for the nuclear deterrent have been under discussion at the MoD since publication of the last white paper on Trident in 2006.

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"It's been a constant worry for a long time," said the official. "The Scottish government's decision to hold a formal vote in 2014 means people will now be drawing up more detailed plans for what happens if you get a complete breakaway."

Professor Malcolm Chalmers of the Royal United Services Institute think-tank said one of the biggest concerns facing the MoD after independence was that it would take about 10 years to build a replacement storage facility for the Trident warheads.

Because of this, Prof Chalmers believes London would have to ask the government of a newly independent Scotland to continue maintaining the deterrent at Faslane and Coulport for up to a decade.

"The new Scottish state would be under pressure to agree to this because it would need London's goodwill to help it gain membership of the European Union and other organisations," he said.

However, Prof Chalmers warned that Scotland's acquiescence would be by no means be guaranteed, especially if the new Edinburgh government opted for a foreign policy differentiating itself from that of London. He said MoD planners would have to consider a worst case scenario after independence where the UK was left with no operational nuclear deterrent because it could not be safely berthed.

If Scotland were to opt for a completely independent foreign and security policy after independence, many defence experts believe this would lead to the break-up of the UK armed forces. According to some, the likelihood is that, as with the collapse of the Soviet Union, Scotland would take over military units and assets that were permanently based on Scottish territory.

A spokesman for Alex Salmond, Scottish first minister, said: "The UK government should have a care, and stop this sabre rattling. The vast majority of MSPs [members of the Scottish parliament], as well as the churches, trade unions, and civic society across the nation totally oppose Trident nuclear weapons being based in Scotland – and in the last Westminster parliament a majority of Scottish MPs opposed the renewal of Trident."

Additional reporting by Andrew Bolger in Edinburgh

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/20f28e12-3e0d-11e1-ac9b-00144feabdc0.html#axzz1jYmw9D00>

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The Moscow Times – Russia

U.S. Plans Arms Control Talks in 2012

15 January 2012

Reuters

WASHINGTON — U.S. and Russian negotiators will hold talks this year on issues ranging from missile defense to cyber security, hoping to set the stage for a renewed arms control push once elections are over in both countries, the top U.S. arms negotiator said.

Ellen Tauscher, undersecretary of state for arms control, said a year after the New START nuclear arms treaty with Russia that the United States was still committed to returning to the negotiating table to discuss cuts in strategic and tactical nuclear weapons.

But with Europe working on a nuclear deterrence review, elections in Russia and the United States, and Moscow largely satisfied with nuclear stockpile levels following New START, Tauscher said the timing was not right for a new round of nuclear talks.

"We would like to get back to talks. ... But I think we're sanguine about the fact that they're not ready to do it," she told defense writers late last week. "So what we've decided to do is to multitask and to use this next six to eight months to do these ... strategic stability talks."

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Tauscher, who would lead the talks with her Russian counterpart, said the two sides agreed in December to focus on 13 topic areas and to meet at least monthly and talk every few days in an effort to identify common concerns, threats and points of agreement.

The issues include conventional forces in Europe, piracy, cyber security, missile defense and other areas where there is a considerable amount of common interest and agreement but some threat as well. The aim is to define what the two sides mean by strategic stability and what steps they must take to achieve it.

"We're not wasting this year, which is pretty much consumed by ... things that are going to distract people," Tauscher said. "We'll get that work done, and as soon as we get the opening subsequent to their election and perhaps even subsequent to ours, off we go."

Tauscher said New START, ratified last February, had been an important step in improving U.S. and Russian relations, which had soured as a result of U.S. efforts to build a missile defense system in Europe and other disagreements.

Russia has demanded assurances that Tauscher said the United States could not give without limiting or eliminating parts of the system.

"The only way they're going to be reassured that ... the system itself does not undercut their strategic deterrent is to sit with us in the tent in NATO and see what we're doing," she said.

"So is it a political leap of faith? Yes. Are they ready to do it? No," she said. "But we're hoping that these strategic stability talks over the next eight months will start to kind of loosen these old ties that have been binding everybody."

