



USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER
CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL
MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

Issue No. 989, 16 March 2012

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Welcome to the CPC Outreach Journal. As part of USAF Counterproliferation Center's mission to counter weapons of mass destruction through education and research, we're providing our government and civilian community a source for timely counterproliferation information. This information includes articles, papers and other documents addressing issues pertinent to US military response options for dealing with chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) threats and countermeasures. It's our hope this information resource will help enhance your counterproliferation issue awareness.

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Windsor Star – Windsor, Canada

U.S. Nuclear Expert Finds Iran Explosive Site in Imagery

By Tabassum Zakaria, Reuters

March 13, 2012

WASHINGTON — A U.S. non-proliferation expert said on Tuesday he has identified a building at the Parchin military site in Iran suspected of containing, currently or previously, a high-explosive test chamber the United Nations nuclear watchdog wants to visit.

David Albright, founder of the Institute for Science and International Security, said he studied commercial satellite imagery and found a building located on a relatively small and isolated compound at Parchin that fit a description in the November 2011 International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) report.

The building has its own perimeter security wall or fencing and there is a berm between the building and a neighbouring building, Albright said in a report.

The compound is located more than four kilometres away from high-explosive related facilities at Parchin which the IAEA visited in 2005, Albright's report said.

Iran refused access to Parchin, southeast of Tehran, during two rounds of talks with IAEA inspectors. Western diplomats say Iran may be delaying access to give it time to sanitize the facility of any incriminating evidence of explosive tests that would indicate efforts to design nuclear weapons.

"We have information that some activity is ongoing there," IAEA director general Yukiya Amano said recently, referring to Parchin.

The IAEA has evidence that the test chamber was placed at Parchin in 2000 and that a building was subsequently constructed around it, Albright's report said.

The information was that a large explosive test chamber was used to conduct experiments possibly related to the development of nuclear weapons in the early years after 2000, Albright said.

He was not able to gauge the level of activity at this particular site without comparing it to multiple images over a short period of time.

<http://www.windsorstar.com/news/nuclear+expert+finds+Iran+explosive+site+imagery/6296912/story.html>

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Belfast Telegraph – Ireland, U.K.

Iran in Fresh Nuclear Talks Offer

Wednesday, 14 March 2012

Iran says it has repeated an offer to the five permanent UN Security Council members and Germany to resume talks over the country's nuclear programme.

Iran's negotiator on the issue, Saeed Jalili, has written to European Union foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton asking that the two sides set a timetable and choose a venue for the talks.

The official IRNA news agency said Mr Jalili's letter was delivered to Brussels on Wednesday, reiterating his call for a "constructive approach".

There was no immediate response from the EU.

Previous talks have not allayed Western governments' suspicions that Iran's nuclear programme masks a pursuit of atomic weapons.

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But Iran's government has always maintained its nuclear work is for peaceful purposes.

Iran first offered the new talks in February in response to a letter from Ms Ashton.

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/world-news/iran-in-fresh-nuclear-talks-offer-16131108.html>

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New York Times

March 14, 2012

Iran May Not Open a Site to Inspectors

By RICK GLADSTONE

Page – A14

Iran signaled on Tuesday that it was unwilling to grant a request by international nuclear inspectors for unfettered access to a restricted military complex that they suspect may house a chamber designed to test explosives used in atomic weapons triggers.

In its first public statement on the matter since the leader of the International Atomic Energy Agency expressed irritation last week about Iran's lack of cooperation, Iran also denied suggestions that it had sought to cleanse the military complex, called Parchin, to eliminate any trace of incriminating activity.

"The site is a military site, and conventional military activities are being carried out in the site," the Foreign Ministry spokesman, Ramin Mehmanparast, said, according to Iranian news agencies. Ridiculing reports that Iran had tried to clean up the site, he said, "If military nuclear activities are carried out, evidence of them can never be cleaned up, and the issue is mostly propaganda."

Iran's unwillingness to grant the inspectors' request could complicate resumed talks announced last week between Iran and the five permanent United Nations Security Council members plus Germany over Iran's nuclear energy program, an increasing source of world tension. Iran says the program is peaceful; Western nations and Israel say it is a cover for developing nuclear weapons capacity.

A sprawling desert complex near Tehran, Parchin figured prominently in the atomic agency's report on Iran's nuclear activities last November. The report said Iran had constructed a containment vessel there in 2000 that may have been designed to conduct tests on explosives required to set off the type of reaction needed to detonate a nuclear bomb.

On an earlier visit to Parchin, inspectors found nothing, but were not allowed free access. Inspectors were recently twice denied permission to visit the site.

Mr. Mehmanparast said Iran did not oppose a visit but first wanted an agreement on what the inspectors would be allowed to do.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/14/world/middleeast/iran-may-not-open-a-site-to-nuclear-inspectors.html>

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Los Angeles Times

Obama Warns Iran that Time Is Running Out for Diplomacy

March 14, 2012

By Christi Parsons and Paul Richter

REPORTING FROM WASHINGTON -- President Obama warned Iran on Wednesday that the window of opportunity to resolve the international deadlock over its nuclear weapons program through diplomacy is closing.

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In a joint news conference in the White House Rose Garden, Obama and British Prime Minister David Cameron appeared to ratchet up the pressure on Iran to engage in serious negotiations.

Iran has shown a tendency in the past to "delay, to stall, to do a lot of talking," Obama said, but has not taken steps to dismantle its nuclear program.

"I think they should understand that because the international community has applied so many sanctions, because we have employed so many of the options that are available to us to persuade Iran to take a different course," Obama said, "that the window for solving this issue diplomatically is shrinking."

The United States and many of its allies suspect that Iran's nuclear program is geared toward developing weapons, though the Tehran regime insists that its goals are peaceful.

The sharpening of Obama's language was slight but significant since Tehran has offered to resume negotiations with the U.S. and five other world powers. Iranian officials nevertheless have refused to allow International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors to enter its Parchin military base, as the United Nations inspectors have requested for several months, to search for possible evidence of nuclear development.

U.S. officials said Wednesday that the president wasn't responding to a particular development, but was taking note of the Iranians' past practice of holding out the possibility of negotiations in order to stall for time.

Obama did not make an explicit threat, but the possibility of a military strike against Iranian nuclear facilities was clear. Cameron issued an oblique reminder of it.

"We are serious about the talks that are set to resume, but the regime has to meet its international obligations," he said. "As the president and I have said, nothing is off the table. That is essential for the safety of the region and the wider world."

Earlier this month, Obama met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and other Israeli officials and urged them to hold off on a possible military attack on Iran to give time for diplomacy to work. The president also argued that Iran will increasingly feel the bite of unprecedented economic sanctions in coming months.

On Wednesday, though, Obama suggested that the offer to negotiate won't last forever.

"We will do everything we can to resolve this diplomatically," Obama said. "But ultimately we've got to have somebody on the other side of the table who's taking this seriously, and I hope that the Iranian regime understands that, that this is their best bet for resolving this in a way that allows Iran to rejoin the community of nations and to prosper and feel secure themselves."

http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/world_now/2012/03/obama-warns-iran-nuclear-program-diplomacy.html

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Washington Post

Iranians Offer Gloomy Outlook of Nuclear Talks

By Thomas Erdbrink and Joby Warrick

March 15, 2012

TEHRAN — Prominent Iranian politicians and analysts are offering a gloomy assessment of upcoming nuclear talks with the United States and other world powers, insisting that Iran will not agree to any significant cuts to its nuclear program.

The elected officials and analysts — many of them close to Iran's hard-line leadership — say it is highly unlikely that Iran would accept even a temporary halt in its production of enriched uranium, a key demand by Western countries during previous negotiations with the Islamic republic.

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Some said recent economic sanctions and military threats have made Iranian leaders even more determined to continue enriching uranium, despite the worsening toll on Iran's currency and oil industry.

"There will be no retreat whatsoever on our rights," said Hossein Sheikholeslami, a former Iranian ambassador to Syria and once a leader of the student movement that took 52 U.S. Embassy workers hostage in 1979. "They impose unlawful sanctions on us, and now they want us to retreat. No way."

It was not clear whether the assessments — made in interviews with a wide range of current and former politicians, diplomats and analysts — reflect the official view of Iranian leaders preparing to meet with negotiators from the United States, Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany. The six-country bloc agreed last month to an Iranian request to resume nuclear talks after a lull of 14 months.

Western officials also have played down expectations for the talks, which are not yet scheduled, although some suggested that the pessimism in Tehran could be a bargaining tactic. On Wednesday, Iranian officials dispatched a letter to the European Union reiterating the government's desire for a diplomatic solution and asking that a date and a venue for the negotiations be set.

U.S. and European diplomats have been characterizing the talks as a modest first step that will mostly serve to demonstrate whether Iranian intentions are sincere.

"Maybe miracles happen," a European diplomat said, insisting on anonymity in discussing his country's position going into the talks, "but mostly we have to see if there is willingness by Iran to have a serious discussion of nuclear issues."

Since agreeing to talks, Iranian leaders have publicly adopted a tough line on the subject of uranium enrichment. In a televised address last month, Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, declared that possessing nuclear weapons was "a sin," but he also vowed that Iran would not be forced to waive its legal right to a civilian nuclear energy program.

"Pressures, sanctions and assassinations will bear no fruit," Khamenei said. "No obstacles can stop Iran's nuclear work."

The rhetoric adds to the predicament facing the Obama administration. In the past, the administration has backed compromises intended to effectively end Iran's ability to convert uranium into weapons fuel while allowing Iran to save face by claiming that it reserves the right to enrich uranium for peaceful purposes. A compromise in 2009, for example, called on Iran to surrender nearly its entire stockpile of low-enriched uranium in exchange for nuclear fuel rods for Iran's aging medical research reactor.

The White House has not yet staked out a position for the upcoming talks with Iran. Dennis Ross, who until last year was one of the administration's top advisers on Iran, said any long-term deal with Iran would almost certainly need to include a suspension of uranium enrichment. But he also held out the possibility of short-term "confidence-building" measures that would effectively freeze Iran's progress toward a nuclear-weapons capability.

