



USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER
CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL
MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

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London Guardian – U.K.

Iran Warns Against Attacks on Its Nuclear Bases

Revolutionary Guards deputy head says countries face 'retaliatory aggression' if used to launch airstrikes against Iran

By Harriet Sherwood in Jerusalem

Sunday, 5 February 2012

Iran has warned it will attack any country used to launch airstrikes against its nuclear bases, as increasingly aggressive rhetoric emanating from the Islamic Republic and Israel has increased apprehension that military confrontation is looming.

"Any spot used by the enemy for hostile operations against Iran will be subjected to retaliatory aggression by our armed forces," Hossein Salami, the deputy head of Iran's elite Revolutionary Guards, told the semi-official Fars news agency.

The warning followed a threat by Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, on Friday to attack Israel in retaliation for western sanctions and a pledge to support any country or group that wanted to fight Israel.

In a two-hour televised speech, Khamenei said: "From now on, in any place, if any nation or any group confronts the Zionist regime, we will endorse and we will help. We have no fear expressing this." He referred to Israel as a "cancerous tumour that should be cut and will be cut".

At an international gathering of security officials and diplomats in Munich, the Turkish foreign minister, Ahmet Davutoglu, said a western attack on Iran would be a "disaster" and that greater diplomatic efforts were needed.

"A military option will create a disaster in our region. So before that disaster, everybody must be serious in negotiations. We hope soon both sides will meet again but this time there will be a complete result," he said.

The Israeli prime minister, Binyamin Netanyahu, urged political colleagues to avoid "chatter [which] causes extensive damage, puts Israel on the frontline and impedes the sanctions effort".

His comments followed a formal speech by Israel's defence minister, Ehud Barak, on Thursday in which he warned that "later might be too late", as Iran was approaching a "zone of immunity" in which its nuclear facilities would be beyond the reach of airstrikes. On the same day, the US defence secretary, Leon Panetta, was quoted as warning that an Israeli attack could come as early as April, May or June.

Meanwhile, the man expected to execute a political order for such a strike was named on Sunday in an appointment that has been embroiled in controversy for weeks.

Amir Eshel is to take up the post of commander of the Israeli air force in April after his appointment was approved by Barak. The move follows reported differences between Netanyahu and the military chief of staff, Benny Gantz, over who should fill the vacancy.

Eshel is thought to be relatively cautious on the issue of military action against Iran, in tune with Gantz who strongly backed him for the post. But, he told reporters last month: "We have the ability to hit very, very hard any adversary." He also warned that a nuclear Iran would lead to proliferation across the Middle East.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/feb/05/iran-warns-attacks-nuclear-bases>

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China Daily – China

Risky to Attack Iran, Wants Diplomatic Fix: Obama

February 6, 2012

(Agencies)

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WASHINGTON/TEHRAN - US President Barack Obama said on Sunday there were important risks to consider before any military strike against Iran and made clear he does not want to see more conflict in the oil-producing Gulf region.

In a television interview, Obama also said he did not believe Tehran had the "intentions or capabilities" to attack the United States, playing down the threats from Tehran and saying he wanted a diplomatic end to the nuclear standoff.

"Any kind of additional military activity inside the Gulf is disruptive and has a big effect on us. It could have a big effect on oil prices. We've still got troops in Afghanistan, which borders Iran. And so our preferred solution here is diplomatic," Obama said.

His comments echoed concerns expressed by earlier by Iran's neighbor Turkey that an attack on Iran would be disastrous.

Obama, who is up for re-election in November, has ended the US war in Iraq and is winding down combat in Afghanistan amid growing public discontent about American war spending at a time when the economy remains shaky.

He said Israel had not yet decided what to do in response to the escalating tension but was "rightly" concerned about Tehran's plans.

"My number one priority continues to be the security of the United States, but also the security of Israel, and we are going to make sure that we work in lockstep as we proceed to try to solve this, hopefully diplomatically," he told NBC.

Iranian leaders have responded sharply to speculation that Israel could bomb Iran within months to stop it from assembling nuclear weapons, threatening to retaliate against any country that launches an attack against the Islamic Republic.

Iran says its nuclear program is meant to produce energy, not weapons.

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/world/2012-02/06/content_14545217.htm

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Baltimore Sun

U.N. Nuclear Talks in Tehran: Frustrated Hopes

Fredrik Dahl Reuters

February 6, 2012

VIENNA (Reuters) - After two days of rare and intensive talks in Tehran, senior U.N. nuclear officials may have felt they were finally making headway towards getting Iran to address suspicions that it is bent on developing the ability to make atom bombs.

Then, on the evening before the third and final session of last week's meetings in the Iranian capital, the visiting U.N. nuclear watchdog delegation was handed an envelope that dealt a blow to any hopes of substantive progress.

According to one Vienna-based diplomat briefed on the discussions, it contained a procedural "new work plan" at odds with the nature of the discussions until then, in which the U.N. experts had tried to focus on concrete steps required by Iran.

In the view of Western officials, the Iranian move was further proof of the kind of stalling tactics Tehran has often used during the decade-long dispute over its nuclear program.

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"It is delay. It is talks about talks," a senior Western envoy said about the Iranian negotiating strategy.

The team from the U.N. International Atomic Energy Agency, headed by Deputy Director General Herman Nackaerts, was forced to use much of the last day of the January 29-31 meeting to push back against the Iranian initiative.

"The agency had to spend a great deal of time getting over Iranian obfuscation," said another diplomat. "It wasted a lot of time, at least a day."

Neither Iran nor the IAEA have commented on the Iranian proposal or given details about it.

But it evoked memories among Western diplomats of an ultimately doomed plan agreed between the IAEA and Tehran in 2007 to resolve "outstanding issues" that failed to allay international doubts about Iran's nuclear aspirations.

By putting forward a new such proposal, they suspect, Iran was trying once again to drag talks out while pressing ahead with nuclear work Western powers fear is aimed at acquiring the means and technologies needed to build atomic bombs.

"The Iranians kept trying to push that 'work plan' and the agency was not going to go there. They had some very frank engagement," the senior envoy said.

Iran's mission to the IAEA was not reachable for comment. Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi has described the meeting with the IAEA as "very good," without elaborating.

A second round of talks has been slated for later this month but Western diplomats hold out little hope that the February 21-22 meeting in Tehran will fare much better than the previous round.

One diplomat said the January negotiations ended with a draft "discussion paper" listing the main points the IAEA wants Iran to answer, especially allegations about possible military dimensions to its uranium enrichment program.

The talks coincide with soaring tension in the long-running row, with the United States and European Union adopting sanctions targeting Iran's oil exports and the Islamic Republic threatening retaliation by closing the main Gulf oil shipping lane.

IRAN UNDER PRESSURE

The outcome of the IAEA's meetings in Tehran will be scrutinized in Washington, European capitals and Israel for signs of whether Iran's leadership may finally be prepared to give ground after a decade of pursuing shadowy nuclear development goals, or whether it remains as defiant as ever.

Many fear a downward spiral towards military conflict and rocketing oil prices if diplomacy and sanctions fail to change the Islamic state's nuclear course.

The Vienna-based IAEA, tasked with preventing the spread of nuclear arms in the world, is pressing Iran to be transparent.

It wants Iran to explain intelligence findings, detailed in an IAEA report in November, about research and development work pointing to nuclear weapons aims, and grant access to sites, documents and people relevant for its investigation.

Iran has indicated readiness for the first time to answer the agency's questions but also repeatedly dismissed the allegations as baseless and forged.

It says its drive to stockpile enriched uranium is entirely peaceful and aimed at generating electricity using a future network of nuclear power plants.

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The deadlock over the IAEA's suspicion that Iran is looking into "weaponizing" its nuclear activity dates back over three years.

Nackaerts and his team specifically asked last week for access to the Parchin military site near Tehran, without receiving a clear answer from the Iranian side, diplomats said.

The secretive U.N. agency would not comment on the visit beyond a formal statement in which Director General Yukiya Amano said: "The agency is committed to intensifying dialogue. It remains essential to make progress on substantive issues."

The IAEA said it explained to Iran its "concerns and identified its priorities, which focus on the clarification of possible military dimensions."

"The IAEA also discussed with Iran the topics and initial steps to be taken, as well as associated modalities," it said.

Western diplomats said the statement made clear that there had been little progress on substance, but also raised pressure on Iran to deliver tangible results in the next meeting.

Tehran is in the "game of gaining time," one of them said.

But at least it would be clear who was to blame if the talks failed, he added: "It is going to be Iran's responsibility."

The IAEA may also hope that the Iranian side next time will send senior officials such as Fereydoun Abbasi-Davani, the head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organisation, to the talks.

Iran's ambassador to the IAEA, Ali Asghar Soltanieh, was the main counterpart in the January meeting. While he is a senior nuclear official, the U.N. agency frequently sees him in Vienna.

"There was nothing achieved on this visit and in fact the agency could not get Iran to engage on possible military dimensions questions at all," the senior Western envoy said.

Editing by Mark Heinrich

http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/nation-world/sns-rt-us-nuclear-iran-iaeatre8151h8-20120206_0,4779212,full.story

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Al Arabiya – U.A.E.

Iran Expands Nuclear Activity in Bunker as U.S., Europe Stage Major Amphibious Drill

Tuesday, 07 February 2012

By Al Arabiya with Agencies

Iran is believed to be expanding uranium enrichment activity deep inside a mountain, diplomatic sources said on Monday, a move likely to add to tension with Western powers that suspect Tehran is seeking nuclear weapons capability, as the U.S. and eight other countries were staging a major amphibious exercise, fighting an Iran-like fictional enemy.

The move to increase sensitive nuclear work at the Fordow underground site near the Shiite Muslim holy city of Qom, even if expected, underlines the Islamic state's defiance in the face of intensifying Western pressure to curb such activity.