<http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/us-plans-arms-control-talks-in-2012/451072.html>

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Washington Times

New Space-Arms Control Initiative Draws Concern

Critics say military activities will be compromised

By Bill Gertz, Special to The Washington Times

Monday, January 16, 2012

The Obama administration is launching a new space arms-control initiative that critics say will lead to restrictions on U.S. military activities in space, a key U.S. strategic war-fighting advantage.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton is expected to announce the initiative as early as Tuesday. The plan will be built on work contained in a European Union draft code of conduct for space that the Pentagon and State Department have criticized as too restrictive.

"The United States has decided to enter into formal consultations and negotiations with the European Union and other spacefaring nations to develop an International Code of Conduct," said an administration official familiar with the announcement.

The U.S. government has rejected space-arms talks promoted by Russia and China at the United Nations as a covert attempt to limit U.S. military space operations, but the administration official called the EU draft code an improvement.

"We believe the European Union's draft Code of Conduct is a solid foundation for future negotiations on reaching a consensus international code," the administration official said, noting that signing a code is not imminent and that negotiations are expected to continue throughout this year and possibly into next year.

Change of plans

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The comments contradict those of Ellen Tauscher, undersecretary of state for international security and arms control, who told reporters last week that the U.S. had rejected a draft EU code of conduct as "too restrictive."

A Dec. 9, 2009, State Department cable on the draft EU code said the United States "continues to have significant concerns about the widespread use of language connoting binding obligations, such as 'shall' and 'will,' in the proposed non-binding Code of Conduct."

"The use of such language in a non-binding document is contrary to established practice; for example, The Hague Code of Conduct, which is not binding under international law, does not use such binding language," the cable said.

According to a recent assessment of the EU draft by the Pentagon's Joint Staff, U.S. adherence to the code's provisions would hurt the U.S. military's space operations in several areas. The unclassified portion of the report did not provide further details.

The initiative will seek to outline international norms for non-threatening behavior in space; to increase transparency among nations that use space; and to reduce the hazards of debris, such as more than 10,000 pieces of space junk left by China's 2007 anti-satellite missile test that are orbiting Earth.

A 2008 draft of the EU space code calls for the signing states to "refrain from any intentional action which will or might bring about, directly or indirectly, the damage or destruction of outer space objects, unless such action is conducted to reduce the creation of outer space debris and/or justified by imperative safety considerations."

Reaction

John R. Bolton, a former U.N. ambassador who held Ms. Tauscher's post during the George W. Bush administration, said the initiative is symptomatic of the Obama administration's ideological commitment to arms talks.

"This is mindless," Mr. Bolton said in an email. "The last thing the United States needs is a space code of conduct. The ideology of arms control has already failed in the Russian 'reset' policy, and it is sure to fail here as well."

Retired Air Force Lt. Gen. Thomas McInerney also expressed concerns about the arms-control plan.

"U.S. military activities in space are a key strategic advantage for the United States," Gen. McInerney said. "Any agreements that limit or constrain military space activities must be approached with extreme caution."

Two U.S. national security officials said the new talks are part of the administration's arms-control-oriented national security policies, which place a priority on international agreements instead of developing military capabilities.

Whether Strategic Command is concerned about the arms initiative was not certain.

A State Department official confirmed that the administration will pursue an international code of conduct for space. An announcement is expected soon, the official said.

Congress has not been briefed on the space-arms initiative.

Hard questions

Several House and Senate members are expected to ask the administration hard questions about the initiative in the coming weeks. Critics in Congress are likely to view the initiative as a way to circumvent the Senate's treaty-making powers by concluding executive agreements that do not require ratification by the Senate.

Mrs. Clinton's announcement will say that the Obama administration is committed to avoiding an international space code of conduct that would constrain U.S. defense capabilities, one official said, adding that the administration plans only to implement an international code that would not be legally binding or impose limits on U.S. or allied missile defenses.

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However, critics say such preconditions would not long survive protracted negotiations or affect how the deal would be implemented.

For example, one official opposed to the space code said a foreign government recently called the U.S. military's use of the Space Based Infrared Satellites a space-weapons program because U.S. missile defenses use the satellites for both warning and tracking.

Ms. Tauscher, the undersecretary of state for international arms control, told defense reporters last week that the U.S. had rejected the draft EU code of conduct for space.

"It's been clear from the very beginning that we're not going along with the code of conduct," Ms. Tauscher said at breakfast with reporters.

"We made it very definitive that we were not going to go ahead with the European code of conduct; what we haven't announced is what we're going to do, but we will be doing that soon."