One such measure, Ross said, might be an Iranian agreement to immediately halt production of a purer form of enriched uranium that can be quickly converted to weapons-grade. U.N. inspectors last month confirmed that Iran had recently tripled its production of "20 percent-enriched" uranium, a purer form of nuclear fuel than the 3.5 percent-enriched uranium generally used in nuclear power plants.

"One thing you try to do is stop the clock," Ross said. "Getting a whole deal would be best, but if you can't get the whole deal, you might at least get something that builds confidence and stops the clock."

But even such interim measures can pose risks for a White House that is trying to delay a threatened Israeli military attack on Iran's nuclear sites while fending off criticism from Republican presidential candidates who accuse the administration of being soft on Iran.



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President Obama has sought to use a combination of diplomacy and economic and political pressure to force Iran to accept negotiated limits to its nuclear program. Obama has said he will never allow Iran to become a nuclear power, and he has left open the possibility of a military strike if other approaches fail.

On Thursday, European officials took a new step to isolate Iran economically, announcing that Iranian banks were being excluded from the international financial messaging network known as SWIFT. The Belgium-based electronic-payment system confirmed in a statement that Iranian institutions would be shut out of the system beginning Saturday.

The move adds to pressure from multiple rounds of sanctions and a European oil embargo set to begin in July. Iranian politicians have acknowledged the impact of the measures as Iranian companies are increasingly limited in what they can buy and sell on the international market. Yet, in the face of the collapse of Iran's currency and increased fears of war, Iran's top leaders have sought to rally the nation.

"We should not give in but resist sanctions and pressure by the enemies over the nuclear program," President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said during a meeting with visiting Zimbabwean Defense Minister Emmerson Mnangagwa. "We will not only prevail but eventually turn these pressures into new opportunities for further development and progress."

Warrick reported from Washington.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/iran-unwilling-to-compromise-on-nukes-throwing-fate-of-talks-into-doubt/2012/03/09/gIQAiIMGFS_story.html

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AOL Defense.com

Iran's Parchin Test Site: What UN Nuke Inspectors Think They'll Find

By Michael Adler
March 15, 2012

UN nuclear inspectors have honed in on Parchin, a military testing ground 30 kilometers southeast of Tehran, in their inquest into whether Iran is secretly developing nuclear weapons. Iran is dragging its feet on access to this site, but the UN watchdog International Atomic Energy Agency has drawn a line in the sand. It says that visiting Parchin must be the next step in an investigation that began in 2003 and has been stalled for the past four years over questions about the possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear work.

The IAEA thinks there may have been tests at Parchin on the trigger for an atomic bomb, possibly involving natural uranium, in what would have been a dry test rather than a chain reaction. Proof that Iran used uranium in military research would destroy Iran's central claim that its program has made only peaceful use of nuclear material. Iran says it seeks to use atomic power for energy and other civilian ends but the United States fears the Islamic Republic is hiding a drive to build, or to be able to build, the bomb.

This article presents key facts about Parchin and the IAEA investigation, gleaned from IAEA documents as well as reliable sources.

The Parchin testing grounds cover 42 square kilometers, but the area the IAEA wants to visit is in a sector isolated from the military activities at the site. There is at least one access road to this area which does not go through active military sites, and the IAEA argues that this would make it relatively easy for Iran to allow a visit. IAEA inspectors had visited Parchin twice in 2005 but at spots more central to the military area, and they found nothing suspicious. They clearly feel they have better information this time.

Specifically, the IAEA is now focusing on a massive cylinder some 19 meters (288 feet) long, which was installed in the year 2000 and which may have housed explosion tests sometime before 2003. The metal cylinder is 4.6 meters

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in diameter but is reinforced in the middle with concrete, almost doubling the diameter to 7.6 meters. This apparatus is inside a building, blocking direct observation from satellites. It is possible the cylinder is no longer there – but analysts said it would not look good for Iran to have dismantled the apparatus just when the IAEA is seeking to inspect it.

Satellites are detecting more activity at this site than in the last 7 or 8 years, Yet orbital imagery has its limits. The pictures reportedly show the presence of trucks but not actual work taking place, and the resolution is only about 50 centimeters, which limits the ability to see individual people moving around. Also work at night could be invisible to the satellites.

Iran has rejected charges that what the satellites are showing is an effort to clean up the Parchin site. Foreign Ministry spokesman Ramin Mehmanparast told reporters in Tehran on Tuesday that uranium traces cannot be cleaned up, as tiny particles would remain after any effort to sanitize an area. He insisted that only "conventional military" activities are carried out at Parchin.

The UN watchdog is skeptical. An IAEA report in November spoke of two types of experiments which Iran may have carried out. The first is hydrodynamic tests, which are simultaneous explosions to compact a spherical nuclear core. The core for such tests would not be enriched uranium, since this could set off an actual atomic explosion. But surrogates such as tungsten or natural uranium, not enriched to the level needed for a chain reaction, can be used, and traces of these can theoretically be found even years later. The IAEA is focusing on this hydrodynamic testing, so-called because the core becomes fluid as it is compacted. But there is also the possibility that the explosions would have been to test a neutron initiator, a tiny capsule in the center of the bomb core which bathes the nuclear material with neutrons, thus accelerating a chain reaction. This procedure could involve uranium deuteride, a surrogate for enriched uranium and which might leave tell-tale traces.

In possible connection with these suspected tests, the IAEA is investigating whether Iran diverted some 20 kilograms of natural uranium "in the form of natural uranium metal and process waste" from the Jabr Ibn Hayan Multipurpose Research Laboratory, according to the November IAEA report. The IAEA is moving cautiously on this charge, however, as the evidence relies on potentially unreliable weighing of nuclear material. But proof of such a diversion from civilian research to a military program, especially to Parchin, would be close to a "smoking gun" that would discredit Iran's claim to have a strictly peaceful program.

The IAEA has also quizzed a Ukrainian scientist, Vyacheslav Danilenko, about Parchin. It said in its November report that it had "strong indications" a "foreign expert" had assisted Iran in working on developing a "high explosives" trigger for a bomb. The IAEA said the expert was in Iran "from about 1996 to about 2002" to help develop "a facility and techniques for making ultra-dispersed diamonds ('UDDs' or 'nanodiamonds')." The sort of cylinder which is at Parchin can be used for nanodiamonds. The unnamed expert has been identified as Danilenko, who had another expertise. He had worked for the Soviet Union on designing nuclear weapons small enough to fit in a missile, bomb or artillery shell.

In any case, the IAEA wonders why the Iranians are denying the agency access to a site where civilian diamonds research, rather than military testing, allegedly took place.

<http://defense.aol.com/2012/03/15/irans-parchin-test-site-what-un-nuke-inspectors-think-theyll/>

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Yonhap News – South Korea
March 14, 2012

Terrorist Attack with N.K. Nukes could Spell Crisis for S. Korea: U.S. Expert

By Lee Haye-ah

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SEOUL, March 14 (Yonhap) -- A terrorist attack that uses a North Korean nuclear bomb could be devastating for South Korea even if it took place elsewhere in a country like the United States, according to a U.S. expert on nuclear terrorism.

The possibility of terrorists detonating a nuclear bomb, and ways to prevent such an event, are expected to be the focus of the March 26-27 Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul. The forum is set to bring together 58 heads of state and international organizations, including U.S. President Barack Obama and Chinese President Hu Jintao.

The biennial summit was launched in Washington in 2010 under Obama's vision for a world free of nuclear weapons.

Speaking Tuesday at a lecture at Yonsei University in Seoul, Graham Allison, director of the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard University, stressed the relevance of nuclear terrorism for South Korea, which borders nuclear-armed North Korea.

"If you imagine the North Korean regime selling a bomb to some group like Al Qaeda -- maybe to Iran, maybe to a splinter terrorist group in Pakistan -- and they took this nuclear bomb and exploded it in an American city, what's going to happen in North Korea?" the professor asked a lecture room packed with students.

He suggested that the U.S. would take retaliatory action against the communist country, the effects of which would be felt heavily in South Korea.

"By extension, a nuclear bomb that goes loose in North Korea could be the biggest event that ever happened in South Korea even though it didn't explode here," he said.

Allison was in Seoul to meet with South Korean President Lee Myung-bak as a member of an international panel tasked with advising Lee ahead of the upcoming summit. The professor was joined by former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and former Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov in the meeting with Lee.

Backing up his argument, Allison noted that North Korea has been accused of helping Syria build the nuclear reactor that Israel eventually bombed in 2007.

"How much bigger than a nuclear bomb is that reactor? More than a thousand times," he said. "Who could imagine you could sell a reactor and get away with it? Well, somebody did."

Allison, who served as a U.S. assistant secretary of defense in 1993-1994, is the author of the 2004 book, "Nuclear Terrorism: The Ultimate Preventable Catastrophe."

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2012/03/14/51/0401000000AEN20120314002700315F.HTML>

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Korea Times -- South Korea

March 14, 2012

Seoul Nuke Summit Expected to Touch on NK Issue: Ban

NEW YORK (Yonhap) -- U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said Tuesday he expects global leaders will discuss the North Korean nuclear issue when they meet in Seoul later this month for a summit on nuclear safety and security.

South Korea is scheduled to host the second Nuclear Security Summit from March 26-27 in which the heads of state from more than 50 nations and leaders of international organizations including Ban will take part.

The biennial summit does not have the North's nuclear problem as a formal agenda since it is not designed to deal with nonproliferation issue of a specific nation, Ban said in an interview with Yonhap News Agency at his office in New York.

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"I think discussions (on the matter) are possible on the sidelines such as through bilateral consultations, since leaders of the world's major countries participate (in the summit)," he said.

Ban, formerly a South Korean foreign minister, said participants will be able to express support for the six-way nuclear talks and the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, which will eventually contribute to global efforts to bolster nuclear security.

He was skeptical of the possibility that Pyongyang will join the Seoul session, citing the communist nation's internal situation and its responses to the South's invitation.