Iran last month confirmed it had begun refining uranium to a fissile concentration of 20 percent at Fordow, shifting its highest-grade enrichment from an above-ground location to better protect it against any strikes by Israel or the United States.

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Washington, which has not ruled out military action against Iran if diplomacy fails to resolve the long-running nuclear dispute, on Jan. 9 denounced the start-up of the Fordow plant as a further escalation of Iran's "ongoing violations" of U.N. resolutions.

At that time, diplomats said Iran was operating at Fordow two so-called cascades, each of 174 centrifuges -- machines that spin at supersonic speed to increase the ratio of the fissile isotope. More centrifuges were being installed, they said.

Enriched uranium can have both civilian and military uses.

One Vienna-based diplomat said two more cascades, like the first pair connected with each other to make the process more efficient, had now also been deployed to enrich uranium.

"The second set of cascades is operational ... my understanding is they are both operational and (have) no problems," the diplomat said, according to Reuters.

Another diplomat accredited to the IAEA also painted a picture of expanding activity at Fordow, without giving details.

Neither Iran nor the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Vienna-based U.N. agency that regularly inspects Iranian nuclear sites including Fordow, was immediately available for comment.

Fordow enrichment plant

Iran said last year that it would transfer its highest-grade uranium refinement work to Fordow from its main enrichment plant at Natanz, and sharply boost capacity.

The decision to move work which the U.N. Security Council has called on Iran to suspend to an underground facility could further complicate diplomatic efforts to resolve the standoff peacefully.

The United States and its allies say Iran is trying to develop the means to make atomic bombs, but Tehran insists its nuclear program is aimed at generating electricity and isotopes for medical treatment.

President Barack Obama tightened sanctions on Iran another notch, the White House said on Monday, targeting its central bank and giving U.S. banks new powers to freeze assets linked to the government.

Iran two years ago started refining uranium to a fissile concentration of 20 percent at Natanz -- far more than the 3.5 percent level usually required to power nuclear energy plants.

Tehran says it will use 20 percent-enriched uranium to convert into fuel for a research reactor making isotopes to treat cancer patients, but Western officials say they doubt that the country has the technical capability to do that.

In addition, they say, Fordow's capacity -- a maximum of 3,000 centrifuges -- is too small to produce the fuel needed for nuclear power plants, but ideal for yielding smaller amounts of high-enriched product typical of a nuclear weapons program.

Nuclear bombs require uranium enriched to 90 percent, but Western experts say much of the effort required to get there is already achieved once it reaches 20 percent purity, shortening the time needed for any nuclear weapons "break-out".

They give different estimates of how quickly Iran could assemble a nuclear weapon -- ranging from as little as six months to a year or more.

Western officials believe Iran has not yet decided whether it will indeed "weaponize" enrichment, but rather is seeking now solely to establish the industrial and scientific capacity to do so if needed for military and security contingencies.

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Iran disclosed the existence of Fordow to the IAEA only in September 2009 after learning that Western intelligence agencies had detected it.

Major drill

With beach landings, 25 naval ships and an air assault, the United States and eight other countries are staging a major amphibious exercise on the U.S. East Coast this week, according to AFP, fighting a fictional enemy that bears more than a passing resemblance to Iran.

After a decade dominated by ground wars against insurgents in Iraq and Afghanistan, the drill dubbed Bold Alligator is “the largest amphibious exercise conducted by the fleet in the last 10 years,” said Admiral John Harvey, head of U.S. Fleet Forces Command.

About 20,000 U.S. forces, plus hundreds of British, Dutch and French troops as well as liaison officers from Italy, Spain, New Zealand and Australia are taking part in the exercise along the Atlantic coast off Virginia and North Carolina.

But UK defense sources have revealed that the United States had only allowed a British Royal Navy frigate to join the mission following an intervention from French president, Nicolas Sarkozy, the Telegraph reported.

“Sources said that Philip Hammond, the [British] defense secretary, concluded that if the French were sending a ship, Britain must do so too. His decision to was then endorsed by David Cameron, the Prime Minister,” the newspaper stated.

“The disparity in vessel numbers means the British and French presence in the flotilla was of greater diplomatic than military significance,” it added.

An American aircraft carrier, amphibious assault ships, including France’s Mistral, Canadian mine sweepers and dozens of aircrafts have been deployed for the drill, which began on Jan. 30 and runs through mid-February.

Monday was “D-day” for Bold Alligator, with U.S. Marines stepping on to the beach from hovercraft, near the Camp Lejeune base in North Carolina.

The American military, mindful that Marines have spent most of their time in the deserts of Iraq and the mountains of Afghanistan since 2001, said the goal was “to revitalize, refine, and strengthen fundamental amphibious capabilities and reinforce the Navy and Marine Corps role as ‘fighters from the sea.’”

With defense spending coming under pressure after years of unlimited growth, the Marines -- which devoted a brigade to the exercise -- also are anxious to protect funding for their traditional role as an amphibious force.

Treasure Coast

The exercise scenario takes place in a mythical region known as “Treasure Coast,” with a country called Garnet, a theocracy, invading its neighbor to the north, Amberland, which calls for international help to repel the attack.

Garnet has mined several harbors and deployed anti-ship missiles along the coast.

The threat of mines, anti-ship missiles and small boats in coastal waters conjure up Iran's naval forces, but the commanders overseeing the drill, Admiral Harvey and Marine Lieutenant General Dennis Hejlik, say the scenario is not based on any particular country.

Amid rising tensions with Iran and threats from Tehran to close the strategic Strait of Hormuz, naval officers and military planners are keenly aware of the Islamic Republic’s arsenal of mines and anti-ship missiles.

When asked by reporters last week, Harvey acknowledged that the exercise scenario was “certainly informed by recent history” and that it was “applicable” to the Strait of Hormuz, as well as other areas.

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Harvey also said the exercise incorporated lessons from the 2006 Lebanon conflict, when Iran-backed Hezbollah forces hit an Israeli navy corvette with an anti-ship missile.

The Pentagon opened the drill to allied forces for the first time this year, with 650 French troops among those participating.

In their AMX-10 wheeled reconnaissance vehicles and VAB armored personnel carriers, the mission of the French forces was "to land first to secure a path for the Americans," said Second Lieutenant Chens Bouriche, a French military spokesman.

<http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/02/07/193092.html>

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London Telegraph – U.K.

Israel: We Will Act to Prevent Syria's Chemical Weapons from Reaching Hezbollah

Israel's defence establishment has indicated it is prepared to take action should Syria's vast store of unconventional weapons fall into the hands of Hezbollah militants in Lebanon.

By Phoebe Greenwood in Tel Aviv
07 February 2012

Tel Aviv has expressed grave concerns about the fate of Syria's weaponry should Bashar al Assad fall, saying they pose as great a threat to Israeli security as Iranian nuclear development.

As the violent government crack down on Syrian civilian protestors enters its eleventh month, Israeli intelligence now regards the fall of the Assad regime as inevitable.

Syria's massive stockpile of weapons includes surface-to-air missiles, high-trajectory long-range rockets and missiles, biological and chemical weapons, which are currently under the watchful guard of government troops.

An Israeli defence official was quoted last week in free Israeli daily Israel Hayom, a paper closely affiliated with prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, warning that the transference of chemical weaponry to Lebanon would be tantamount to a declaration of war by the Lebanese government, adding that Israel would act to prevent such a move.

Air Force Command Major General Ido Nechushtan has stated baldly that the volatile situation in Syria may lead to a conflict on Israel's northern border.

"Everything that is happening [in Syria] every day is reason for us to re-examine the situation, closely follow the developments and make decisions as necessary," Nechushtan said.

Incoming Air Force Chief Major General Amir Eshel told a recent press conference: "The question is when, not if [Assad will fall]. And the big question is what will happen the following day.

"What has been passed on to Hezbollah so far? What will be passed on in the future? What will be divided between the two factions in Syria?" Benjamin Ben Eliezer, who has served both as Israel's minister of defence and deputy prime minister, warned last month that radical Shi'a militant group Hezbollah has trebled in strength since the last war between Lebanon and Israel in 2006.

"The fall of Syria will cause a lot of problems. We're talking in terms of thousands of missiles that might move to Hezbollah and endanger the whole of the Middle East," Ben Eliezer warned.

"Lebanon's Hezbollah is getting stronger. The numbers and the range of the missiles in Syria and already with Hezbollah are beyond any imagining. Even without Iran - they cover the whole of Israel."

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According to Arab media reports, Syria has already moved Scud missiles to Hezbollah camps in Lebanon and erected advanced surface-to-air missiles in the Lebanese mountains.

Since 2008, Israel has warned of the transfer of unconventional weapons to the Lebanese militant group, which are stored on Syrian territory to prevent their destruction in an Israeli strike.

But with Assad's grip on Syria loosening, the danger is that these weapons, including deadly chemical agents such as Sarin and the nerve agent VX, will reach Hezbollah militants or fall into the hands of radical Sunni elements.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/israel/9066222/Israel-We-will-act-to-prevent-Syrias-chemical-weapons-from-reaching-Hezbollah.html>

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Business Insider

New Data Suggests North Korea Has Much Bigger Atomic Bombs Than Anyone Thought

By Luke McKenna
February 03, 2012

North Korea may have conducted two secret nuclear weapons tests in 2010 as part of a program to build a more powerful bomb, according to a new radiation study.

Geoff Brumfiel at Nature reports that an analysis of data from an international network of radioisotopic monitoring stations and South Korea has identified two strains of radioactive isotopes that are generated during man-made explosions.

The results point to detonations in the range of 50–200 tonnes of TNT equivalent in April and May of 2010 — about a year after the rogue state's last open nuclear test on May 25, 2009.

At the time, the state said that blast, estimated at between 10 and 20 kilotonnes, was the more powerful than its first nuclear test in 2006.