Ms. Tauscher has had a mixed record in arms-control negotiations. She was the key figure in drafting an agreement with Russia on missile defenses last year that the White House rejected because it would have imposed legally binding limits on U.S. defenses.

The agreement had been drafted for signing by President Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev at the Group of Eight summit in May, but White House attorneys rejected the draft because of a provision that would have included legally binding restrictions on the targeting of missile defense interceptors.

Satellite risks

The U.S. military relies heavily on space satellites for reconnaissance, surveillance and intelligence in a region that is becoming increasingly contested as China and other nations develop space weaponry or the systems that will facilitate their use, such as small, maneuvering satellites.

China's military last year conducted an operation that involved moving a satellite within a short distance of another satellite. Analysts said such an exercise would be useful in conducting a space attack.

China last year rebuffed Pentagon officials' requests to hold talks on space, along with strategic-nuclear issues, missile defense and cyberwarfare.

Russia and the U.S. have had technical talks on space security issues since 2010 with the goal of developing transparency and confidence-building measures on military activities.

The talks were held after a 2009 collision between U.S. and Russian satellites in orbit that U.S. officials said highlights the growing hazards in space.

Several satellites and a space shuttle have been forced to alter course because of concerns about orbiting debris, which moves so fast that even small bits can do serious damage. Just last week, the International Space Station moved about 1,000 feet to dodge a softball-size piece of debris from a U.S. communications satellite, its 13th such maneuver since 1998.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/jan/16/new-space-arms-control-initiative-draws-concern/?page=all#pagebreak>

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Eurasia Review - Spain
Institute for Near East & Gulf Military Analysis (INEGMA) – U.A.E.
OPINION/Analysis

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Nuclear Deterrence For A Nuclear-Armed Iran - The U.S./GCC Dilemma

By Sabahat Khan, Senior Analyst, INEGMA
January 15, 2012

Following the political fall-out between Washington and its Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) allies after the American invasion of Iraq in 2003, relations between the GCC bloc, in particular Saudi Arabia, and the U.S. have recovered – largely driven by the necessity of the multi-dimensional security challenge Iran has come to posit. The rise of Iran – in part catapulted by the United States-led wars in Afghanistan and in particular Iraq, and the growth in status of proxy groups such as Hizbullah and Hamas – has presented a number of capitals in the GCC (some more so, admittedly, than others) with a renewed set of mutual interests to drive relations with Washington forward for potentially the next two decades. At the pinnacle of mutually shared security threats between the U.S. and GCC states are the suspected activities of Iran to enrich uranium to weapons-grade and then ‘weaponize’ the fissile material, closely followed by the increasingly sophisticated growing Iranian cruise and ballistic missile arsenals.

While remaining imbued with considerable ambiguities, the idea of a defense umbrella to GCC allies floated by U.S. Secretary of State Hilary Clinton in fall 2009 has unavoidably carried undertones of Cold War-era ‘extended deterrence’ strategies – especially in the event Iran makes a breakthrough as a nuclear weapons state. The concept of ‘extended deterrence’ is traced back to the Cold War when the U.S. and the Soviet Union declared their willingness employ their nuclear arsenals for the protection of allies. What ‘category’ of a defense umbrella the U.S. could extend to its GCC allies remains unclear. For example, would such a defense umbrella be framed within bilateral or multilateral arrangements, and would it be designed only to offer GCC allies a defensive missile shield with deployed in-theater U.S. military assets? Or, would the United States’ umbrella go as far as extended deterrence whereby a potential nuclear attack on GCC allies by Iran would be met with Washington retaliating in kind?

Extended deterrence for GCC allies could simultaneously serve two core long-term policy objectives for Washington: Firstly, to support the security of indispensable energy partners in the GCC, and; Secondly, to offer an convincing alternative to GCC states that could consider their own nuclear weapons programs if Iran became a nuclear armed state. For now, however, it can be presumed on the basis of prevailing policy position that the U.S. will extend its military assets only in support of what could eventually evolve into an integrated regional air and missile defense shield against Iranian air and missile capabilities. To enable such, Washington would authorize – as it already is – sales of modern air defense systems such as the PAC-3 and THAAD systems, simultaneously with advanced weapons sales – also as it has already declared – to bolster GCC counterforce capabilities for offensive operations. At another level, presumably, Washington would entertain some tacit understanding to either lead or support military operations against Iran if it chose to attack GCC states, or destabilize them beyond a level of tolerability.