Ban said, meanwhile, the U.N. will put forward several action plans to beef up the multilateral nuclear security and safety.

He said toughening financial sanctions are necessary to prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction and nuclear terrorism.

Above all, Ban stressed, it is important to tackle the production and transfer of highly enriched uranium (HEU), plutonium and other fissile materials.

On South Korea, he said he was proud that his motherland will host the Nuclear Security Summit, the highest-level forum on international security, after the G-20 summit was held in Seoul.

"The summit this time is meaningful in that the stature of the Republic of Korea (South Korea) has been recognized not only in economy but also in the international security field," Ban said. "I think South Korea's national brand will be upgraded by one notch through the success of the summit this time."

http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2012/03/120_106897.html

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Yonhap News – South Korea

March 15, 2012

S. Korea Expects N. Korea, IAEA to Meet Soon on Monitoring

SEOUL, March 15 (Yonhap) -- North Korea is expected to hold consultations soon with the United Nations nuclear watchdog to allow U.N. inspectors back into the communist country to monitor the suspension of its uranium enrichment program, part of a deal with the United States in return for food aid, South Korea's foreign ministry said Thursday.

In a deal announced late last month, North Korea agreed to halt its uranium enrichment at the Yongbyon nuclear facility under inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and suspend nuclear and missile tests.

The U.S., in return, pledged to resume food aid to the impoverished North, raising hopes for a resumption of the long-stalled six-party talks on ending the North's nuclear weapons program. The talks, involving the two Koreas, the U.S., China, Russia and Japan, were last held in late 2008.

Asked about when the IAEA inspectors would return to North Korea, Foreign Ministry spokesman Cho Byung-jae replied, "We expect consultations (between North Korea and the IAEA) for the monitoring to take place at an early date."

South Korea hopes North Korea will hold "smooth consultations with the IAEA on monitoring modalities" and "swiftly go forward with the IAEA inspection," Cho said.

The Feb. 29 deal between North Korea and the U.S. was the first important decision taken by the North's new leader, Kim Jong-un, since he inherited power from his late father, Kim Jong-il, who died in December.



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The North quit the six-party talks in April 2009, kicked out IAEA inspectors and conducted a second nuclear test a month later.

Seoul officials welcomed the deal, but remained cautious on whether the North will follow through with its latest commitment.

North Korea has a track record of making commitments in return for economic concessions and then abandoning talks and renegeing on its commitments.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2012/03/15/72/0301000000AEN20120315004400315F.HTML>

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Korea Times – South Korea

March 15, 2012

Korea to Boast Nuke Tech Supremacy

'The Seoul summit will renew the importance of maintaining peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula.'

By Park Si-soo

South Korea will unveil homegrown technology that could significantly reduce the risk of nuclear terrorism for the first time in the world at the Seoul Nuclear Security Summit.

“We will showcase at the summit a nuclear technology that only South Korea possesses,” Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Kim Sung-hwan said in an interview with The Korea Times, Wednesday. “The homegrown technology will make it possible for reactors working with highly enriched uranium (HEU) to generate the same level of performance with low enriched uranium.”

Several rogue countries, including North Korea, have been accused of abusing HEU to make nuclear weapons. Many nuclear experts have also worried that HEU in civilian industries, particularly the medical industry, is under constant threat of theft by terrorists and other non-state actors with malicious intent.

Kim said the new technology will undergo feasibility testing in other countries. “I strongly believe that the technology will largely contribute to reducing the risk of nuclear terrorism,” the minister said.

With the summit only 10 days away, Kim said his ministry is putting the final touches to the preparations for the meeting to ensure that the event flows smoothly in terms of security and protocol.

“We will continue to work to make the Seoul summit an event to be carried out with the people,” he said. “We are attempting to raise public awareness about the significance of the summit.”

Fifty-eight world leaders will come together in Seoul on March 26 and 27 in an orchestrated effort to prevent nuclear terrorism and ensure the safe use of weapon-useable radioactive materials such as plutonium and HEU. The last sherpa meeting will be held here on March 23 for a final review of the preparations for the world’s largest forum on the matters, including the outcome document, or the Seoul Communiqué.

“The Korean government is working closely with other participating countries so that effective and substantial commitments to improve nuclear security are announced at the summit,” Kim said.

The communiqué will identify specific goals through practical measures to realize the vision of a “four-year lockdown” of all vulnerable nuclear materials, he said.

In addition to the document, he said South Korea expects further announcements to be made on specific steps toward nuclear security. Among the expected actions are the elimination and minimization of weapon-useable nuclear materials such as HEU or plutonium, the signing or ratification of key nuclear security instruments, and contributions to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Nuclear Security Fund.

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He added the venue for the summit will be open to the public on the heels of its closure so that many people can see and experience the “historic setting.”

Message to North Korea

North Korea’s possession of nuclear weapons is not an agenda at the summit since it’s a matter of nonproliferation and is being dealt with within the separate framework of the six-nation talks.

Nevertheless the minister said the summit could send a strong message urging North Korea to eliminate any such materials.

“I believe the presence of 58 world leaders in Seoul to discuss nuclear security could serve as an occasion to renew the importance of maintaining peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula,” he said.

Kim didn’t rule out the possibility that President Lee Myung-bak would discuss the North Korean issue with other leaders on the sidelines of the summit. Lee is scheduled to have bilateral meetings with more than 20 heads of state during the event.

The nuclear-armed North has recently launched verbal assaults on the South for the latter’s hosting of the summit, defining the global gathering as a “grave threat to the Stalinist state” and threatening “It won’t sit back.”

Regarding the angry reaction, the South Korean foreign minister said it reflects Pyongyang’s deep frustration over the nuclear security summit being held under its nose.

National brand

The minister underscored that the Seoul summit will help upgrade the country’s national brand.

Seoul’s hosting of the summit is indicative of the “recognition by the international community of Korea’s standing and role in addressing global issues,” Kim said.

“Korea has already demonstrated its leadership in the global economic arena,” he said referring to the country’s host of the G20 summit in 2010 and the Busan High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in 2011. “If the G20 summit and the Busan forum signified Korea’s transition from a recipient country of international aid to a donor state, the nuclear security summit demonstrates the leading role Korea is playing in the international security field.”

He went on to say that the country has actively tried to assume a “responsibility and role commensurate to our standing in the international community.”

“Indeed, we have actively taken part in global efforts to overcome common challenges,” he said. “The successful hosting of the summit will contribute to dissolving the Korea discount and instead serve as an opportunity to build a Korea premium.”

'Comfortable stay in Seoul'

Kim wants South Korea to be portrayed among participating leaders as a “dynamic country with a rich cultural background” behind its modern success story.

To that end, the minister suggested three things which he hopes participating leaders will experience during their stay here — the new Gyeongheoru Yeonhyang, a traditional Korean performance, at Gyeongbokgung Palace; a moonlight tour of Chandeok Palace; and a stay at a Buddhist temple.

Chandeok Palace was designated as a world heritage site by UNESCO in 1997 and the templestay program has been promoted by the government in line with its promotional campaign on traditional Korean culture.

“I hope the leaders attending the summit will get a chance to taste a unique blend of rich cultural tradition and dynamic modernity during their stay in Korea,” the minister said.



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Noting the country's rise from the ashes of the 1950-53 Korean War, he said Korea is more than willing to share our experience with other countries seeking national development.

"We will do our best to make every leader's stay in Korea most comfortable, and I hope many of them will revisit Korea for the Yeosu Expo, which opens in May."

http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2012/03/371_106990.html

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Yonhap News – South Korea
March 16, 2012

N. Korea Says Will Launch Earth Observation Satellite in April

SEOUL, March 16 (Yonhap) -- North Korea said Friday it will launch an earth observation satellite aboard a long-range rocket next month, a move expected to spark international condemnation because the launch is seen as little different from a missile test.

The announcement came just weeks after North Korea agreed to temporarily put a moratorium on missile and nuclear tests and freeze its uranium-enrichment facilities in exchange for 240,000 tons of food aid from the United States.

South Korea expressed "serious concern" over the North's plan, noting the launch would violate a U.N. Security Council resolution.

North Korea said Unha-3 rocket carrying Kwangmyongsong-3 will blast off from its satellite launching station in North Pyongan Province between April 12 and 16, the Korean Committee for Space Technology said in Pyongyang.

The launch of a satellite built by indigenous technology is designed "to mark the 100th birth anniversary of President Kim Il-sung," the country's founder and the late grandfather of current leader Kim Jong-un, the committee said.

The launch date is set around the late founder's April 15 birthday, one of the most important holidays in the isolated country. The North, one of the poorest countries in the world, has vowed to usher in a prosperous and powerful nation by the milestone anniversary.

The committee said it has chosen a safe flight orbit to ensure carrier rocket debris to be generated during the flight would not have any impact on neighboring countries.

North Korea "will strictly abide by relevant international regulations and usage concerning the launch of scientific and technological satellites for peaceful purposes and ensure maximum transparency," the North's committee said in an English-language statement carried by the official Korean Central News Agency.

The committee claimed that the launch will greatly encourage North Koreans "in the building of a thriving nation and will offer an important occasion of putting the country's technology of space use for peaceful purposes on a higher stage."

Meanwhile, South Korea called on North Korea to "immediately stop such a provocative act and abide by its international obligations."

The launch "will become a grave provocative act against peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia," the Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

The North's move could be aimed at boosting its negotiating power with the U.S. after their recent nuclear deal, said Kim Yong-hyun, a North Korea expert at Dongguk University in Seoul.

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"The North could employ brinkmanship, as it wants to take the lead in future negotiations with the U.S.," Kim said.

The communist country has a track record of making commitments in return for economic concessions and then abandoning talks, reneging on its commitments and staging provocations.

Kim said the North could argue that its satellite launch would not be in violation of its moratorium on missile tests, a position that is expected to be rejected by the U.S.

"The borderline is ambiguous," Kim said, referring to technological similarity between a rocket launch and a long-range missile test.

Baek Seung-joo, a senior analyst at the state-run Korea Institute of Defense Analyses, said a rocket can carry either a satellite or a warhead and the technology in launching the satellite could be diverted for military purposes.