The suspected secret detonations would also have come at about the same time that North Korea made the unbelievable claim that it had created a nuclear fusion reaction, which western scientists have been attempting for decades.

The researcher behind the new radiation study, Lars-Erik De Geer, an atmospheric scientist at the Swedish Defence Research Agency, told Nature the findings suggests North Korea was testing materials and techniques to boost the power of its nuclear weapons.

But other experts are asking questions about the reliability of De Geer's data, and claim there were no seismic vibrations to support his assertions.

http://articles.businessinsider.com/2012-02-03/news/31020089_1_nuclear-weapons-nuclear-test-nuclear-fusion-reaction

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Daily Yomiuri – Japan

573 Deaths 'Related to Nuclear Crisis'

By The Yomiuri Shimbun
February 5, 2012

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A total of 573 deaths have been certified as "disaster-related" by 13 municipalities affected by the crisis at the crippled Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant, according to a Yomiuri Shimbun survey.

This number could rise because certification for 29 people remains pending while further checks are conducted.

The 13 municipalities are three cities--Minami-Soma, Tamura and Iwaki--eight towns and villages in Futaba County--Namie, Futaba, Okuma, Tomioka, Naraha, Hirono, Katsurao and Kawauchi--and Kawamata and Iitate, all in Fukushima Prefecture.

These municipalities are in the no-entry, emergency evacuation preparation or expanded evacuation zones around the nuclear plant, which suffered meltdowns soon after the March 11 disaster.

A disaster-related death certificate is issued when a death is not directly caused by a tragedy, but by fatigue or the aggravation of a chronic disease due to the disaster. If a municipality certifies the cause of death is directly associated to a disaster, a condolence grant is paid to the victim's family. If the person was a breadwinner, 5 million yen is paid.

Applications for certification have been filed for 748 people, and 634 of them have been cleared to undergo screening.

Of the 634, 573 deaths were certified as disaster-related, 28 applications were rejected, four cases had to reapply because of flawed paperwork, and 29 remain pending.

In Minami-Soma, a screening panel of doctors, lawyers and other experts examined 251 applications and approved 234 of them. The panel judged two deaths were not eligible for certification and 15 were put on hold.

"During our examination of the applications, we gave emphasis to the conditions at evacuation sites and how they spent their days before they died," a city government official said. "However, the screening process was difficult in cases when people had stayed in evacuation facilities for an extended time and when there was little evidence of where they had been taking shelter."

<http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T120204003191.htm>

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Yonhap News – South Korea

February 5, 2012

N. Korea Developing Unmanned Attack Aircraft from U.S. Drones: Source

SEOUL, Feb. 5 (Yonhap) -- North Korea is developing unmanned attack aircraft using U.S. target drones purchased from the Middle East, a military source in Seoul said Sunday, indicating the aircraft will likely target the South.

"North Korea recently bought several U.S. MQM-107D Streakers from a Middle Eastern nation that appears to be Syria, and is developing unmanned attack aircraft based on them," the source said on condition of anonymity.

The MQM-107D Streaker is a high-speed target drone used by the U.S. and South Korean militaries for testing guided missiles.

North Korea has conducted numerous tests on high-speed target drones mounted with high explosives, but has yet to master the technology, the source said, citing South Korean intelligence sources.

If it succeeds in developing the attack aircraft, the North appears likely to deploy them near the inter-Korean border to target South Korean troops stationed on border islands in the Yellow Sea.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2012/02/05/17/040100000AEN20120205000900315F.HTML>



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San Francisco Chronicle

Age, Military Ties Mark Kim Jong Un's Inner Circle

By JEAN H. LEE and FOSTER KLUG, Associated Press

Tuesday, February 7, 2012

PYONGYANG, North Korea (AP) -- Wherever North Korea's young new leader goes, they're there: a group of graying military and political officials who shadow Kim Jong Un as he visits army bases, attends concerts and tours schools.

As Kim Jong Un steps into the role of "supreme commander" less than two months after his father's death, these officials can be seen in the background. They listen attentively as their leader speaks during "guidance visits" and stand at his side during group photos, smiling and clapping.

Since Kim Jong Il died of a heart attack in December, Kim Jong Un has assumed the mantle of leadership with apparent confidence. But this aging circle of advisers is never far behind, lending the young man gravitas and experience while making clear that he has the backing of the powerful military.

The world has been watching for signs of trouble as Kim, believed to be in his late 20s, leads North Korea just three years after he was tapped to be his father's successor.

His ascension comes at a delicate time. Kim Jong Il died as diplomats were in the midst of negotiating with Washington on much-needed aid to alleviate a chronic food shortage. There were also discussions between North Korea and its neighbors on the prospect of restarting nuclear disarmament negotiations.

The show of support by the nation's core military and political leadership settles a major question about the new era under Kim Jong Un: Kim Jong Il's "military first" policy will remain in place. And it's clear that these men, many now in their 70s and 80s, will continue to advise Kim Jong Un after years of working with his father and even his grandfather, North Korea founder Kim Il Sung.

The "central" leadership stepped into the spotlight most vividly during Kim Jong Il's funeral in a tableau watched as closely here in Pyongyang as it was in Seoul and Washington for signs indicating who is in power in North Korea's opaque political system.

On that day, in a swirl of snow, eight men accompanied the black limousine bearing Kim's flag-draped coffin: Kim Jong Un and seven elderly men who represent the topmost levels of North Korea's military and political circles.

At the front of the hearse, opposite Kim Jong Un, walked Ri Yong Ho, vice marshal of the Korean People's Army and the military's General Staff chief.

Ri wields power from his position at the intersection of three crucial institutions: the Korean People's Army, the Central Military Commission of the ruling Workers' Party and the Standing Committee of the party's influential Political Bureau.

While the Workers' Party of Korea has served as the backbone of the power structure since Kim Il Sung founded the country in 1948, Kim Jong Il elevated the military when he became leader after his father's death in 1994.

Ri, who has operational control of the army, also oversees an influential Kim Jong Un support group comprising officers in their 50s and 60s who commanders consider rising stars, according to Ken Gause, a North Korea specialist at CNA, a U.S.-based research organization.

A stern figure, Ri stood between Kim Jong Il and Kim Jong Un in October 2010 as they watched a massive military parade marking the 65th anniversary of the Workers' Party. He occasionally leaned over to whisper to the son,



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who was making his international public debut. And Ri stood at Kim Jong Un's side following Kim Jong Il's funeral. Ri is 69, according to South Korea's Unification Ministry, which provided the birth dates of all seven figures.

Walking directly behind the young leader during the funeral procession was his uncle, Jang Song Thaek, husband of Kim Jong Il's younger sister, Kim Kyong Hui, who is also an important Kim Jong Un patron.

Jang, 65, is a vice chairman of the National Defense Commission. Under the constitution, the commission is the country's highest military body, and Kim Jong Il led the country as chairman.

Jang apparently is involved in big economic projects and oversees internal security offices, according to Nicholas Hamisevicz, director of research and academic affairs for the Korea Economic Institute in Washington. Jang was a frequent companion to Kim Jong Il on field inspection trips last year.

"He is thought to be helping groom Kim Jong Un by providing him information as well as some political protection," Hamisevicz said.

Also escorting Kim's hearse was People's Armed Forces Minister Kim Yong Chun, who controls military logistics and training, according to Gause. In a Jan. 28 state media report, Kim Yong Chun, 75, was mentioned second only to Ri Yong Ho in a list of top aides who accompanied Kim Jong Un to a military concert.

Kim Ki Nam, 82, is credited with orchestrating the legends surrounding the Kim family and serves as the main ideologue for the country, according to the World Institute for North Korea Studies in South Korea.

Kim Jong Gak is a senior political officer in the Korean People's Army, while U Tong Chuk is a top state security official. On Jan. 9, Kim Jong Gak was mentioned prominently at a massive rally of army, navy and air force troops pledging loyalty to Kim Jong Un. U Tong Chuk has attended two concerts with the new leader this year, according to state media.

Rounding out the entourage in the funeral procession was Choe Thae Bok, the longtime chairman of the Supreme People's Assembly and a member of the Politburo who has led a number of North Korean delegations overseas. Choe is 81, according to the South Korean government.

Other important advisers include Premier Choe Yong Rim, who despite being in his 80s has been making the types of inspection trips to factories, construction sites and power plants that were once Kim Jong Il's purview; and Kim Yong Nam, president of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly and the country's nominal head of state.

Two other top officers, wearing gray parkas, have accompanied Kim on military inspections recently: Kim Myong Guk, a 71-year-old General Staff director of operations; and Kim Won Hong, a top political officer who is reportedly in charge of military personnel appointments. Gause says Kim Won Hong heads one of the bodies that form an "inner ring for internal security inside North Korea."

One of these men is invariably at Kim Jong Un's side.

"While Kim might enjoy real authority, it is his relationship with the leadership support system around him that will determine the latitude he has to make decisions on his own," Gause said.

The elderly leaders who lived through the Korean War are being replaced by a new generation of senior leaders in their 40s, 50s and 60s and numbering perhaps 5,000, according to a recent report by Peter Hayes, Scott Bruce and David von Hippel of the Nautilus Institute think tank.

The analysts said Kim Jong Un and his "senior advisers are likely to seek continuity with the past as the basis for smooth sailing in 2012 while they concentrate on domestic issues."

Klug reported from Seoul, South Korea. Associated Press writers Hyung-jin Kim and Sam Kim also contributed to this story from Seoul.

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/n/a/2012/02/07/international/i005006S39.DTL&ao=all>

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Times of India – India

Forces to Be Trained for Nuke Accidents

By R Vasundara, Tamil News Network (TNN)
February 6, 2012

CHENNAI: The national disaster response forces planned to be set up across the country will be trained to deal with nuclear, chemical, radiological and biological emergencies. The decision has been taken in the aftermath of the protests at Kudankulam and Jaitapur over the safety of nuclear plants and the Mayapuri incident in Delhi. The Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Mumbai, will be one of the agencies involved in training.