However, the posture outlined above only looks at dealing with Iran as a conventional power: The acquisition of nuclear weapons by Iran could render a defense umbrella for GCC states redundant in the absence of a nuclear deterrent – prompting GCC states to consider their own. It is entirely conceivable if not increasingly certain that a GCC state or the GCC bloc would feel compelled to develop an indigenous nuclear deterrent. So it becomes necessary to consider at least in theory the possibility of a U.S. extended deterrence to GCC allies – firstly, as means to protect GCC allies, and secondly, as a strategy to contain a regional nuclear arms race.

Assuming the United States did eventually offer extended deterrence to GCC states, a number of important questions arise: The biggest ask where the U.S. would deploy its nuclear arsenal, how quantitatively large any such deployment would be, and – crucially – how much, if any, control GCC states party to such an arrangement would have. The latter presents several more questions – for example, where would the United States’ nuclear deterrent be positioned within either individual command and control structures for GCC states, or within an as-yet-unrealized regional command and control structure? If the nuclear deterrent was in the form of air-to-ground

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bombs deliverable by aircraft, who would be assigned to deliver them? Alternatively, if the deterrent was in the form of ground-launched missiles, would their launch be automated (and to what degree) or not in retaliation to a nuclear attack – and who would take responsibility in the event of miscalculation?

Indeed, any extended deterrence for the GCC would need to be deployed in-theater (i.e., on GCC territory), for nuclear missiles housed on U.S. aircraft carriers or naval ships would be exposed to unnecessary and potentially untenable risks – and for now no known submarine bases exist anywhere on the peninsula. However, even the deployment of U.S. submarines with nuclear weapons could create problems with regards to the balance of power between the U.S. and Russia, and increasingly, China – the implications of which could be an even more dangerous regional arms build-up than what Iran threatens by itself. Within that backdrop, it is almost certain that GCC states would want some level of control over U.S. nuclear weapons deployed on their territories – this could in fact be an essential element of any U.S. efforts to convince GCC states to voluntarily forgo efforts to launch their own nuclear weapons programs.

The idea of some level of joint control of deployed U.S. nuclear weapons seems feasible at least in theory – and perhaps the most useful model to contrast the possibility of such is the current NATO arrangement with Turkey. Under a decades-old Cold War-era NATO arrangement, Turkey still hosts as many as 90 B61 gravity bombs that can be delivered with F-16 jets at its Incirlik Air Base (IAB). Reportedly, U.S. pilots are assigned to deliver 50 of the 90 B61 bombs stored at IAB, and the rest are assigned for delivery by the Turkish Air Force. Similarly, the U.S. keeps upwards of 100 nuclear bombs at NATO bases in Belgium, Germany, Netherlands, and Italy. One particular feature in the Turkish arrangement may however be unacceptable to GCC states – that there is no permanent deployment of a nuclear-capable F-16 wing at IAB (only the B61 gravity bombs here are permanently stored).

Yet, even if the U.S. came around, firstly, to extended deterrence for GCC allies, and second, to some level of joint control for it, further obstacles remain in a workable long term arrangement. For instance, assuming Iran acquired a nuclear weapons capability and then, having acquired a capable modern air defense system such as future variants of the Russian-made S-400, begun stockpiling an unlimited number of nuclear warheads – would a presumed U.S. extended deterrence meet the threat of an expanding Iranian nuclear arsenal with some degree of quantitative parity? And as we are exploring future scenarios – would an implosion of the Islamic regime in Iran and its replacement with a democratic, pro-Western regime that, for instance, halts its nuclear weapons production but does not entirely disassemble its arsenal, prompt the U.S. to review and possibly withdraw its extended deterrence to GCC allies, in part or principle?