In 2009, the North claimed it successfully put a satellite into orbit as part of a peaceful space program. However, South Korea and the United States said at the time that the launch was meant to test North Korea's ballistic missile technology and that no object entered orbit.

The launch drew U.N. condemnation, prompting North Korea to quit the six-nation talks aimed at ending its nuclear weapons programs. The North conducted a second nuclear test in May 2009, drawing tightened U.N. sanctions.

The recent nuclear deal between Pyongyang and Washington raised hopes that the disarmament talks could be resumed. The talks also involve South Korea, China, Japan and Russia.

Still, the nuclear accord could unravel if the U.S. views the North's upcoming launch as a disguised long-range missile, said Baek.

The U.S. did not make any immediate comment on the North's announcement.

The upcoming liftoff comes as the North is set to hold a key political conference. The KCNA reported in February that the Workers' Party conference in mid-April is designed "to glorify the sacred revolutionary life and feats" of its late leader Kim Jong-il and "rallied close" around his son and successor, Kim Jong-un.

The launch is meant to show to North Koreans that the young North Korean leader is in charge of his country, said Kim Yong-hyun.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2012/03/16/37/0401000000AEN20120316004900315F.HTML>

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Washington Post

North Korea Says It Will Launch Long-Range Rocket Carrying Satellite

By Chico Harlan

Friday, March 16, 2012

SEOUL — North Korea said Friday that it intends to blast a satellite into space using a long-range rocket, an announcement that drew international condemnation and seemed to run counter to Pyongyang's recent promise to halt weapons tests in exchange for food.

North Korea described the launch as both scientific and celebratory: It will take place between April 12 and 16, to mark the centenary of founder Kim Il Sung's birth.

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The North's announcement comes just 16 days after an agreement with the United States in which famine-stricken North Korea said it would halt parts of its nuclear program and suspend all weapons tests in exchange for 240,000 metric tons of food aid.

Even if the North's rocket propels a satellite, rather than a weapon, into orbit, the launch could jeopardize the food deal — which U.S. officials had described as a tentative first step to better relations with new leader Kim Jong Eun.

The news sparked immediate concern from Washington, Tokyo and Seoul, with South Korea's Foreign Ministry calling the rocket test a "grave provocative act against peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and in Northeast Asia."

U.S. State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland, citing U.N. Security Council resolutions that ban North Korea from using ballistic missile technology, said a launch would be a "direct violation" of Pyongyang's international commitments.

"Such a missile launch would pose a threat to regional security and would also be inconsistent with North Korea's recent undertaking to refrain from long-range missile launches," Nuland said in a statement. "We call on North Korea to adhere to its international obligations, including all relevant U.N. Security Council Resolutions. We are consulting closely with our international partners on next steps."

Both U.S. and South Korean government officials have characterized the North Korean satellite program as a cover for long-range missile tests, because the technology for launching either is similar, and it is difficult for outsiders to distinguish one from the other. The key difference is a matter of payload: Satellites are designed for communication and observation; missiles are for destruction.

"What they're trying to do is perfect their reentry heat shield for a ballistic missile," said Victor Cha, a former White House director of Asian affairs who is now a senior adviser at the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies. In past years, North Korea has refined its ability to launch but has been flummoxed by the technology required for the survivability and accuracy of long-distance projectiles.

After a similar purported satellite launch in April 2009, the United Nations tightened sanctions against the North, adding a measure to ban Pyongyang from any future launches using "ballistic missile technology."

"If North Korea does conduct the launch, it kills the food deal," said Dan Pinkston, a Seoul-based security expert at the International Crisis Group. "For the Obama administration, it becomes politically impossible."

The North, which has signed an international space treaty, argues that it has every right to launch satellites for peaceful purposes. Friday, in a statement carried by its state-run news agency, the North promised "maximum transparency" and said the launch would encourage the "building of a thriving nation."

The Kwangmyongsong-3, designed as a "polar-orbiting earth observation satellite," will be launched from a station in the northwestern corner of the country, bordering China, and blasted in a southern direction, North Korea said. This is different from a launch three years ago that traveled over northern Japan.

"A safe flight orbit has been chosen so that carrier rocket debris to be generated during the flight would not have any impact on neighboring countries," the North's news agency said.

Previous North Korean launches have succeeded more in sparking international ire than in showing off indigenous technology. The North said its previous long-range rocket launch, on April 5, 2009, placed into orbit a satellite that broadcast patriotic songs honoring leaders Kim Jong Il and Kim Il Sung. But outside analysts say the launch ended in failure, with no object of any kind entering orbit. The first stage of the rocket landed in the Sea of Japan; the remaining stages and payload dropped into the Pacific Ocean.

Angry about global condemnation of that launch, North Korea expelled international nuclear inspectors from the country and walked out of the six-party talks on its weapons program.

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One month later, Pyongyang conducted its second nuclear test.

Analysts in Seoul said that participants in the six-party talks — which include the United States, South Korea, Russia, China and Japan — could now see a similar breakdown in relations, particularly if North Korea interprets the latest condemnation of its satellite launch as an international vendetta.

South Korea later this month will host the Nuclear Security Summit, which will bring together some 50 world leaders, including President Obama.

In recent weeks, the Obama administration had been seeking new diplomatic opportunities with North Korea and Kim, who assumed power after the Dec. 17 death of his father, Kim Jong Il. U.S. officials approached talks tentatively, in large part because of North Korea's track record of making denuclearization deals in order to receive aid, then backtracking once the aid arrives.

But North Korea's latest apparent reversal differs from previous ones, because the food-for-nuclear weapons deal hasn't been completed, and Washington hasn't sent any of its food aid. The two countries had been in the final stages of negotiations on the food aid, but the United States had not yet signed a letter of intent, the final contractual step.

The North's announcement on Friday, some analysts in Seoul said, felt more like evidence of a divide within Pyongyang's leadership, rather than a well-orchestrated strategy to gain leverage.

"This is more complicated than typical North Korean behavior," said John Delury, an assistant professor at Seoul's Yonsei University. "One of the only things I can think of is, there isn't total unanimity in the direction of foreign policy. Maybe we are seeing some confusion within the system."

The North, for years, has promised its people a nationwide celebration in mid-April of this year, pledging to become a "strong and prosperous" nation with something akin to first-world status. A satellite or missile test at that time, some experts said, could be sold domestically as evidence of North Korea's strength.

"For now, it is unclear what is behind this decision," said Ryoo Kihl-jae, at Seoul's Institute for Far Eastern Studies. "But even if North Korea is to go on launching its missile or satellite, there aren't any more measures for the international community to take. ... All possible sanctions have already been imposed."

As recently as last week, North Korean officials were expressing at academic events in New York their desire for rebuilding the U.S. relationship. Now U.S. officials are scrambling to figure out how to respond.

"I imagine it's going to be difficult to provide assistance now," Cha said. "The main option now is probably to go to U.N. Security Council and argue that this is a violation of security resolutions on North Korea. And you may see resistance from China and possibly Russia on that."

Staff writer William Wan in Washington and special correspondent Yoonjung Seo in Seoul contributed to this report.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/north-korea-says-it-will-launch-long-range-rocket-next-month/2012/03/16/gIQArAwtFS_story.html

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The Daily Star – Lebanon

U.S. Dangles Secret Data for Russia Missile Shield Approval

By Jim Wolf

March 15, 2012

WASHINGTON, Mar. 13, 2012 (Reuters) — The Obama administration is leaving open the possibility of giving Moscow certain secret data on U.S. interceptor missiles due to help protect Europe from any Iranian missile strike.

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A deal is being sought by Washington that could include classified data exchange because it is in the U.S. interest to enlist Russia and its radar stations in the missile-defense effort, a Pentagon spokeswoman said Tuesday in written replies to Reuters.

No decision has been made yet on whether the United States would offer data about the interceptors' "velocity at burnout," or VBO, said Air Force Lieutenant Colonel April Cunningham, the spokeswoman, but it is not being ruled out.

VBO is at the heart of what Russia wants as the price for its cooperation, said Riki Ellison, head of the private Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance, who has close ties to missile defense and military officials.

VBO tells how fast an interceptor is going when its rocket-booster motor fuel is spent and the motor burns out.

With VBO and certain other technical data, Moscow could more readily develop countermeasures and strategies to defeat the system and transfer the information to others, Ellison said.

Ellen Tauscher, the administration's special envoy for strategic stability and missile defense, held talks in Moscow Tuesday with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov, including on missile defense, a State Department spokesman said.

The Defense Department, in its response to Reuters, ruled out giving Russia information on either "telemetry" or U.S. "hit-to-kill" technology.

Telemetry involves the automatic transmission and measurement of data from remote sources to monitor a missile flight. Hit-to-kill is the way in which modern U.S. interceptors, such as Raytheon Co's Standard Missile-3, destroy targets by slamming into them.

The department emphasized the Obama administration was following in the footsteps of the George W. Bush administration in seeking missile defense cooperation with Moscow, a process formally begun in 2004.

In keeping open the possibility of sharing VBO information with Moscow, Obama is at odds with Republicans in Congress who have said they will seek to legislate a prohibition on such data-sharing.

Republican Rep. Mike Turner, chairman of the House of Representatives' Armed Services subcommittee on strategic forces, faulted the administration for what he described as "caving" to Russian concerns at the expense of U.S. interests.

"That is why it is important Congress insist on protecting our classified missile defense information, and our right to deploy missile defenses without concern for Russia's posturing," he said in a statement Tuesday to Reuters.

The sharing of such data might help salve Russian concerns about the layered shield being built in Europe by the United States and its NATO allies, chiefly to fend off the perceived threat from Iranian missiles.

Moscow fears the bulwark could grow strong enough over time to undermine its nuclear deterrent force. It has threatened to deploy missiles to overcome the shield and potentially target missile defense installations such as those planned in NATO members Poland and Romania.

The Defense Department, in its reply to Reuters, said the sharing of classified U.S. data is subject to an interagency group known as the National Disclosure Policy Committee, which evaluates requests for dealing with other governments.