According to M Shashidhar Reddy, vice-president of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), a training centre will be established in Nagpur and land has already been allotted in all the states for housing and training the local forces. The training exercise will entail an estimated cost of Rs 800 crore.

Reddy said the state governments too will be asked to set up state level disaster response forces and they too will be similarly trained. Moreover, each nuclear plant in the country will have a state response force stationed nearby in the event of disasters. In the event of radioactive contamination from the plant site, the working groups within the plant will be used to bring the situation in the plant under control. Currently, the national disaster response force in Tamil Nadu is stationed at Arakkonam.

"Already 4 battalions of the central paramilitary forces, drawn into the disaster response forces have been trained," said Reddy. "The states shall draw from the state armed reserve forces. These forces, however, will be solely kept for handling disasters and not be pressed into duties like elections at other times. Instead, an exercise called Famex or familiarization exercise will be conducted where the forces will be made to familiarize themselves with the terrain and its changes regularly. This way, they can act swiftly in times of need."

"There is very little knowledge in the public domain on dealing with radiation exposure," said Reddy. "We also do not have a proper incidence response system in place in the event of such a disaster. In any such case of contamination, once it spreads beyond the plant site and forms threat to civilian population, the state administration too must step in and that's where this comes in."

The NDMA is also looking to equip the national forces with world class equipment for rescue services. "We are looking at winches that can lift 50 tonnes dead weight to rescue people trapped underneath, or a camera that can be inserted into a tiny hole to look for victims and survivors in a wreck and also a device to pick up human heart beats," he said.

The project is estimated to cost Rs 3,000 crore. The training may include lessons ranging from use of radiation detection equipment to evacuation procedures, said K Ramamurthy, station director of Madras Atomic Power Station at Kalpakkam. "Locating the source of radiation is most important, especially after the Mayapuri incident," he said. "The forces will be trained how to use the radiation detection equipment."

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/Forces-to-be-trained-for-nuke-accidents/articleshow/11772695.cms>

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The Hindu Business Line – India

February 7, 2012

UN Appeals to India to Ratify Global Nuclear Test Ban Treaty

Press Trust of India (PTI)

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United Nations, Feb. 7: UN chief Ban Ki-moon has appealed to eight countries, including India, to ratify the CTBT to bring the global nuclear test ban into force.

The UN Secretary-General made the appeal after Indonesia became the 157th country to adopt the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

Besides India, China, North Korea, Egypt, Iran, Israel, Pakistan and the US are the other nations in a core group of 44 nuclear countries which did not ratify the treaty.

The 44 nations, which must ratify the CTBT to bring it into force, all have nuclear weapons or atomic programmes.

This would accelerate the entry of CTBT into force, Mr Ban said after his meeting with the Indonesian Foreign Minister, Mr Marty Natalegawa, at the UN headquarters.

During their meeting, Mr Ban stressed the importance of Indonesia's ratification of the CTBT given that the country is one of the so-called Annex 2 States, whose endorsement is required for the treaty to enter into force, a UN release said.

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/industry-and-economy/economy/article2868113.ece>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

Moscow Sees No Progress on European Missile Defense

4 February 2012

There has been no shift on the issue of a European missile defense system, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said on Saturday.

“Unfortunately there have been no changes,” he said commenting on reports of a compromise between Russia and the West.

Ahead of a global security conference in Munich, which runs from February 3 to 5, its chairman Wolfgang Ischinger expressed hope that it would help Russia and its Western partners reach a “compromise” on the missile defense issue “so that cooperation with Russia can move forward at the NATO summit in May in Chicago.”

Moscow is seeking written, legally binding guarantees that the NATO missile shield will not target Russia.

Washington, however, refuses to provide such guarantees, saying the shield is designed to protect NATO members against missile attacks from North Korea and Iran.

MOSCOW, February 4 (RIA Novosti)

<http://en.ria.ru/world/20120204/171139699.html>

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Daily News & Analysis – India

Russia to Build Anti-NATO Missile Shield

Sunday, February 5, 2012

Moscow, Indo-Asian News Service (IANS)

Russia will build a reliable aerospace defence system to effectively counter NATO missile threats, Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin said on Sunday.

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Rogozin, appointed recently to oversee Russia's defence industry, tweeted that the global security conference being held in the German city of Munich had failed to come to a compromise on creating a European missile defence system.

Rogozin quoted NATO Secretary General Anders Fog Rasmussen as saying that NATO would continue "to develop a missile defence system because we feel a strong responsibility to protect our populations effectively against the missile threat".

"Well, as for us, we also feel responsibility for protecting our population from your missile threat and will create a reliable air and space defence," Rogozin, who served as Russia's envoy to NATO prior to his new appointment, wrote on his Twitter account.

Russia and NATO had agreed to cooperate on the so-called European missile shield during the NATO-Russia Council summit in Lisbon in November 2010.

http://www.dnaindia.com/world/report_russia-to-build-anti-nato-missile-shield_1646226

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RTT News

Russia to Acquire 10 Borey Class Nuke Submarines

February 7, 2012

By RTT Staff Writer

(RTTNews) - The Russian Navy will acquire at least ten new Borey class strategic nuclear submarines in line with a revised state armament procurement program aimed at raising the submarine fleet as the core of the country's naval force in future, the Kommersant daily reported on Tuesday.

The revised document also envisions the procurement of ten Graney class nuclear attack submarines and 20 diesel-electric subs, including six Varshavyanka class vessels.

Prime Minister Vladimir Putin had said last year that procurement of new warships and submarines for the Navy would be a priority over the next decade. The government has allocated five trillion rubles (\$166 billion) or a quarter of the entire armament procurement budget until 2020 for this purpose.

In addition to submarines, the Navy will receive 14 frigates, 35 corvettes, six Buyan class small artillery ships and six Ivan Gren Class large landing ships.

Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin, who is also in charge of defense production, said on Monday Russia would evolve by June a detailed 30-year plan for strengthening its naval forces.

<http://www.rttnews.com/1814528/russia-to-acquire-10-borey-class-nuke-submarines.aspx>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

Russia to Upgrade Over 10 Tu-160 Bombers by 2020

7 February 2012

The Russian Air Force will receive more than 10 modernized Tu-160 Blackjack strategic bombers by 2020, the Defense Ministry said on Tuesday.

According to official data, Russia has at least 16 Tu-160 aircraft in service. There are plans to increase their number to 30.

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"The Tu-160 in service with the Air Force are already undergoing modernization," Air Force spokesman Col. Vladimir Drik said. "We are planning to receive more than 10 aircraft of this type."

The Tu-160 is a supersonic, variable-geometry heavy bomber, designed to strike strategic targets with nuclear and conventional weapons deep in continental theaters of operation.

The modernized version, Tu-160M, features new weaponry, improved electronics and avionics, which double its combat effectiveness.

The upgraded aircraft will remain in service until a fifth-generation strategic bomber is developed, the Air Force officials earlier said.

Russia will also modernize about 30 Tu-22M3 Backfire-C strategic bombers to a Tu-22M3M variant by 2020.

MOSCOW, February 7 (RIA Novosti)

http://en.ria.ru/military_news/20120207/171200584.html

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People's Daily – China

Russia May Boost Nuclear Arsenal to Respond to Threats: Deputy Defense Minister

(Xinhua)

February 07, 2012

MOSCOW, Feb. 6 (Xinhua) -- Russia may have to expand its nuclear arsenal to meet emerging global threats, Deputy Defense Minister Anatoly Antonov has said.

Antonov, in an interview with the Kommersant Daily published Monday, said that new challenges are emerging in the world, including nuclear proliferation and unrest in the Middle East.

"That's why Russia's military doctrine envisages the use of nuclear weapons in specific cases," Antonov said. "I do not rule out that under certain circumstances we will have to boost, not cut, our nuclear arsenal."

Antonov also criticized the U.S.-led European missile defense system as the main threat to Russia's security. He said that American strategic weapons, including the missile defense system, have been getting closer to Russia's borders since the Cold War.

"Components of the U.S. global missile defense network deployed in other regions also contain an anti-Russian potential," Antonov said.

Russian-U.S. talks on the missile system are deadlocked, he said, adding that Moscow may quit its strategic arms treaty with the U.S. that was signed in 2010.

Moscow has long opposed the deployment of American-led NATO missile defense facilities near its borders and wants legally binding guarantees from the United States and NATO that the shield is not targeting Russia.

<http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90777/7721719.html>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

Delivery of S-500 Air Defense System Delayed Until 2017

7 February 2012

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Russia's Almaz-Antey concern will finish the development of the advanced S-500 air defense system by 2017, two years later than the deadline announced earlier, the company's General Director Vitaly Neskorodov said.

The S-500, a long-range air defense missile system, is expected to become the backbone of a unified aerospace defense system being formed in Russia.

Neskorodov said in an interview with Moskovsky Komsomolets newspaper on Monday that the complexity of technical solutions used in this unique system and some management problems led to the delay in the development.

"We have to step up the work and make up for lost time," he said. "Nevertheless, we will have prototypes of several components of the system ready for testing by the end of 2012."

Russian officials provide sketchy details on the technical characteristics of the new system.

The S-500 will reportedly have an extended range of up to 600 kilometers (over 370 miles) and simultaneously engage up to 10 targets.

The Russian military has demanded that the system must be capable of intercepting ballistic missiles and hypersonic cruise missiles and plans to order at least ten S-500 battalions for the future Russian Aerospace Defense.

The S-500 could become a trump card in Russia's response to the U.S.-backed European missile shield, which Moscow believes may threaten Russia's nuclear deterrent.

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin has proposed setting up a government body responsible for consolidating efforts aimed at the creation of an effective aerospace defense network in the country.