GCC states cannot entirely discount the possibility of a paradigm shift in the center of gravity for political power in Iran profoundly impacting their own relationships with Washington, reducing their dispensability to overarching U.S. interests and potentially leaving them isolated in fifteen years from now. GCC states look back to 1960s and 1970s when Washington was helping build its regional policeman under the Shah of Iran, much to the discomfort of Arabian Gulf states. Ironically, there are high-up circles in the GCC that have already subscribed to the belief that the potential nuclear weapons breakthrough of Iran is a Western conspiracy to undermine the Sunni Arabs. The issue here is about whether Saudi Arabia or GCC states would ever be prepared to live in the shadow of a nuclear-armed Iran per se, regardless of the nature of its government. Thus even an extended deterrence for GCC allies – while offering them a sense of protection, and an important one – may not be sustainable as a long-term substitute to dissuade all GCC states from exploring the feasibility of a national nuclear deterrent.

Some analysts feel that the development of a nuclear weapons capability would be too costly and draining on national resources for a nation like Saudi Arabia, for example – and combined with the likelihood of defying the U.S., which could fundamentally jeopardize the single most important strategic security relationship Riyadh has, the Saudis would be unlikely to pursue nuclear weapons capability. Similar arguments are made for the UAE – the next GCC state with theoretical weight to be able to embark on such an effort – which has become the first GCC state to launch a civilian nuclear program, poised to set new benchmarks for international safeguards and transparency. However, while such analyses may hold some weight, they represent an “outside-in” look into the security perceptions of Saudi Arabia rather than how the Saudis themselves – and indeed their GCC partners –



view regional nuclear weapons proliferation, and feel compelled to channel their national and collective powers to counter the looming threat of nuclear weapons from what is perceived to be an interventionist and aggressive regional force. Quietly, some observers look at the closeness of Saudi-Pakistani bilateral relations – exemplified by historical Saudi support for Pakistan’s nuclear program – to consider the possibility of Pakistan deploying part of its own arsenal in the kingdom.

Some time ago the former U.S. ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Chas M. Freeman, noted that “[S]enior Saudi officials have said privately that, if and when Iran acknowledges having, or is discovered to have, actual nuclear warheads, Saudi Arabia would feel compelled to acquire a deterrent stockpile.” In fall 2011, Prince Turki al-Faisal – a U.S.-educated former Saudi intelligence chief and former Saudi envoy to the U.S. – declared in an unofficial capacity that the leadership of Saudi Arabia has a “duty” to its people to look into “all options we are given, including obtaining these weapons ourselves” if “the efforts of the world community, fail to convince Israel to shed its weapons of mass destruction and to prevent Iran from obtaining similar weapons.” Although Prince Turki’s remarks were made in a personal capacity to not reflect official policy, it should be noted that the remarks by Prince Turki – once a champion of a nuclear-free Middle East – suggest not only that a regional nuclear arms race is a real possibility in the event of a nuclear-armed Iran, but that even moderates are accepting its inevitability.

Any U.S. extended deterrence for the GCC remains only a conceptual exercise – but could feature as a future add-on to a “defense umbrella” which for now only focuses on combining advanced air and missile defense and GCC counterforce capabilities. GCC states have been working away at upgrading missile defense capabilities, and hope with renewed energies a regional integrated air and missile defense architecture can be realized within the decade. For that to happen, GCC states will need continued U.S. support – operationally, at least in the short-term, and technologically much longer. How dependency on the U.S. for defense needs would affect the self-drive of a state like Saudi Arabia or the UAE to consider a nuclear weapons capability if Iran acquired such remains unclear. Although the U.S. could in theory threaten withdrawal from regional air and missile defense set-ups – either by refusing to take part in or ultimately suspending sales of its missile defense systems – it may be reluctant to take such measures. Ultimately, in the prevailing environment, Washington could pay a much heavier price by deserting regional forces that are friendly to its greater interests, paving the way for competing powers to capitalize on a vacuum any U.S. retreat from longstanding relationships with GCC allies could create.

<http://www.eurasiareview.com/15012012-nuclear-deterrence-for-a-nuclear-armed-iran-the-us-gcc-dilemma-analysis/>

<http://www.inegma.com/?navigation=reports>

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Jerusalem Post – Israel

OPINION/Editorial

Stopping Iran’s Nukes

Combination of covert operations, sanctions, diplomatic pressure, military threat necessary against Iran.

By JPOST Editorial

January 15, 2012

Iran seems intent on pushing forward with its nuclear program and there seems to be no surefire way of stopping it. If the current situation continues, we might have to face the horrific prospect of learning to live with a nuclear Iran.