Bradley Roberts, a deputy assistant secretary of defense, told Turner's committee last week the United States had been making "no progress" toward persuading Russia to drop its opposition to the shield despite its willingness to consider sharing certain classified data.

Reporting by Jim Wolf; editing by Todd Eastham.

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<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/International/2012/Mar-15/166697-us-dangles-secret-data-for-russia-missile-shield-approval.ashx#axzz1pCGoGz2Q>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

Russians Prefer Iran over U.S. – Poll

15 March 2012

More Russians than ever support Iran in its standoff with the United States, though most of the populace is against the country taking sides in international disputes, according to a new poll by state-run VTsIOM.

Thirteen percent of Russians think Moscow should side with Tehran in case of its military conflict with the United States, a seven-percent increase from 2010, according to a survey released on Wednesday.

Support for the United States stood unchanged at 3 percent. Sixteen percent said Russia should look after its own interests, 22 percent thought it should not interfere and 29 percent said it should act as a mediator in case of a conflict.

The responses go in line with the general perception of the West: 25 percent of the respondents – the biggest figure since 2001 and an 11-percent increase from 2010 – think Russian-American ties are strained or downright bad, while 42 percent consider them good or normal and 26 percent believe them chilly, compared to 49 and 33 percent, respectively, in 2010.

The trend for Europe was the same, with 13 percent of Russians speaking about strained or bad ties with European Union, up from 6 percent in 2010. Still, 58 percent spoke favorably of Russian-European relations, while 20 percent attested them as chilly.

Thirty-eight percent of the polled said Russia should not ignore criticism from the West, while 50 percent said it should dismiss the rebukes. Of the latter, a combined 66 percent put the criticism down to hostile intentions from the West, while 29 percent said Western countries do not understand Russia.

The populace was also polled on the uprising in Syria, which claimed thousands of lives since last March, and came out divided, with 29 percent upholding a neutral stance, 23 percent backing Syria and 13 percent siding with the West. The remaining 35 percent were undecided.

The poll, held late February, covered 1,600 respondents nationwide and had a margin of error of 3.4 percentage points.

MOSCOW, March 15 (RIA Novosti)

<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20120315/172190499.html>

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Global Security Newswire

Pentagon Could Expand WMD Response Command Roles

March 15, 2012

By Diane Barnes, *Global Security Newswire*

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. Defense Department is considering means for expanding leadership responsibilities for military officers responding to incidents involving weapons of mass destruction, the head of U.S. Northern Command said on Wednesday (see *GSN*, Sept. 16, 2010).

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The Pentagon since 2009 has sought to prepare select officers to serve in "dual-status" capacities -- commanding both active-duty military personnel and state National Guard troops -- in responding to crises in the United States. Four officers linked to a hurricane relief effort received the first such roles last August, Gen. Charles Jacoby said in testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee.

"[At] the very first opportunity that we had to employ dual-status commanders, we did," he said. "Now we're going to continue to grow that and look at ways to employ dual-status commanders in both the regional and CBRNE -- chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear event; so big progress."

The military as of April will have prepared "at least two dual-status commanders for every state," according to the general, whose command leads homeland defense efforts for the Pentagon.

Dual-status commanders are intended to promote close cooperation between federal and state military personnel in responding to a major emergency and to reduce unnecessary overlaps in operations, the Air Force said last August in the face of Hurricane Irene.

In the last year and a half, the Pentagon "has taken significant steps to improve its ability to support civil authorities in responding to catastrophic incidents in major metropolitan areas, particularly weapons of mass destruction attacks and major industrial accidents," Jacoby last week told the House Armed Services Committee in prepared testimony.

The military's "response enterprise" for handling chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents "will reach full operational capability" on Oct. 1, with more than 18,000 active-duty federal, reserve and National Guard forces, he said.

"These forces are focused on lifesaving and are trained and equipped to provide critical search and rescue, decontamination, emergency medical care and medical evacuation in support of the primary federal agency, the affected regions and states and local incident commanders," Jacoby stated. "These forces maintain a graduated response posture and are prepared to deploy within hours after an incident in order to save lives and minimize human suffering within the critical first 72 hours."

The U.S. armed services have "lost a small amount in [their] chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear response capability" due to a 6 percent spending reduction for operations and maintenance, he said.

The Pentagon cut two National Guard Civil Support Teams, which would provide support to civilian authorities in the aftermath of a WMD incident, Jacoby said (see *GSN*, Dec. 21, 2007). Each state receives one team; Jacoby did not specify where the cuts were made, but indicated that no state had been left without a unit. "We kept teams in every state. We just reduced two that were additional ones that states had fielded."

Meanwhile, a yearly summit is set this week to examine coordination between government offices in addressing potential chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear crises.

"We're going to look at whether we are addressing the missions and requirements," Lt. Col. Pete Lofy, deputy CBRN operations head for the Northern Command and the North American Aerospace Defense Command, said in a statement. "Do we have the right units conducting these missions? Are the logistical functions set up to support the CBRN Response Enterprise? And are we satisfying [interagency] requirements for consequence management in the homeland?"

<http://www.nti.org/gsn/article/pentagon-expand-officers-wmd-response-role/>

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BusinessWeek

Obama Atomic-Test Ban Goal Faces Scrutiny from Science Panel

By Viola Gienger

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March 16, 2012

President Barack Obama's goal of Senate ratification for a treaty banning atomic weapons tests faces a key hurdle later this month, when a scientific panel will weigh in on whether the U.S. can verify the reliability of its nuclear stockpile without additional tests.

A National Academy of Sciences committee will release the long-awaited report on March 30 in Washington, according to a notice posted on the group's website. The study has been underway since 2009.

"The report addresses the ability of the United States to maintain the safety and reliability of the U.S. nuclear stockpile," according to the announcement. The assessment also examines questions such as "the capability to detect, locate and identify nuclear explosions."

The ability of the U.S. to rely on modern scientific measures rather than test explosions is central to Obama's argument for reversing the Senate's 1999 vote against ratifying the treaty. Obama's nuclear arms control agenda has largely stalled after a successful 2010 fight with Senate Republicans to ratify a new nuclear weapons treaty with Russia and in the run-up to November's presidential election.

"The report is likely to confirm that the stockpile stewardship program has been very effective and that there are no technical reasons to resume testing," Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association policy group in Washington, said in an interview. The program has used alternative technical means to verify the reliability of the weapons.

The Holdouts

The test-ban treaty, while not yet in force, has been signed by more than 180 countries. Its terms require that 44 designated countries with nuclear technology must sign and ratify the treaty before it enters into force. In addition to the U.S., the holdouts are China, North Korea, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel and Pakistan.

"The President is committed to getting the CTBT ratified," Ellen Tauscher, then-undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, told the Defense Writers Group in January.

The U.S. has banned its own nuclear testing by law and executive order since the early 1990s.

"So we've been living under a treaty, but we can't actually use it to enforce the same thing on other people," said Tauscher, who now is the administration's special envoy for strategic stability and missile defense.

Opponents' Questions

Opponents of Senate ratification question whether the treaty can be enforced on other nations and whether the reliability of the U.S. nuclear stockpile can be verified without testing.

The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization in Vienna has worked for years to establish a system of tools to monitor a ban on nuclear weapons tests.

The monitors provided data after North Korea's 2009 nuclear test to indicate that shocks being reported as a possible earthquake more likely originated from a nuclear detonation. Thirty minutes later, North Korea announced that it had conducted a nuclear test.

<http://www.businessweek.com/news/2012-03-15/obama-atomic-test-ban-goal-faces-scrutiny-from-science-panel>

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Science Codex

New Test could Help Track Down and Prosecute Terrorists

March 14, 2012

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WASHINGTON, March 14, 2012 — The latest episode in the American Chemical Society's (ACS) award-winning "Global Challenges/Chemistry Solutions" podcast series describes the development of a new test that could help track down and prosecute terrorists.

Amid concerns about the threat of terrorist attacks, scientists have been seeking better protection for the U.S. and other nations. One such team has developed a technique that could help authorities catch terrorists and put them out of business. A report on the development appeared in ACS' journal *Analytical Chemistry*, and became the topic of the new podcast.

Nerve agents like sarin, or GB, are some of the most dangerous terrorist threats. Although traces of these substances would remain after an attack, there has been no practical way of tracing the remains backward in time — to the company from which they were purchased or possibly to the terrorists who bought them.

In the podcast, Carlos Fraga, Ph.D., of Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, Richland, Wash., explains that his team has developed a first-of-its-kind technology that could help law enforcement officials trace the residues from terrorist attacks involving nerve gas and other chemical agents back to the companies or other sources from which the perpetrators obtained ingredients for the agent.

The researchers used a method called "impurity profiling" that identifies impurities in a GB sample at a crime scene and matches them like a fingerprint to the impurities in the source chemicals, pinpointing the likely source. They found that up to 88 percent of the impurities in source chemicals used to make GB can wind up in the finished product, and these impurities are unique, like a fingerprint.

So exactly how would these "fingerprints" help the FBI, police and other federal law enforcement officials? Using standard laboratory instruments, the scientists did impurity profiling and correctly identified the starting materials used for two different batches of GB. This may one day become a basis for using impurity profiling to help find and prosecute perpetrators of chemical attacks, says Fraga.

The new podcast is available without charge at iTunes and from www.acs.org/globalchallenges.

Source: American Chemical Society

http://www.sciencecodex.com/new_test_could_help_track_down_and_prosecute_terrorists-87813

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RT – Russia

OPINION/Politics

US Missile Defense: Loaded System, Empty Promises

14 March 2012

By Robert Bridge, RT

Despite the threat of another arms race erupting over a US missile defense system in Europe, Washington shows no sign of cooperating with Moscow.

Ever since news of Washington's plans to build a missile defense system in Europe surfaced, Moscow has been receiving friendly assurances that cooperation with NATO on the project would be forthcoming.

To date, nothing of the sort has transpired.