MOSCOW, February 7 (RIA Novosti)

http://en.ria.ru/military_news/20120207/171194086.html

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Chicago Tribune

Spanish Foreign Minister Says US Promises to Help Clean Up Nuclear Contamination in South

By HAROLD HECKLE, Associated Press

February 3, 2012

MADRID (AP) — Spain said Friday it had received guarantees that the United States will help clean up land contaminated with radioactivity after a mid-air collision in 1966 dumped four U.S. hydrogen bombs in the country's south.

Foreign Minister Jose Manuel Garcia-Margallo said he will discuss the clean-up with U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton at the Munich Security Conference in Germany on Saturday.

U.S. Embassy spokesman Jeffrey Galvin said it was premature to say a deal had been struck, but the clean-up had been a subject on the agenda at recent bilateral meetings.

"There's definitely good will and Secretary Clinton did say we're taking this seriously and we're aware how sensitive it is for Spaniards," Galvin said.

The bombs were released on Jan. 17, 1966, when a routine refueling operation went disastrously wrong. A B-52 bomber and a refueling plane crashed into each other, killing seven of 11 crew and raining 100 tons (90 metric

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tons) of flaming wreckage over 15-square miles (38 square-kilometers) around the village of Palomares, whose population then was around 600.

None of the H-bombs exploded, but the plutonium-filled detonators on two went off, strewing 7 pounds (3 kilograms) of highly radioactive plutonium 239 across the landscape of the region of Almeria, and one bomb was spotted by a fisherman splashing into the Mediterranean Sea.

In those days, at the height of the Cold War, it was U.S. policy to keep nuclear-armed warplanes in the air constantly near the Soviet border.

Under an accord with the government of dictator Gen. Francisco Franco, who ruled from 1939-1975, American B-52s had permission to rendezvous over Spanish airspace with KC-135 tanker refueling planes.

Local farmer Martin Moreno tried to pry loose with a screwdriver a souvenir from one of the fallen 1.5 megatons weapons, each 75 times more powerful than the one that devastated Hiroshima, but was unable to do so.

A contingent of 800 American troops rapidly arrived to scour the land and soon found three bombs, cleaning up the worst of the radioactive mess.

A crisis flotilla of 34 U.S. Navy ships carrying 2,200 sailors, 130 navy divers and four mini subs was assembled to search for the bomb missing at sea.

Francisco Simo, the fisherman who had witnessed the bomb's splashdown, was ignored because a supercomputer had calculated where the bomb should have been from its probable descent trajectory, but after weeks only chunks of airplane had been found.

Eventually, Simo was summoned back and he sent searchers in the right direction, having memorized the site with visual triangulation, a mariner's trick used since the times of Phoenician traders.

A two-man mini-sub called Alvin finally located the missing nuke at a depth of 655 meters (2,162 feet) on March 1, 1966.

The Spanish government built a wire fence around the area where the two semi-detonated bombs fell and has warned against construction, saying it wasn't a good idea to stir up soil there.

Another B-52 carrying four H-bombs crashed off Thule, Greenland, in 1968 but the plutonium contamination occurred at sea. Palomares was the first case of nukes lost and recovered in a populated area. The village is now home to some 2,000 people.

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/sns-ap-eu-spain-usa-plutonium-clearup,0,2931298.story>

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Stars and Stripes

Cyber Weapons Growing Concern in Hyper Connected World, Experts Say

By Steven Beardsley, Stars and Stripes
February 5, 2012

MUNICH, Germany — The concept of cyberwar crossed a threshold in 2010, says Michael Hayden, former CIA and NSA director, when the Stuxnet computer worm destroyed a series of nuclear centrifuges in Iran by hijacking their controls.

Where previous notable cyber attacks had disrupted systems, Stuxnet destroyed property — it was a cyberweapon, Hayden said at the close of the annual Munich Security Conference Sunday.

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Hayden and other experts in cybersecurity agreed that the dangers of such weapons remain high in a world of networked infrastructure, and tracking attackers is especially difficult.

The conference comes as the U.S. Defense Department considers the best response to cyber attacks that could cripple critical U.S. infrastructure, including utilities. Last May, the DOD made news when officials said a lethal, real-world attack could be used in response.

For Estonian President Toomas Hendrik Ilves, a participant in Sunday's panel, such retaliation is appropriate. Estonian government servers fell victim to a broadly distributed denial-of-service attack in 2007, that crippled state websites and some state functions. The attack taught him a lesson about civil society's reliance on networking, down to the delivery of basic needs.

"You don't have to have a missile," Ilves said. "You don't even have to shut down a centrifuge. You can just play around with a delivery system, and no milk is there."

Yet one of the cyber domain's key attributes, its anonymity, makes retaliation difficult. Blame in the Estonia attacks was eventually attributed to a group of pro-Russian sources that some term "hacktivists." Likewise, the origin of Stuxnet was never pinpointed.

Eugene Kaspersky, chairman and CEO of a private lab that works in cybersecurity, expressed concern that more "hacktivists" would seek cyber weapons like Stuxnet and become cyberterrorists. A flaw in the use of the Stuxnet is that much of its coding remained visible to its victims, allowing the worm to be modified and perpetuated.

"This is why I say, stop the use of cyberweapons, Kaspersky said. "If you use it, you educate your enemies. And this boomerang will get back to you."

Such cyber weapons can also cause havoc when improperly programmed, Kaspersky said. A worm aimed at one piece of infrastructure can carry far-reaching consequences to other networks if not directed properly, he said. The panel struggled with the dilemma of controlling the use and development of such weapons in a world where billions of people are tethered to the Internet. While increased interconnectivity raises the stakes of cyberwar, restriction on the Internet is often seen as inhibiting freedom of expression, panelists said.

"We would make a fundamental mistake, even in the name of security to restrict it," Italian Defense Minister Giampaolo Di Paola said. "We have to learn to regulate it and raise awareness of its importance in the global economy."

Hayden said the U.S. is still grappling with cybersecurity versus cyberfreedom.

"This is a policy desert for us," he said. "We lack legal and policy guidance for what we expect the government to do."

<http://www.stripes.com/news/cyber-weapons-growing-concern-in-hyper-connected-world-experts-say-1.167780>

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Global Security Newswire

Russia, U.S. Each Complete 18 New START Audits

February 6, 2012

The United States and Russia have each conducted 18 audits of the other nation's nuclear sites under a bilateral strategic arms control treaty that took effect one year ago, the highest quantity the pact permits over a 12-month period, the U.S. State Department said on Friday (see *GSN*, Dec. 23, 2011).

New START, which entered into force on Feb. 5, 2011, requires each government by 2018 to reduce deployment of strategic nuclear warheads to 1,550, down from a cap of 2,200 mandated by this year under an older treaty. It also limits the number of fielded strategic warhead delivery platforms to 700, with an additional 100 systems

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permitted in reserve. The treaty calls for the nations to regularly share quantities, siting and schematics of armament equipment and sites.

Information swaps mandated by the treaty have resulted in "very detailed" portraits of the U.S. and Russian strategic arsenals that the audits can verify, according to a State Department fact sheet. Orbital surveillance instruments and other tools operated by each government offer additional means of monitoring compliance with the pact, the document adds.

The sides to date have swapped more than 1,800 notifications under the treaty. The details, traded through each side's Nuclear Risk Reduction Center, includes quantities, siting and operational specifications of armaments covered by the pact.

"These notifications help to track movement and changes in the status of systems," the State Department said. "For example, a notification is sent every time a heavy bomber is moved out of its home country for more than 24 hours."

Full-scope information caches traded twice each year by the countries offer a "full accounting of exactly where weapons systems are located, whether they are out of their deployment or operational bases and gone to maintenance, or have been retired," the document states. "This semiannual exchange, along with the mandatory treaty notifications that continuous updates provide, creates a 'living document' that provides a comprehensive look into each other's strategic nuclear forces."

Moscow last March made the RS-24 ICBM and its firing unit available for examination as part of a New START mandate for system exhibitions. The United States had not previously observed up close the mobile system that can carry several warheads.

Washington provided comparable access to the B-1B and B-2A heavy bombers.

"Following the U.S. exhibition demonstrating that B-1B heavy bombers are no longer capable of employing nuclear armaments, these aircraft no longer count toward the central treaty limits regarding deployed heavy bombers," the department said.

In addition, each government has displayed apparatus intended for use in telemetric data swaps enabled by the treaty. The pact permits trading in 2012 of such details from ICBM and submarine-launched ballistic missile trials conducted last year.

"The treaty's Bilateral Consultative Commission (BCC) held its first session in April 2011, and has since met two additional times," the department said. "Under the treaty, this implementing body must meet at least two times per year" (U.S. State Department release, Feb. 3).

<http://www.nti.org/gsn/article/russia-us-each-complete-18-new-start-audits/>

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London Guardian – U.K.

OPINION/Global Security Blog

New Push to Remove Tactical Nuclear Weapons from Europe

More than 20 years after the Cold War there are still more than a thousand nuclear bombs and short-range missiles in Europe ready to launch at very short notice. Now there is a new idea on how to get off the continent's old front lines.

By Julian Borger

Friday, 3 February 2012

On Sunday, the New START arms control treaty between US and Russia will have been in force for a year. By this time, according to the conditions laid down by the US Senate for ratifying the treaty, the Obama administration

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was supposed to have tried to start negotiations with Russia on tactical nuclear weapons, well over a thousand of which are scattered around bases in western Europe, Turkey and Russia on a high state of readiness.

At a meeting with her Russian counterpart in mid-December, undersecretary of state Ellen Tauscher, ticked this box by bringing up the subject but it was no more than a formality. The vaunted 'reset' with Russia has jammed. The two countries are at odds over missile defence, Syria and the Arab Spring, and the animosity is likely to grow once Vladimir Putin returns to the presidency. Negotiations on a new arms control treaty to agree really significant cuts in nuclear arms look further away than ever, and the high hopes inspired by Obama's famous Prague speech of April 2009 are in danger of looking simply naive.