It has been five years since the UN Security Council first demanded that Iran cease enriching uranium. But the Islamic Republic continues to defy international pressure and is stubbornly advancing with what appears to be a bid to acquire nuclear weapons in the coming year.



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On November 8, the International Atomic Energy Agency released a report expressing “serious concerns regarding possible military dimensions to Iran’s nuclear program.” The most recent development is Iran’s announcement that it is beginning to enrich uranium in a new facility in Fordo, near the holy city of Qom.

The imminent opening of the new enrichment site further complicates a military option. Since the new facility is buried deep underground at a well-defended military site, it is considered far more resistant to air strikes than the existing enrichment site at Natanz. And even if a military strike against Iranian nuclear facilities succeeded, the geopolitical fallout is liable to be nightmarish, although the prospect of a nuclear Iran is no less of a nightmare.

Covert actions, in contrast, carry much less of a risk, but are also less effective. For instance, last week’s assassination of Mostafa Ahmadi Roshan, director of the Natanz uranium enrichment facility, undoubtedly dealt a blow to Iran’s nuclear program.

But the delay, if any, is only temporary since Roshan is obviously not the only person in Iran privy to nuclear know-how. And these sorts of operations have negative side effects. Theoretically, if the US was behind the killing of Roshan or one of the other four (or five, depending on which reports you believe) scientists killed since 2007 and this became known, the Obama administration might have a more difficult time putting together a unified front consisting of Russia, China and other countries against Iran.

Some say that targeted killings strengthen extremists, though it is difficult to claim today that there is any significant “moderate” opposition challenging the Islamic Republic’s leadership.

In contrast, cyber warfare or other non-lethal covert operations such as the Stuxnet virus are less likely to hurt American attempts to muster a broad coalition against Iran. Some of these operations can be presented by the Iranians as “accidents.”

Economic sanctions, meanwhile, have so far not changed Iranian nuclear policy, though they have caused some damage. Indeed, since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, there have been numerous attempts to influence Iranian policy through economic sanctions.

Arguably, such sanctions helped end Iran’s war with Iraq in 1988. At the same time, Iran’s economy has been forced to adapt to functioning under various Western boycotts while developing alternative trade ties with Russia, China and several South and Central American countries.

Still, Tehran’s threat to close the Strait of Hormuz, gateway to much of the world’s oil trade, could be a sign of its growing economic desperation. Iranians are plagued by inflation, unemployment and economic stagnation. And the economic situation will only worsen. Though a new round of Security Council-backed sanctions has been delayed due to opposition from Russia and China, the US and Europe have put in place their own penalties. Japan pledged to buy less Iranian oil while South Korea said it was looking for alternative suppliers. And even China can take advantage of a situation in which fewer countries are buying Iranian oil to put pressure on Tehran to lower prices.

A new US law that would penalize foreign companies that do business with Iran’s central bank and an oil embargo that EU foreign ministers plan to approve on January 23 could have an even bigger impact.

A combination of covert operations, economic sanctions and diplomatic pressure, while at the same time keeping the military option “on the table,” is the only way to convince Tehran to back down. And maintaining a broad coalition of countries behind the sanctions is the best way to make them effective.

<http://www.jpost.com/Opinion/Editorials/Article.aspx?id=253763>

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New York Times
OPINION/Op-Ed Contributors

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January 16, 2012

Preventing a Nuclear Iran, Peacefully

By SHIBLEY TELHAMI and STEVEN KULL

Page – A23

Washington -- THE debate over how to handle Iran's nuclear program is notable for its gloom and doom. Many people assume that Israel must choose between letting Iran develop nuclear weapons or attacking before it gets the bomb. But this is a false choice. There is a third option: working toward a nuclear weapons-free zone in the Middle East. And it is more feasible than most assume.

Attacking Iran might set its nuclear program back a few years, but it will most likely encourage Iran to aggressively seek — and probably develop — nuclear weapons. Slowing Iran down has some value, but the costs are high and the risks even greater. Iran would almost certainly retaliate, leading to all-out war at a time when Israel is still at odds with various Arab countries, and its relations with Turkey are tense.

Many hawks who argue for war believe that Iran poses an “existential threat” to Israel. They assume Iran is insensitive to the logic of nuclear deterrence and would be prepared to use nuclear weapons without fear of the consequences (which could include killing millions of Palestinians and the loss of millions of Iranian civilians from an inevitable Israeli retaliation). And even if Israel strikes, Iran is still likely to acquire nuclear weapons eventually and would then be even more inclined to use them.