The Obama administration is currently wrangling over the details of a data-exchange program that would give Russia more information on its "hit-to-kill" technology behind the missile defense. By providing Russia with such classified data, Moscow may be more comfortable with the system.

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At the same time, analysts say the US missile defense system would be stronger with cooperation from Russia, which possesses extensive radar stations of its own. The main hurdle in Washington, however, seems to be US Republican opposition to any cooperation with Russia.

Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov warned that failure to cooperate with Russia on missile defense would undermine the spirit of the Russia-US reset.

"There are problems in Russian-US relations, and I am talking about US plans to deploy missile defense all around the world," Lavrov told a meeting of the State Duma on Wednesday. *"The US taking into account our concerns would (testify to) the reset of our relations."*

If Washington has no intention of cooperating with Russia, Lavrov says, *"it should provide guarantees that the system is not aimed against Russia."*

Once again, Russia warned that without an acceptable agreement on missile defense, it will be forced to act appropriately.

"If our partners continue to ignore our legitimate interests (over missile defense) Russia will be forced to take measures in the security area that would be appropriate to the US' and NATO's actions," Lavrov said.

President Dmitry Medvedev warned in November that Russia will deploy short-range Iskander missiles in Kaliningrad if Russia and NATO fail to reach agreement on missile defense. The Russian leader added that Moscow may opt out of the New START arms control treaty if the US and NATO proceed with its plans irrespective of Russia's objections.

Meanwhile, political analysts remain split as to the true nature of Washington's actions. Either the Obama administration is being thwarted in cooperating with Russia due to America's harsh political climate – the fact that the US has entered a stormy presidential election season certainly does not help – or it is dangling the carrot of cooperation and data-sharing in a deliberate attempt to buy time to bolt down the system, thereby making irrelevant Russia's objections.

In any case, the reasons ultimately do not matter. Without some degree of cooperation and genuine assurances, the Kremlin will be forced to view the system as a potential threat to its national security, and act accordingly. Increasingly, and unfortunately, that seems to be the bumpy road the Russia-US reset has taken.

But as Lavrov reminded, Russia, which just overwhelmingly supported Vladimir Putin in recent presidential elections, will continue to base its foreign policy on national interests.

"The presidential elections proved the continuity of our foreign policy," Lavrov said. *"We will build our policy based on our interests."*

Despite the heated rhetoric and lack of trust between Moscow and Washington, the two sides show a willingness to cooperate on other fronts. Lavrov mentioned a project to create a transit station to move "non-lethal" cargo to Afghanistan, where Coalition forces are having mixed results battling the Taliban and al-Qaeda.

The transportation of non-military cargo transit to Afghanistan *"is regarded by us as a means of helping those who are eradicating the terrorist and drug threat in Afghanistan,"* Lavrov said.

Draft plans for cargo shipments passing through the city Ulyanovsk, which is situated 893 kilometers (555 miles) east of Moscow, have not yet been submitted to the government for consideration.

<http://rt.com/politics/us-missile-defense-russia-lavrov-555/>

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Washington Times
OPINION/Analysis

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Plotting Against Iranian Nuke Sites

Israel could use everything from worms to bunker busters

By Rowan Scarborough, The Washington Times

Wednesday, March 14, 2012

The first indication that Israel has resorted to military action against Iran's nuclear program would be explosions across the Islamic republic.

The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) — with its vaunted pilots and American-supplied warplanes — are so adept at surprise that Iraq and Syria never knew what hit them until their nuclear facilities lay smoldering.

But Iran and its scores of buried and cemented nuclear sites present a much more daunting campaign — one of days, not hours, and multiple weapons, not a few laser-guided bombs.

And unlike Iraq in 1981 and Syria in 2007, Iran can be expected to launch a fierce counterattack that likely would draw the United States into a low-level war with Tehran.

The strikes and counterstrikes could unfold this way:

If Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu persuades his Cabinet to approve strikes, long-range F-15Is and F-16Is ("I" for Israel) would take off from the Hatzetim air base on a moonless night.

Israel's most advanced warplanes, the "I Team" would carry U.S.-made, 5,000-pound bunker-busting bombs that drill below ground before exploding. Israel's older F-16s and F-15s would stay home to deal with anticipated reprisals.

Israel has been revising its target list for years as it has gained intimate knowledge of Iran's infrastructure and military installations via U.S. intelligence-sharing and its own network of spy satellites.

The low-flying "I" jets could take one or more routes to penetrate Iranian airspace on flights as long as 1,000 miles or more.

Saudi Arabia, which sees Iran as the biggest threat to Persian Gulf oil states, might allow Israeli jets to access its airspace to cross into Iran from the southwest.

Israel also could opt to fly over Iraq, given that the U.S. and its warplanes have left and Baghdad has not rebuilt an air defense force.

'Difficult, but not impossible'

Iran's thick network of radars and anti-aircraft missiles would be attacked first, perhaps by cyberwarfare viruses or some type of electronic jamming that makes the bombers invisible.

Analysts presume that Israel has probed Iran's computer networks and has a plan to disable them with viruses and worms that would break down communication lines and disrupt electric power.

Once Israeli jets have penetrated Iranian airspace, their target list undoubtedly would include the large uranium-enrichment plant at Natanz and the nuclear reactor on the Gulf coast at Bushehr.

Israel has tracked the whereabouts of Iran's atomic scientists and also would target their homes.

Israeli pilots have practiced long-range missions, complete with in-air refueling via sophisticated aerial tanker-fighter maneuvers to extend their aircraft's range of operation by hundreds of miles.

"The United States has provided the airplanes, bombs and missiles, and the aerial refueling tankers to support the kind of sustained strikes that would be required to attack the known sites inside Iran," said James Russell, an instructor at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif., who worked at the Pentagon on arms transfers to U.S. allies.

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“This is not a matter of blowing up a reactor in a single mission,” he said. “Iran’s infrastructure is spread out over the country. Some of the sites, like Natanz, are said to be deeply buried and built to withstand aerial bombing by the kinds of bunker-buster bombs the United States has provided.

“Conducting these strikes would be difficult, but not impossible.”

Israel would position diesel-powered Dolphin-class submarines within missile range, perhaps in the Arabian Sea. Sub-launched Harpoon cruise missiles could strike Iranian radars, air-defense jets and nuclear sites.

“I think a lot of it is going to be done through the use of submarines,” said Michael Maloof, a former Pentagon policymaker who focused on the Middle East and Central Asia. “They have very capable missile submarines.”

Israel also has an arsenal of Jericho surface-to-surface missiles that were built primarily to carry nuclear warheads. The Jewish state is estimated to own about 85 nuclear weapons.

It is likely that Israel’s military, which is skilled at adapting multitask weapons, has reconfigured the Jericho to carry conventional explosives.

Two years ago, Vice Prime Minister Moshe Ya’alon boasted of the IDF’s combat readiness.

“This capability can be used for a war on terror in Gaza, for a war in the face of rockets from Lebanon, for war on the conventional Syrian army and also for war on a peripheral state like Iran,” said Mr. Ya’alon, who served as IDF chief of staff in the 2000s.

Israeli officials reportedly are mulling a military attack on Iran’s nuclear program, which they regard as an existential threat, given the Islamic republic’s calls for the destruction of the Jewish state.

Israel and Western nations suspect that Iranian atomic research is geared toward bomb-making, despite Iran’s assertions that its nuclear program is only for peaceful, civilian uses.

A question of capacity

Retired U.S. Air Force Lt. Gen. David Deptula knows how to conduct an air war.

He is a former fighter pilot who ran the air-operations center during the early days of the Afghanistan War. He ended up as the Air Force’s top uniformed intelligence officer. He can find and hit a target.

Gen. Deptula asks a key question: Does Israel own the military capacity to inflict sufficient damage to set back Iran’s nuclear program for several years?

For instance, a U.S. campaign would unleash an airborne armada of B-2 stealth bombers, Air Force and Navy strike fighters, sea- and air-launched cruise missiles, and electronic jammers to blind radars. It also would field command-and-control aircraft to synchronize flights and warn of threats.

Israel has some of those assets, but in much smaller numbers — a combined total of about 100 F-15 and F-16’s. That means it could not hit as many targets as a sustained U.S. air war would.

“Israel has one of the most capable militaries in the world, and they have one of the most innovative and creative sets of planners, as far as nations around the world are concerned,” Gen. Deptula said.

“The issue is not whether they are capable of conducting selected strikes inside Iran. The issue is the capacity of their forces to inflict enough desired effects on the weapons-production facilities to accomplish whatever the endgame objective is.

“Yeah, they would conduct a couple of strikes. But the question is, to what end?” the general said.

The task is even more difficult, he said, given Iran’s widely separated nuclear facilities that are “deeply hardened and buried.”



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Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta has taken note of Iranian defenses as challenges to U.S. forces, let alone Israeli forces.

Asked in December how long military action would set back Iran, he said: "It depends on the ability to truly get the targets that they're after. Frankly, some of those targets are very difficult to get at."

Press reports from Jerusalem have quoted Israeli officials as saying they will not tip off the Obama administration about any strike on Iran.

The U.S., however, is maintaining a large military presence in the Gulf, including a combined operations center at Al Udiid, Qatar, that monitors all air corridors in the region.

"Israel's airplanes would be transiting over third-country airspace, not to mention having to de-conflict airspace management with the United States," Mr. Russell said.

What would the U.S. do if it detected Israeli fighters en route to Iran?

"It really depends on where, and what agreements have or have not been made in advance," Gen. Deptula said.

'Standoff' warfare

Israel likely has looked at an "Option B" for attacking Iran that would not involve the risky business of manned flights through inhospitable airspace.

Such "standoff" warfare would rely heavily on drones to deliver bombs, complemented by sea- and land-based missiles, cyberattacks and sabotage by Iranian dissidents trying to oust Iran's hard-line mullahs.

"They are probably pretty close to what the United States has in cyberwarfare," Mr. Maloof said. "If they, along with the United States, developed the Stuxnet bug, that shows they do have a high level of technical and cyberwarfare capability.

"They really focus on these things that give the greatest punch for the least amount of effort."