At present, Russia is thought to have well over 1,000 tactical weapons over various sorts along its western border, including the enclave of Kaliningrad according to some reports. The US has about 180 B61 nuclear gravity bombs stored at bases in Germany, Belgium, Netherlands, Italy and Turkey. These Cold War relics are generally agreed to serve no military purpose, and there were hopes that the Obama administration would remove them as a unilateral gesture, with the aim of inviting reciprocal action from Russia. So far this has not happened, and the dangerous Cold War nuclear stand off has been allowed to continue.

In an attempt to restore some momentum to arms control, an international pro-disarmament movement called Global Zero is launching a new proposal today at the Munich Security Conference, for both the US and Russia to remove their tactical nuclear weapons from combat bases in Europe and put them in storage. In the case of the American B61's this would mean shipping them back to the US. Russia would withdraw its tactical weapons to its own storage facilities, known as 'S' sites.

Global Zero's Bruce Blair argues that a deal on tactical weapons would unblock progress on arms control and clear the way for reductions from New START's limits of 1550 strategic warheads (with tactical weapons completely unregulated) to a new ceiling of 1,000 total.

Malcolm Rifkind, a former UK defence secretary and member of Global Zero's international commission of former and serving security officials, argues that breaking the arms control impasse was the central aim of the initiative. He said: "It is the prospect of the momentum towards further major reductions in nuclear weapons grinding to a halt that is the key concern."

As a side effect, the Global Zero initiative would also reduce the threat of theft of a nuclear warhead by moving the tactical weapons out of a large number of combat bases with dubious security and move them to a smaller number of hopefully well-guarded storage sites. Blair points out that as the fissile pits of Russian warheads have to be renewed every 10 years "on any given day there are hundreds of Russian nuclear weapons in some stage of transit".

Given that most experts believe these weapons are useless (see this explanation of their futility by Edmond Seay, a former advisor to the US ambassador to Nato) this initiative ought to be pushing at an open door, but there is a lot of politics conspiring to keep that door shut.

Russia does not want to start talking about nuclear weapons until forward-deployed US B61's are taken out of Europe, and a deal is done on missile defence. That position is likely to be entrenched as Putin returns to untrammelled power. Consequently, advocates like Daryl Kimball of the Arms Control Association, believe the only way to make any progress is to call Moscow's bluff and unilaterally withdraw the B61's. Kimball told me:

These weapons have absolutely no military value. Remove them and you remove the excuse for Russia not talking about tactical nuclear weapons.

Unilateral steps towards disarmament might be considered a political risk for Obama as he faces reelection but Kimball reckons that if Nato gives him political cover by agreeing on the B61's removal in its ongoing Deterrence and Defence Posture Review (DDPR), due to be completed in time for the NATO Chicago summit in May, "then the Republican candidates will have a tough time explaining why that is a problem".



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However, several US allies in Europe, particularly the Baltic states, are nervous about removing the weapons because of the symbolic sense of security they provide. Arms control advocates argue that American 'boots on the ground' in the form of bases or joint exercises would be far more meaningful and considerably cheaper. Ultimately, Global Zero's Blair hopes that the global economic squeeze and sheer fiscal desperation will break the deadlock. That point of view resonates in Washington and Moscow, which tend to be deaf to what is arguably the most powerful case for ridding Europe of these obsolete but devastating weapons: that failure to do so makes it much harder to convince countries outside the nuclear club not to seek similar weapons of their own.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/julian-borger-global-security-blog/2012/feb/03/nuclear-weapons-tactical>

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Ha'aretz Daily – Israel

OPINION/Columnist

6 February 2012

Israel Can Clear Mideast of Nukes, It Just Won't

If Israel accepts an invitation to the conference in Helsinki, it will have an opportunity to move ahead on a deal: comprehensive nuclear disarmament in exchange for comprehensive peace, says researchers' position paper.

By Akiva Eldar

The Iranian professor burst out laughing when I showed him the report on the Haaretz website about President Shimon Peres' call for the Iranian people to bring down the ayatollahs' regime. His neighbor at the table, also a senior lecturer at the University of Tehran, looked annoyed and scoffed: "Don't you think it takes a lot of temerity to sit next to the Palestinian prime minister, whose people have been living for years under Israeli occupation - and call on another people to rise up against its elected government?"

The conversation took place during a seminar in Barcelona at the end of January. It was one of a series of preliminary conferences initiated by the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt, in cooperation with the Norwegian government, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and the Protestant churches of Hesse and Nassau, in preparation for a regional conference on Middle Eastern disarmament of weapons of mass destruction. The event is to take place in Finland later this year.

At the request of the organizers, the identity of the two Iranians - like that of the other participants (from Yemen, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Israel, the United States and Europe) - was kept under wraps. However, they did not keep secret the fact that four Israelis (among them a former senior member of the intelligence community) had been invited to participate in the discussions about lifting the threat of nuclear weapons and other types of WMDs.

It is possible, of course, that taking part in the conferences is just another Iranian public relations ploy, an effort to throw sand in people's eyes while they develop a bomb. But if we don't try such things, how will we know? And after all, after Iran attains the bomb and the means to deliver it, the cost of disarmament will be much higher, if it can be paid at all.

The attendees were presented with a position paper written by Prof. Bernd Kubbig, a project director at the institute, and another institute member, Christian Weidlich, in cooperation with Prof. Gawdat Bahgat, an American of Egyptian origin, and Col. (res.) Dr. Ephraim Kam, deputy head of Israel's Institute for National Security Studies.

The authors of the document mention the traditional support Iran has offered for the idea of nuclear disarmament, since Tehran adopted the 1974 United Nations General Assembly resolution calling for a declaration of the Middle East as nuclear weapons-free zone.

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The writers of the paper also quote statements by Ali Asghar Soltanieh, Iran's envoy to the International Atomic Energy Agency, ahead of its board of governors' meeting last November. The ambassador had stressed Iran's central role in promoting the idea of nuclear disarmament, but explained that his country would not take part in the November IAEA meeting. "The Islamic Republic of Iran believes that boosting and raising hopes to create a nuclear-weapons-free Middle East is meaningless while the Zionist regime has not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and its nuclear activities are not controlled by the IAEA," Soltanieh was quoted as saying.

Since the 1980s, Israel has conditioned its support for nuclear disarmament on peace treaties with all Middle Eastern countries, including Iran. The authors of the position paper state that if Israel accepts an invitation to the conference in Helsinki, it will have an opportunity to move ahead on a deal: comprehensive nuclear disarmament in exchange for comprehensive peace. For instance, Israel will be able to help create a regional coalition of peace and disarmament (accompanied by a reliable monitoring mechanism) based on the Arab League peace initiative, which was approved by all members of the Organization of Islamic States. That initiative, which next month will be 10 years old, has proposed normalization of ties between Israel and the entire Muslim world.

If this entire move takes place, it would likely allow Iran to take credit for helping to end Israel's occupation, it will extricate Tehran honorably from international isolation and economic sanctions, and it will remove the threat inherent in Iran's implementation of a disastrous military option.

It is not by chance that the Israeli (and the American) spokesmen who proclaim that "all options are open" ignore this option. To promote it, Israel would have to withdraw from most of the West Bank, divide Jerusalem and propose a fair solution to the Palestinian refugees. But Israel wants to be both the only country in the region that has nuclear weapons (according to foreign sources, of course) - and also to keep its hold on most of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, while not having to deal with the problem of the refugees.

And what will we do if the new government in Cairo, and then the successors of the murderer from Damascus, decide that they, too, want to develop nuclear programs? Will we send Peres to call on the Egyptian and the Syrian peoples to bring down their regimes?

Akiva Eldar is the chief political columnist and an editorial writer for Haaretz. His columns also appear regularly in the Ha'aretz-Herald Tribune edition.

<http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/opinion/israel-can-clear-mideast-of-nukes-it-just-won-t-1.411272>

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New York Times
OPINION/Editorial
February 6, 2012

Shall We Call It the 'Bronze Standard'?

Page – A22

President Obama usually deserves high marks for his efforts to curb the spread of dangerous nuclear technology. But his administration's decision not to insist on an important nonproliferation provision in nuclear cooperation agreements is a serious retreat.

Under American law, countries are required to negotiate detailed agreements before they are allowed to buy American nuclear reactors, fuel and services. The United States has signed many of them and many more are expected as additional countries pursue nuclear power.

The Obama administration set a rigorous new standard in 2009. It signed an agreement with the United Arab Emirates in which the U.A.E promised, in exchange for access to American technology, to forswear uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing. Those are the processes for making nuclear fuel for reactors — or weapons.



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In 2010, P. J. Crowley, then the State Department spokesman, hailed the U.A.E. agreement as the “gold standard.” But as it negotiates agreements with Vietnam and Jordan, the administration has jettisoned that marker.

Deputy Energy Secretary Daniel Poneman and Under Secretary of State Ellen Tauscher told Congress in a letter last month that they will deal with enrichment and reprocessing on a “case by case” basis by “taking into account a partner’s domestic policies and laws, proliferation concerns and negotiability.”

Jordanians had no doubt what that meant. As The Jordan Times reported, “Washington has dropped its reservations over Jordan’s right to uranium enrichment.”

American officials now say that asking for too much could cost America’s nuclear industry valuable new business. American suppliers are facing stiff competition from companies in France and Russia that make no demand that their clients forgo enrichment and reprocessing. Officials also insist that once American businesses have contracts in hand, Washington can still use its nuclear trade rules and suasion to urge countries signing nuclear deals to limit enrichment and reprocessing and meet other nonproliferation standards so there is no diversion.