Despite all the talk of an “existential threat,” less than half of Israelis support a strike on Iran. According to our November poll, carried out in cooperation with the Dahaf Institute in Israel, only 43 percent of Israeli Jews support a military strike on Iran — even though 90 percent of them think that Iran will eventually acquire nuclear weapons.

Most important, when asked whether it would be better for both Israel and Iran to have the bomb, or for neither to have it, 65 percent of Israeli Jews said neither. And a remarkable 64 percent favored the idea of a nuclear-free zone, even when it was explained that this would mean Israel giving up its nuclear weapons.

The Israeli public also seems willing to move away from a secretive nuclear policy toward greater openness about Israel's nuclear facilities. Sixty percent of respondents favored “a system of full international inspections” of all nuclear facilities, including Israel's and Iran's, as a step toward regional disarmament.

If Israel's nuclear program were to become part of the equation, it would be a game-changer. Iran has until now effectively accused the West of employing a double standard because it does not demand Israeli disarmament, earning it many fans across the Arab world.

And a nuclear-free zone may be hard for Iran to refuse. Iranian diplomats have said they would be open to an intrusive role for the United Nations if it accepted Iran's right to enrich uranium for energy production — not to the higher levels necessary for weapons. And a 2007 poll by the Program on International Policy Attitudes found that the Iranian people would favor such a deal.

We cannot take what Iranian officials say at face value, but an international push for a nuclear-free Middle East would publicly test them. And most Arab leaders would rather not start down the nuclear path — a real risk if Iran gets the bomb — and have therefore welcomed the proposal of a nuclear-free zone.

Some Israeli officials may also take the idea seriously. As Avner Cohen's recent book “The Worst-Kept Secret” shows, Israel's policy of “opacity” — not acknowledging having nuclear weapons while letting everyone know it does — has existed since 1969, but is now becoming outdated. Indeed, no one outside Israel today sees any ambiguity about the fact that Israel possesses a large nuclear arsenal.

Although Israeli leaders have in the past expressed openness to the idea of a nuclear-free zone, they have always insisted that there must first be peace between Israel and its neighbors.



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But the stalemate with Iran could actually delay or prevent peace in the region. As the former Israeli spy chief, Meir Dagan, argued earlier this month, Israel's current stance might actually accelerate Iran's quest for nuclear weapons and encourage Arab states to follow suit. Moreover, talk of an "existential threat" projects Israel as weak, hurts its morale, and reduces its foreign policy options. This helps explain why three leading Israeli security experts — the Mossad chief, Tamir Pardo, a former Mossad chief, Efraim Halevy, and a former military chief of staff, Dan Halutz — all recently declared that a nuclear Iran would not pose an existential threat to Israel.

While full elimination of nuclear weapons is improbable without peace, starting the inevitably long and arduous process of negotiations toward that end is vital.

Given that Israelis overwhelmingly believe that Iran is on its way to acquiring nuclear weapons and several security experts have begun to question current policy, there is now an opportunity for a genuine debate on the real choices: relying on cold-war-style "mutual assured destruction" once Iran develops nuclear weapons or pursuing a path toward a nuclear-weapons-free Middle East, with a chance that Iran — and Arabs — will never develop the bomb at all.

There should be no illusions that successfully negotiating a path toward regional nuclear disarmament will be easy. But the mere conversation could transform a debate that at present is stuck between two undesirable options: an Iranian bomb or war.

Shibley Telhami is a professor of government at the University of Maryland and a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution. Steven Kull is director of the Program on International Policy Attitudes.

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/16/opinion/preventing-a-nuclear-iran-peacefully.html?_r=1

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China Daily – China
OPINION/Commentary

Time for a Peaceful Peninsula

January 17, 2012
By Sun Ru (China Daily)

There have been frequent diplomatic negotiations over the Korean Peninsula, including visits to China by Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda and Republic of Korea (ROK) President Lee Myung-bak, and US Assistant Secretary of State Kurt Campbell's visits to China, the ROK and Japan.

Frequent interactions between and among leaders of related countries can facilitate better communication and thus prevent them from misjudging the situation and taking wrong steps.