No one has claimed ownership of the Stuxnet worm, which can attack industrial machinery and processes that are operated by computers.

In Iran's case, the worm was designed to infiltrate and disable uranium-enrichment machinery in Iran, which discovered the sabotage in June 2010.

Suspicion immediately focused on Israel, perhaps in partnership with the CIA or the National Security Agency because precise knowledge of Iran's enrichment process would have been needed to design a successful worm. Iran last year acknowledged removing damaged centrifuges from its major plant at Natanz.

The question is, was Stuxnet an Israeli test? Will it send a barrage of malicious computer programs into Iran's nuclear complexes at some point?

"They can do this without airplanes," Mr. Maloof said. "Standoff warfare is the coming thing."

Shadow war

Someone is killing Iranian nuclear scientists.

Most recently, chemical engineer Mostafa Ahmadi Roshan was killed Jan. 10 by a "sticky" bomb attached to his car by a motorcyclist who fled the Tehran neighborhood after the explosion.

Roshan was the fourth Iranian atomic scientist assassinated in the past two years. Coupled with the Stuxnet attack and various industrial explosions in Iran, the killings point to some sort of sabotage under way.

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Iran blames Israel. So does NBC News, which reported that Israel's intelligence agency, the Mossad, is in cahoots with Iran's largest opposition group in a shadow war to disrupt Iran's nuclear-arms ability through assassinations, explosions and cyberwarfare.

Retaliation came last month. In New Delhi, a car carrying the wife of an Israeli diplomat was bombed, and she was hospitalized. A sticky bomb found on an Israeli diplomat's car in the former Soviet state of Georgia was defused the same day.

War planners at the Pentagon and U.S. Central Command are trying to predict how Iran would counterattack if Israel launches a military strike.

An adviser to the command tells The Washington Times that Iran likely would fire missiles into Israel, possibly using chemical weapons. It also would launch missiles at U.S. bases in Afghanistan and Kuwait.

Iran also would activate its proxies in Lebanon and the Gaza Strip to pinch Israel from the north and south.

Israel, which has used the Iron Dome system to deflect rockets fired from Gaza, thinks the Iranian-backed Lebanese militant group Hezbollah has stashed an arsenal of 50,000 rockets.

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, the army of more than 100,000 troops that promotes terrorism abroad and tamps down dissent at home, would spring into action.

Guard operatives would encourage Shiite extremists in Iraq to kill U.S. diplomats, advisers and security personnel.

The Revolutionary Guard Corps' naval forces would target shipping in the Persian Gulf, using speedboats to swarm around and blow up commercial oil tankers as its warships try to choke off the Strait of Hormuz.

The U.S. would be in a naval and air war against Tehran, attacking Iranian vessels and launching strikes at Iranian military sites to stop the volley of land-based missiles at American troops.

Policy of reciprocity

Michael Eisenstadt is a retired Army Reserve officer who served in the Pentagon during the Afghanistan War and was deployed to Iraq and other Middle Eastern countries during the past decade.

Now at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Mr. Eisenstadt has been brainstorming how Iran would react. He has concluded that the ruling mullahs would direct most firepower at Israel, launching Shahab ballistic missiles at population centers and at the military base in the desert at Dimona, the site for the Jewish state's undeclared nuclear arsenal.

Mr. Eisenstadt thinks Iran also would embark on long-term reprisals worldwide by attacking Israelis, one by one, in third countries.

"Any Iranian response would be guided by the perceived need on their part, first of all, to not let what they see as an act of aggression go unpunished, and it's very important to them to respond in kind.

"First, they will respond to an attack on their nuclear infrastructure with an attempted missile strike on Dimona. The aspect of reciprocity is deep-rooted in Iranian policy," he said.

"Then I think there would probably be some follow-on operations, terrorist operations aboard," Mr. Eisenstadt added. "I think they will want to strike the U.S. in a way that does not draw the U.S. into a conflict, but enables them to get a cheap shot, to punish the U.S. for supporting Israel."

Mr. Panetta has warned of Iran's likely retaliation: "The United States would obviously be blamed, and we could possibly be the target of retaliation from Iran, striking our ships, striking our military bases."

The American who would have to deal with an Israel-Iran war is Marine Corps Gen. James Mattis, chief of U.S. Central Command, which oversees all U.S. forces in the Middle East and Afghanistan.



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He clearly does not want war, given his remarks this month to the Senate Armed Services Committee. He told senators that Western economic sanctions need more time to work, and perhaps turn the Iranian people against the mullahs.

"They're very much a problem, and I don't see this going in the right direction until the full effect of the sanctions can accrue," Gen. Mattis said. And I say 'until,' because even now ... we see in inflation going up, unemployment going up [in Iran].

"The internal frictions have got to start telling here. At some point, I think the Iranian people are going to question, 'Is this the right direction?'

"So if we can keep this at a diplomatic, economic track and get full advantage of what these sanctions are doing and the international isolation is doing, this country basically lacks any significant strategic ally."

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/mar/14/plotting-against-iranian-nuke-sites/?page=all#pagebreak>

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Asia Times – Hong Kong

OPINION/Analysis

Photos of Iran's Parchin Site Lack Credibility

By Gareth Porter

March 15, 2012

WASHINGTON - News stories about satellite photographs suggesting efforts by Iran to "sanitize" a military site that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has said may have been used to test nuclear weapons have added yet another layer to widely held suspicion that Iran must indeed be hiding a covert nuclear weapons program.

But the story is suspect, in part because it is based on evidence that could only be ambiguous, at best. The claim does not reflect US intelligence, and a prominent think tank that has published satellite photography related to past controversies surrounding Iran's nuclear program has not found any photographs supporting it.

The original Parchin clean-up story by Associated Press correspondent George Jahn, published on March 7, reported that two unnamed diplomats from an unidentified country or countries - it was not made clear how many were involved - told him that satellite photos "appear to show trucks and earth-moving vehicles" at the site.

The two diplomats said they suspected Iran "may be trying to erase evidence" of tests of a "neutron device used to set off a nuclear explosion" because "some of the vehicles at the scene appeared to be hauling trucks and other equipment suited to carting off potentially contaminated soil from the site".

However, a third diplomat told Jahn he "could not confirm that", and Jahn was shown no photographs to back up the description offered by his two anonymous sources. Three other diplomats with whom Jahn spoke were apparently unaware of such photographs.

The satellite photographs described to Jahn did not come from US intelligence. Former CIA counterterrorism official Phil Giraldi told IPS that a US intelligence official had confirmed to him that the officials in question were not talking about intelligence provided by US intelligence.

US State Department spokesperson Victoria Nuland refused to answer specific questions at a March 8 briefing about whether US intelligence had such satellite photos or whether the US believes that such intelligence exists. She referred to such intelligence only in the conditional tense.

"Any evidence that Iran is seeking to cover its tracks would raise only further concern about the true nature of the program," she said.

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That means that the officials were either from Israel or one of its three European allies - the British, French and Germans - who have been working closely with Israel to undermine and finally force a revision of the US intelligence community's 2007 conclusion that Iran has not worked on developing a nuclear weapon since 2003.

Israel provided a series of documents to the IAEA after that intelligence estimate - as recounted by former IAEA Director General Mohamed ElBaradei in his 2011 memoir - aimed at proving that Iran had secretly tested a detonator for an implosion device and had worked on a neutron initiator as recently as 2007.

The timing of the story - just after the possibility of an IAEA inspection visit to the site had been suggested by Iran - is also suspect. The allegation of a clean-up at the site would provide a convenient explanation for the failure of the IAEA to find evidence to support the suggestion in its November 2011 report that Iran constructed a large containment vessel for hydrodynamic tests of nuclear weapons at Parchin.

Reflecting the degree to which the alleged intelligence has been given credence by being amplified without any questioning by the rest of the news media, an AFP report Saturday suggested that, even if Iran now agrees to an IAEA visit to the Parchin site, "it will find itself accused of having cleaned up the site beforehand".

Further casting doubt on the motive behind the story, the same allegation was made to the same AP reporter more than three-and-a-half months earlier. On November 22, Jahn reported that a single official of an unidentified state had "cited intelligence from his home country, saying it appears that Tehran is trying to cover its tracks by sanitizing the site and removing any evidence of nuclear research and development".

That assertion came in the wake of the IAEA board of governors meeting in November, as the IAEA Safeguards Department was planning to request a visit to the site at Parchin, where the agency had just reported nuclear weapons-related testing had been carried out in a large explosive containment chamber, according to unnamed "Member States".

The claim of satellite intelligence showing Iranian efforts to clean up a site at Parchin has not been supported by the Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS), the Washington think tank that had defended allegations in last November's IAEA report about foreign expertise having assisted in the alleged construction of a containment vessel at Parchin in 2000.

Paul Brannan, a specialist on interpretation of satellite photography for ISIS, told the New York Times that he had looked at many photos of Parchin but so far had not found any photographs of the "specific site" - meaning the site at which the unnamed officials had claimed there were equipment and vehicles indicating possible removal of evidence of past tests.

But Brannan went even further to say he could not find any photographs of sites at Parchin that suggested clean-up. He told the Times the presence of various kinds of equipment in the vicinity is not an indication of removal of evidence by Iran.

"There is no way to know whether or not the activity you see in a particular satellite image is cleansing or just regular work." Brannan added, "There's a lot of activity there - always."

The new alarm over alleged satellite images recalls the accusation by the George W Bush administration in close consultation with Israel in 2004 that Iran was using high explosives to test nuclear weapons at Parchin.

ISIS Executive Director David Albright told interviewer Scott Horton of Antiwar Radio in July 2009 that he had "gotten a tip" in September 2004 that high explosives testing at Parchin "could be used for nuclear weapons".

ISIS then published a series of satellite photographs that the organization said were "consistent" with facilities for such nuclear testing.

The satellite images were then cited by undersecretary of state John Bolton as alarming evidence of covert Iranian nuclear weapons work. The United States and its Western allies put strong pressure on the IAEA to get Iran to agree to a visit to Parchin.