But if the administration doesn’t make curbing the spread of enrichment and reprocessing an explicit priority, it will never happen. As for the business rationale, the Bush and Obama administrations and the nuclear industry made similar claims when they cast proliferation concerns aside and gave India an overly generous nuclear deal in 2008. The Indians are still mainly buying from others because they have yet to institute a sufficient liability regime to protect American firms.

The blowback from not pressing others to accept the same deal as the U.A.E could also be significant. If Vietnam is given easier terms, charges will inevitably arise that Washington is tougher on the Arab world. If the provision is not in the agreement with Jordan or others in the Mideast, the U.A.E. has the right to renegotiate its deal.

Congress must approve these nuclear deals. Representative Howard Berman has warned the White House that he will oppose any nuclear-cooperation agreement with Vietnam that does not forswear enrichment and reprocessing. Senator Richard Lugar is also insisting on the U.A.E. model for all agreements going forward. Other lawmakers should stand with them.

If there is any chance of controlling the spread of this dangerous technology, Washington must set the standard. Bronze isn’t good enough.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/06/opinion/shall-we-call-it-the-bronze-standard.html>

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Ottawa Citizen – Ottawa, Canada
OPINION/Op-Ed

Don't Ignore the Threat of Nuclear Terrorism

By H.E. Joo-Hong Nam, Ottawa Citizen
February 6, 2012

The threat of nuclear terrorism is one that cannot be ignored.

We face a host of 21st-century problems - dirty bombs, new nuclear threats, illegal trafficking of radiological materials, and devastating nuclear accidents. Given its potential global, political, economic, and psychosocial consequences, defeating nuclear threats requires strong measures at the national and international levels.

With such high stakes, and the potential for disastrous consequences, nuclear security has become a top priority both for the Republic of Korea, and for other likeminded democratic nations.

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In March, more than 50 international leaders will reaffirm their commitment to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. They will gather at the 2012 Seoul Nuclear Security Summit to tackle these issues and combat the threat of nuclear terrorism with a united front.

So-called dirty bombs pose a threat to international security. Though the magnitude of the explosion from these bombs is smaller than that of a nuclear weapon, these bombs are less difficult for terrorist groups to make. Scarily enough, radiological materials are easier to come by. Better co-operation on border control and the safe management and transportation of weapons-grade nuclear materials will be key issues at the summit.

Under normal operations, nuclear power plants provide clean, safe, and efficient energy. Unfortunately, accidents do happen. We can ill afford another Fukushima or Chernobyl.

It is time for the international community to address nuclear safety with our combined knowledge and best practices. At the Seoul Summit, each country will be encouraged to design an independent safety regulatory framework to prevent large-scale nuclear accidents from happening in the future.

New nuclear threats have also garnered international attention. Though it is not in the official agenda of the summit, the nuclear programs for North Korea and Iran suggest cause for concern. Their nuclear programs threaten the stability of their respective regions and beyond. If their programs are not cleared, it could lead other countries towards nuclear proliferation, or result in nuclear blackmail.

As a non-proliferation state, the Republic of Korea is an ideal host for the summit and may act as a diplomatic bridge wherever possible. Nuclear security continues to be one of the biggest challenges to international security. This is surely a set of problems that knows no borders.

H.E. Joo-Hong NAM, Ottawa, Ambassador, Republic of Korea

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/opinion/ignore+threat+nuclear+terrorism/6106382/story.html>

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CNN.com

OPINION/CNN Opinion

Can a Nuclear Iran Be Deterred?

By Amitai Etzioni, Special to CNN

Monday, February 6, 2012

Amitai Etzioni is professor of international relations and director of the Institute for Communitarian Policy Studies at George Washington University.

(CNN) -- There is a growing interest among U.S. foreign policy officials and scholars in deterring Iran; that is, in tolerating a nuclear armed Iran but keeping it at bay by threatening it in kind should it use its nuclear weapons. Although the Obama administration has not embraced this position, some observers believe this is the direction it is headed.

One indication comes from Thomas Donilon, the national security adviser. In a speech late last year, he remarked, "We will continue to build a regional defense architecture that prevents Iran from threatening its neighbors. We will continue to deepen Iran's isolation, regionally and globally." And a recent report sponsored by the U.S. Air Force outlines a strategy for deterrence that includes expanding the United States' regional nuclear presence and improving American missile defense capabilities. As one expert puts it, "Deterrence against a nuclear Iran should not be terribly difficult."

For deterrence to work, the leaders of the nations that command nuclear arms must be rational. The champions of deterrence claim to demonstrate that Iran's leaders are not insane by showing that they react in sensible ways to changes in the world around them.

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For instance, after the U.S. military easily wiped out Saddam Hussein's army in Iraq and President George W. Bush told Iran it was on the very short list of members in the "Axis of Evil," Iran made a very conciliatory offer regarding its nuclear program. In short, proponents of deterrence argue that leaders and governments in fact do respond to changes with reason and logic.

However, there's another type of decision-making process that sociologists have known about. It's nonrational behavior, such as when people act in response to deeply held beliefs that cannot be proven or disproven. People have long shown they are willing to kill or be killed for their beliefs, and that God commanded them to act in a particular manner. They may respond to facts and pressures, but only as long as those factors affect the ways they implement their beliefs -- but not the beliefs themselves. Thus, a religiously fanatical Iranian leader who believes that God commanded him to wipe out Tel Aviv may calculate whether to use missiles or bombers and in what season to attack, but not whether to heed God's command to destroy the infidels.

An example of nonrational thinking is summed up best in these words: "[Iran's] religious zealotry causes it to exaggerate the significance of issues that are, objectively speaking, only tangentially related to its interests. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict, for instance, has no direct bearing on Iran's security, but much of the regime sees it as fundamental to Iranian interests and even to Iran's identity as a Muslim nation."

Even rational heads of states have shown themselves in the past to be fully capable of making gross miscalculations that cost them their lives, regimes and all they were fighting for. Hitler would fall in that category. Similarly, the Japanese, when they attacked Pearl Harbor, believed they would be able at least to drive the United States out of their part of the world. Saddam Hussein believed the United States would not invade Iraq in 2003, but he was dead wrong. History is littered with numerous other, though less grand, miscalculations, from Lord Cardigan's Charge of the Light Brigade in the Crimean War to Pickett's Charge in the American Civil War.

In short, it might be possible to deter Iran, but no one can assume that we can safely rely on the rationality of Iran's leaders and their decisions and reactions to the events around them. No one can predict if they will unleash forces on Saudi Arabia or Israel -- perhaps not even the Iranians themselves.

http://www.cnn.com/2012/02/06/opinion/etzioni-iran-deterrence/index.html?hpt=hp_bn2

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The Hill
OPINION/Op-Ed

Don't Ignore North Korea

By Philip W. Yun
February 6, 2012

Kim Jong Il has been dead eight weeks, and commentators are still treating his successor, Kim Jong Un, as if he's the latest celebrity teen star. But there's more at stake than speculation over the young Kim's staying power. Despite the understandable preoccupation with Iran and the specter of a European economic collapse, we are about to repeat past mistakes by ignoring a rogue state that already possesses nuclear weapons. This failure to be more proactive is likely to end in a different kind of bad news — another nuclear test.

Despite our best efforts, we remain woefully in the dark about the internal leadership dynamics of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). This is particularly true for Kim Jong Un. Many assessments of the young Kim rely on anecdotes and hearsay. Given this lack of knowledge, it would be folly to try to steer North Korea's leadership transition, especially as China is firmly in Kim Jong Un's court. If the United States, Republic of Korea (ROK) or Japan were to intervene, the unintended consequences could be profound, with a misstep erupting into an ugly scenario pitting a Beijing-backed faction against one backed by the United States, South Korea and Japan.



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Just as a policy of fostering regime change is not tenable, a seemingly reasonable wait-and-see/status quo approach is also inadequate. It could sow the seeds for yet another nuclear test in 2013, which could lead to engineering advances that allow the totalitarian North to produce smaller (and more) nuclear warheads. And what better way for a determined North Korea to “market” its nuclear know-how for export?

Here’s why a test is likely:

First, there is a military imperative. Technically, a follow-on test is the next logical step for North Korea’s plutonium-based nuclear weapons program — the North’s quickest route to a deliverable warhead. The inherent insecurity of North Korea exacerbated by Kim Jong Il’s sudden passing creates a greater incentive for the military to push forward. The first test was driven by the DPRK’s need to prove that it had a viable nuclear deterrent; the partial failure of the first test made the successful second test inevitable.

Second, with upcoming presidential elections in South Korea and the United States, policy inertia will take over in 2012. North Korea is likely to refrain from provocative behavior. Therefore, little will be done to address the North’s nukes. Meanwhile, Kim Jong Un will have had a year to consolidate power, gain greater confidence in his new role and cultivate better ties with Beijing.

Third, it is almost certain that North Korea’s high expectations for an ROK policy change in 2013 will not be met. If the ruling party wins, it will continue a hardline policy of no aid to the DPRK. If the opposition party wins, a progressive government will be constrained as to how forward it can be and be arguably a more challenging adversary for the North than the conservatives.

Fourth, Kim Jong Un will be under great pressure to demonstrate bold leadership, especially to key constituencies including the military and China. In 2012 this could mean a surprise on the political or economic front. If pressed too hard or ignored in 2013, it also could mean an emboldened — or desperate — Kim Jong Un ordering a nuclear test.

The only restraint on North Korean action is China. China could probably stop a nuclear test, but to date it has shown no inclination to do so. China did virtually nothing when North Korea conducted its nuclear tests in 2006 and 2009. The DPRK could decide that China’s response would be the same as in the past, and ironically, determine that China would somehow give Kim Jong Un a “pass” — allowing for an early miscalculation or two.