After the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) leader Kim Jong-il's sudden death, some people predicted that it would be difficult to maintain peace and stability on the Peninsula, which is vital for peace and stabilization of Northeast Asia. But the developments after Kim Jong-il's death show there is reason to be optimistic about the Peninsula's future.

First, the transition of power in the DPRK seems to have been successful. Second, related countries have played the role of "responsible stakeholders" and restrained from taking provocative actions against Pyongyang after Kim Jong-il's death, which indicates that they have agreed to maintain peace and stability on the Peninsula.

Despite that, many people still have doubts whether the young and inexperienced Kim Jong-un could lead the country, but till now the situation in the new DPRK has been running smoothly. After Kim Jong-il suffered a stroke in 2008, he expedited the grooming of the new leadership to be headed by Kim Jong-un. Now there are enough reasons to believe that the DPRK people have not only accepted but also backed Kim Jong-un's leadership.

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In recent years, the DPRK has focused on developing its economy and improving its people's livelihoods. It has tried to open the gates of national reunification, too, which requires a stable international environment. But to create a favorable global environment, the DPRK has to improve its ties with the ROK and the US. In return, it should get food and energy aid and the sanctions against it must be lifted.

From the beginning of 2011, the DPRK has tried to resume the Pyongyang-Seoul dialogue unconditionally, hold the third DPRK-ROK summit and restart talks on tourism in and around Mount Kumgang. The DPRK also sent a delegation to the US, and the two countries have held talks in New York and Geneva.

Washington and Seoul, too, want to establish further contacts with Pyongyang. But Seoul's tough policy toward Pyongyang hasn't changed, nor has the latter's stance against those policies. On the contrary, it has intensified the confrontation between them. Therefore, the ROK has to make its policy toward the DPRK more flexible. The US, too, doesn't want to provoke the DPRK, though it wants Pyongyang to suspend its nuclear weapons' program.

Generally speaking, the US, the ROK and Japan, without changing their policies, have exercised restraint vis-a-vis the DPRK because they don't want to suspend contacts with Pyongyang after Kim Jong-il's death. All the three countries favor a policy that would relax the situation in the DPRK. But they should also make efforts to resume the Six-Party Talks as soon as possible and promote stable DPRK-ROK relations.

The DPRK wants to resume the Six-Party Talks unconditionally, while the US, ROK and Japan insist that it suspend its uranium enrichment program, abandon its plans to conduct nuclear and guided missiles tests, re-invite the International Atomic Energy Agency to check its Yongbyon nuclear facility and stop provoking the ROK if it wants the Six-Party Talks to resume.

The suspension of Pyongyang's uranium enrichment program is the key factor. The US, the ROK and Japan want the DPRK to give it up but the DPRK seems determined to continue developing light water reactors before a peace treaty is signed and sanctions against it are lifted. Denuclearization of the Peninsula is a long-term process, so all the parties have to work out a practical road map.

According to an agreement reached at a meeting in Beijing last month, the DPRK agreed to suspend its uranium enrichment program for 240,000 tons of food aid from the US, which is a good beginning.

The vital question for all related countries is to find ways to make the Six-Party Talks a success once they resume. A failure to produce results would not only undermine the mechanism of the Six-Party Talks, but also have a negative impact on the peace and stability on the Peninsula.

DPRK-ROK relations, vital to the peace and stability on the Peninsula, have fluctuated in recent years. After the Cheonan incident and exchange of fire over Yeonpyeong Island, the ROK strengthened its military with the help of the US, and the DPRK appeared to intensify its nuclear and missiles program, and increased the number of warships in nearby seas.

All these have raised fears of a military conflict between the two sides. The DPRK once announced that it would sever contacts with the ROK and their relations were strained after Kim Jong-il's death. The DPRK is unhappy with the ROK government's decision to prevent civil society members from visiting Pyongyang to mourn Kim Jong-il's death. And the ROK has prepared its military to counter possible action from the DPRK, which may heighten tensions.

The demand of the times is that all the countries work together to preserve peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula through close communication and coordination. They should not misjudge the situation and take unnecessary military gambles. And China should continue playing its role in promoting talks and appealing to all sides to exercise restraint.

But the onus is on the ROK to play a more active role to improve its relations with Pyongyang.



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