In the 1990s, many were sure Kim Jong Il was an incompetent playboy and the North would collapse. The world was stunned when North Korea twice tested a nuclear weapon, sunk a South Korean naval vessel and attacked South Korea, killing soldiers and civilians. Rather than reading tea leaves about the future, we need a solid grip on the present. Let’s focus on the real and urgent, seriously probing North Korea’s new leadership for facts — and prevent yet another nuclear test.

Yun is executive director of Ploughshares Fund, a global security foundation. He previously was involved in diplomatic efforts toward North Korea at the State Department, from 1994 to 2001.

<http://thehill.com/opinion/op-ed/208999-dont-ignore-north-korea>

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The Atlantic
OPINION/Commentary

We're Having the Wrong Conversation About Iran

The debate so far has focused on air strikes, but the real option we should be discussing is diplomacy.

By Madison Schramm

February 7, 2012

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In a string of recent articles, we've been given many a reason to strike Iran. Considering there is no indisputable evidence Iran is building a nuclear weapon, it seems the logic for not attacking is, at the moment, stronger. But the use of force against Iran, or any country for that matter, at some point can become worthwhile; if the ends justify the means. For all our discussion over the past few weeks over the means -- a strike on Iran -- what is missing in the discussion is the end.

Our ultimate goal is ensuring that Iran does not weaponize. If a military strike won't accomplish that, it should not happen. We have a better option: diplomacy. It is more likely to succeed because it could offer a permanent solution and because it could address the causes of Iran's nuclear program rather than just the threat itself. But, if diplomacy is to work, there is one major hurdle: the American electorate.

The U.S. could succeed in significantly damaging or destroying known Iranian nuclear sites with an airstrike. Estimates are that this would set the Iranian program back two to three years. However, the turmoil that would likely erupt in the region as the result of such a strike poses the question, is three years worth it?

A strike could reinforce the hardliners' push to weaponize--a path to which the Tehran has not yet committed. In 2009, the Brookings Institute simulated potential Iranian responses to an air strike. Some of Iran's responses include attacking military outposts in Afghanistan, attacking supplies transported from Kuwait through southern Iraq, and launching missiles at oil installations in Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province.

Although policy leaders in both the U.S. and Israel want to keep "all options on the table," a chorus of well-respected generals has warned about the tumult that would ensue were the U.S. to strike Iran. Striking known facilities is not a permanent solution -- we can bomb the facilities, but not the knowledge and technical expertise required to rebuild them. Buying three years, but thereby obliterating any potential for diplomacy, is not a compelling end.

Washington's calculations have been driven, in no small part, by successive administrations' insistence that continued Iranian enrichment activity is unacceptable. Unfortunately, Iran has crossed the nuclear capable threshold. Nuclear capability is often defined as reaching enrichment levels of 20 percent, and per the IAEA and numerous other reports, Tehran has achieved these levels. As a nuclear capable state, Iran possesses the technical expertise and materials to move quickly to create a weapon, though how quickly is not clear.

Iran's objectives for weaponizing (were they to do so) --becoming a stronger regional force and deterring a conventional military attack--would be better addressed diplomatically. Unlike a military strike, deft diplomacy could move Tehran to cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Association. While this would allow Iranian enrichment activity to continue, it is the best way to ensure Iran does not arm. In other words, destroying nuclear facilities would address the symptoms while worsening the underlying disease. In order to prevent Iran from weaponizing, U.S. policymakers will need to address Tehran's motives.

In addition to normalizing economic relations, Washington could reintegrate Iran into the international community, push for Iran's entrance into the World Trade Organization, and provide security support to compensate for the lost deterrence capability. More meetings with Iran won't generate a good campaign slogan for Obama, but bargaining has worked.

In 2003, Libya opened up its nuclear program to IAEA inspectors in exchange for full reintegration into the international community and normalization of economic relations. NATO intervention following the 2011 Libyan uprising, and subsequent ousting of Qaddafi, might not have been possible had Tripoli succeeded in weaponizing. Several other countries, including South Africa and Brazil, gave up their programs peacefully with a mix of incentives and international pressure. There is no guarantee, given the current rift between President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei as well as the lessons Tehran's leadership likely drew from Qaddafi's abandonment of Libya's weapons program, that Iranians would be receptive. But we will never know until we try.

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Unfortunately, it is an election year, and pandering to Tehran will not sit well with the electorate. An olive branch would be perceived as a tacit admission from the Obama administration that the U.S. position is weak. Concessions from Obama, especially contrasted with the sound and fury coming from the Republicans, would probably not do good things for his reelection campaign.

The question for the White House now is not what will work, but what is politically viable. Bargaining probably has the best shot at convincing the leadership in Tehran to open up their program to inspectors, but it is politically impossible given the election. Active deterrents will likely be the only politically viable options until 2013. But that's not a good reason for a military strike, which could have devastating repercussions and would likely be ineffective in permanently stopping the program. Sanctions are supported by both Democrats and Republicans and are far less risky than an air strike.

There are a lot of reasons to worry about Iran. But, at the end of the day, that won't make a military strike more effective. In this case, the ends will not justify the means.

Madison Schramm is a program associate in the David Rockefeller Studies Program at the Council on Foreign Relations.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/02/were-having-the-wrong-conversation-about-iran/252662/>

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Institute of Peace & Conflict Studies – India

OPINION/Analysis

7 February 2012

Indo-Pak Nuclear CBMs: The Road to Nowhere

By D Suba Chandran

Despite numerous initiatives at the research and track-II levels, India and Pakistan have not undertaken substantial NCBMs. A plethora of proposals and suggestions have been ignored, only indicating that the two countries are reluctant to pursue serious NCBMs. This leads to the question why are the two countries reluctant to pursue nuclear CBMs?

Does the non-negotiation of Nuclear-CBMs hurt India and Pakistan?

One of the primary theses of the ripeness theory advocated by William Zartman has been - that parties do not negotiate with each other, unless they reach a mutually hurting stalemate, beyond which both cannot proceed further, without hurting themselves in the process. Until that time is reached, parties are less likely to negotiate with each other.

Is the time ripe, in the Zartman sense, between India and Pakistan to negotiate nuclear CBMs? Does the non-negotiation of nuclear CBMs between India and Pakistan really hurt the two countries?

For India and Pakistan, nuclear CBMs are another strategy to achieve larger bilateral stability at the strategic level, rather than an objective itself. This could be based on the belief that the threat of a nuclear showdown is primarily an invention of the West, especially the US. Though Pakistan threatens to use the nuclear weapons and has convinced the rest of the world that its nuclear threshold is low, there is a larger understanding between the two countries that the threat is only a posture and not an actual position.

Despite few media reports and official accounts (mostly from Bill Clinton's administration), there is no evidence that either India and Pakistan actually planned to use nuclear weapons during the Kargil conflict in 1999 and the military showdown during 2001-02, following the attack on Indian Parliament. Perhaps, India and Pakistan believe there is unlikely to be a nuclear exchange, hence do not pursue a nuclear CBM.

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Disarming while Arming?

The second reason for the lack of NCBMs between the two countries perhaps could be - both countries are on an upward trajectory in arming themselves - with weapons, delivery mechanism and fissile materials. Hence, neither country would like to constrain itself with any CBM, that would affect the pace of armament.

While the West may argue, India and Pakistan should learn from the Cold War experience, there is neither an intention, nor any pressure on both countries to pursue a serious nuclear disarmament – either at the bilateral level or at the global level.

More importantly, the present positions of both countries on some of those critical issues relating to nuclear doctrine – No First Use, Credible Minimum Deterrence, and Threshold and Redlines are unclear and need further clarifications. Besides, there is less transparency on issues relating to doctrines, missiles, and deployment. The two countries are less likely to engage in a nuclear CBM when they are arming themselves and attempting to draft multiple doctrines.

Strong Scientific Bureaucracies, Weak Political Leaderships and Stretched Foreign Ministries

There is a wider belief, that the nuclear bureaucracies in both countries exert pressure over their respective political establishments to proceed further with the science trajectory. Four institutions play a crucial role - Prime Minister Office, Foreign Ministry, Defence Ministry and the technocrats in the making and unmaking of a nuclear CBM. From refining the fissile materials to building ballistic missiles and other delivery mechanisms, they exert pressure on the political leadership not to accept any measures, which would impinge on the scientific experiments. Though the scientific bureaucracies may not be war mongering, their passion for nuclear research, perhaps comes in the way of n-CBM between the two countries.

Unfortunately, the political leadership in both countries is weak to pursue any strong nuclear CBMs. Though, both countries during the last decade, undertook serious CBMs especially over J&K and along the LoC, there were no substantial movement on the nuclear CBMs. Perhaps, there was more pressure from within, to move ahead on the Kashmiri CBMs, whereas on the nuclear CBMs, there is more pressure from outside (read the US and the West). Lack of sufficient internal pressure within the two countries over their political leaderships could be another reason for the slow progress on nuclear CBMs.

More importantly, the foreign ministries in both countries are over stretched. The sections dealing with nuclear aspect within the foreign ministry are under pressure to devise larger national strategy towards global nuclear disarmament and the nuclear security summits. The FMCT debate, IAEA, NSG and other controversies (for example in Pakistan over AQ Khan network) has placed these sections within the foreign ministries of both countries on a fire fighting mode, than to devise a bilateral CBM based on an in depth analysis.

Lack of an Enabling Security Environment

The biggest obstacle for the NCBMs between India and Pakistan is the lack of a security environment, which will enable both countries to consider nuclear CBMs, to reduce the threats and address issues relating to safety and security. Instead, the n-CBM is projected as an enabling feature to reach a secure environment. This has become a sort of a chicken and egg debate. Finally, the Indo-US and Sino-Pak nuclear deals are likely to impact further on how the two countries see each other's nuclear ambitions.

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<http://www.ipcs.org/article/india/indo-pak-nuclear-cbms-the-road-to-nowhere-3571.html>

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