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But Bolton and the IAEA had only vague suspicions rather than hard intelligence to go on. The IAEA asked to visit four entirely different areas of the 24-square-mile (6,215 hectare) Parchin facility for places that Israeli intelligence believed were consistent with some kind of nuclear-related testing activity.

The Iranians insisted that the IAEA inspectors could only visit one area per visit, even though they were allowed to visit five different buildings of their own choosing each time. The result was embarrassing visits in January 2005 and again in November that found nothing to justify the suspicions.

Another IAEA mission to Parchin that concedes that the information it had been given by those unnamed member states was false would deal a serious blow to the efforts of Israel and its European allies to refute the 2007 US intelligence estimate.

Gareth Porter is an investigative historian and journalist specializing in US national security policy. The paperback edition of his latest book, *Perils of Dominance: Imbalance of Power and the Road to War in Vietnam*, was published in 2006.

(Inter Press Service)

http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Middle_East/NC15Ak01.html

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Washington Times
OPINION/Op-Ed

MERRY: Retire the 'Reset' with Russia

Putin's nation doesn't merit superpower treatment, but normal relations

By E. Wayne Merry, The Washington Times

Thursday, March 15, 2012

On March 9, following Russia's presidential election, President Obama telephoned President-elect Vladimir Putin to re-establish contact with someone he once publicly described as a man of the past but who will run Russia for the remainder of Mr. Obama's presidency. Mr. Putin genuinely believes Washington orchestrates Russia's domestic opposition in order to remove him from power and thereby weaken Russia. That's certainly not an ideal basis for bilateral cooperation.

However, Mr. Putin deeply values his legacy. His re-election slogan was "dostroika" - completion or fulfillment. He thinks he has laid the foundations for a strong and prosperous Russia and needs only time and authority to bring it to fruition. Others (myself included) doubt both his vision and his methods, but Mr. Putin is not a petty dictator. He knows relations with the United States will be key to his legacy, for good or ill.

Washington is overdue to retire the "reset" as a concept for ties with Moscow. The Russians never liked the notion because it implied restoring the pre-George W. Bush relationship, a period they recall as one of weakness and humiliation. In addition, the achievements of the reset in strategic arms control and Afghanistan hold diminishing prospects for future progress.

The New START may be the last for a long time because nuclear weaponry plays a vastly more important role in Russian strategy than in ours. If all nuclear weapons were to vanish from the earth overnight, American security would be enhanced because of our global dominance of nonnuclear military capabilities and technology. By contrast, Russia would face a profound crisis of security and, worse, prestige.

A large nuclear arsenal with global reach is one of the few attributes of great power status that Russia possesses. Russia also maintains a huge stockpile of "nonstrategic" nuclear weapons (a category we largely have abandoned) because of its different strategic context (mainly China) and the persistent weakness of its conventional forces and

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demographics. Russia cannot compete in cutting-edge military technologies, so it must maintain the one type where it enjoys dominance over all other Eurasian states.

Thus, Russia opposes anything that might diminish its nuclear advantage, such as deployments of missile-defense systems by the United States and NATO. We can assert until we are blue in the face that these have nothing to do with Russia, but Moscow sees them as the thin edge of a wedge to weaken its narrowly based national strategy. This issue stands as an impediment to further security agreements with Moscow.

Afghanistan has been an underreported area of real cooperation. The Northern Distribution Network, of which Russia is the keystone, has been vital to breaking Pakistan's chokehold on logistics for American and allied forces. The flexibility we gained was critical in allowing the United States to penetrate Pakistani territory and kill Osama bin Laden. However, as the U.S. "exit strategy" develops, the importance to the United States of Russian cooperation will diminish, leaving an unstable Afghanistan looming to Russia's south.

Russia lacks effective influence in either Iran or North Korea, while its Syria policy shows that Moscow can be very stubborn, even at great cost to its broader interests, in defending one of its remaining foreign clients. Russia is not a major international player in finance, commerce or innovation. Even in energy, Russia depends as much on its customers as they do on it.

Russia can obstruct international initiatives if it feels challenged or disadvantaged, however. This is why China, Europe, India and Turkey maintain better relations with Russia than we do; as Eurasian neighbors, they want to keep the neighborhood civil. They also have more commerce at stake.

An abiding failure of American policy has been to attempt too much with Moscow, to search for partnership without a shared agenda and not to comprehend that Russia will not accept junior-partner status. We need to work on building something resembling normal relations with a Russia that is no longer a global or ideological competitor. More trade and investment would help, as will Russian membership in the World Trade Organization. Serious progress in Russian rule of law would do even more.

With Mr. Putin back in the Kremlin, we should maintain perspective and recognize that Russia today is a great regional power like Indonesia, India and Brazil, but no longer a global rival. Washington does not need a special agenda with Moscow, but rather balanced and realistic normal relations.

E. Wayne Merry, a former State Department and Pentagon official, is senior fellow for Europe and Eurasia at the American Foreign Policy Council.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/mar/15/retire-the-reset-with-russia/>

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Washington Post
OPINION/Opinion Writer

Deterring Iran Is the Best Option

By Fareed Zakaria
March 15, 2012

When I was in college, in the early 1980s, I invited Ronald Reagan's defense secretary, Caspar Weinberger, to give a speech on campus. At the time, U.S. colleges were hotbeds of opposition to the Reagan administration, especially to its defense policies. Sure enough, as Weinberger began to speak, a series of students stood up and began to heckle. One after another, they rose and chanted a single line, "Deterrence is a lie!"

I am reminded of that turbulent meeting as I listen to the debates over Iran's nuclear ambitions because it highlights a strange role reversal in today's foreign policy discourse. It used to be the left that refused to accept



the idea of deterrence — searching instead for options such as a nuclear freeze. And it used to be those on the right who would patiently explain the practical virtues of deterrence.

“About once every 25 years, a new generation discovers the horrors of the bomb and the paradoxes of deterrence, and begins looking for a way out. But there are only so many times that one can present the apocalypse . . . so many beguiling alternatives to pursue and discard. Inevitably, the debate grinds to a halt pretty much where it began: affirming, while deploring, the necessity of relying on the balance of terror to preserve the peace.” That was Charles Krauthammer, writing in the *New Republic* in 1984. “Deterrence, like old age, is intolerable, until one considers the alternative,” he explained.

Yet today it is the right that has decided that deterrence is a lie. Krauthammer, the Heritage Foundation, the American Enterprise Institute and others denounce containment and deterrence and would lead us instead to a policy that culminates in a preventive war. It is the right’s version of the nuclear freeze — a simple solution that actually doesn’t solve anything. Strikes on Iran would probably delay its program a few years while driving up domestic support for the government in Tehran and providing it with a much stronger rationale for pursuing nuclear weapons. Yet sophisticated conservatives insist that this route is preferable to deterrence.

Deterrence is a difficult concept to accept because it is counterintuitive: The prospect of destruction produces peace. And yet its record is remarkable. Great powers went to war with brutal regularity for hundreds of years. Then came nuclear weapons, and there has not been a war between great powers since 1945 — the longest period of peace between great powers in history. The United States and the Soviet Union had a more intense and far-reaching rivalry than almost any two great powers ever. Each thought the other wanted to destroy its way of life. And yet, this rivalry did not result in war. Both sides were deterred.

In 1989, Margaret Thatcher said in a toast to Mikhail Gorbachev, “Both our countries know from bitter experience that conventional weapons do not deter war in Europe, whereas nuclear weapons have done so for over 40 years. As a deterrent there is no substitute for them.”

If deterrence doesn’t work, then why are we not preparing preventive war against Russia, which still has a fearsome arsenal of intercontinental ballistic missiles? Or against Pakistan, home to a military-intelligence regime that has been implicated in more major acts of terrorism in the past 10 years than Iran has in the past hundred? The argument that Iran would be deterred does not rest on its reasonableness but on the regime’s desire to survive. “Rulers want to have a country that they can continue to rule,” says Kenneth Waltz, one of the most distinguished theorists of international relations.

To gain credibility with his conservative critics and with the current Israeli government, President Obama has gone along with them, ruled out containment, insisted that he does not bluff and spoken of a “window” of opportunity for negotiations. This might prove a serious error: It boxes in the United States, limits Obama’s options and forces him on a path that could push him into an unnecessary, preventive war.

Anguish over the prospect of an Iranian nuclear weapon is understandable. It would be better for Israel, the Middle East and the world if Tehran does not acquire such weapons. The U.S. effort, in collaboration with almost the entire international community, to prevent this from happening and to put tremendous pressure on Tehran, is the right policy. But were Tehran to persist, were its regime to accept the global isolation and crippling costs that would come from its decision, a robust policy of containment and deterrence would work toward Iran as it did against Stalin’s Soviet Union, Mao’s China, Kim Jong Il’s North Korea and the Pakistani military.

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

http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/deterring-iran-is-the-best-option/2012/03/14/gIQA0Y9mCS_story.html

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New York Times

OPINION/Op-Ed Contributors to the *International Herald Tribune*

Nuclear Terrorism: A Clear Danger

By KENNETH C. BRILL and KENNETH N. LUONGO

March 16, 2012

Terrorists exploit gaps in security. The current global regime for protecting the nuclear materials that terrorists desire for their ultimate weapon is far from seamless. It is based largely on unaccountable, voluntary arrangements that are inconsistent across borders. Its weak links make it dangerous and inadequate to prevent nuclear terrorism.

Later this month in Seoul, the more than 50 world leaders who will gather for the second Nuclear Security Summit need to seize the opportunity to start developing an accountable regime to prevent nuclear terrorism.

There is a consensus among international leaders that the threat of nuclear terrorism is real, not a Hollywood confection. President Obama, the leaders of 46 other nations, the heads of the International Atomic Energy Agency and the United Nations, and numerous experts have called nuclear terrorism one of the most serious threats to global security and stability. It is also preventable with more aggressive action.

At least four terrorist groups, including Al Qaeda, have demonstrated interest in using a nuclear device. These groups operate in or near states with histories of questionable nuclear security practices. Terrorists do not need to steal a nuclear weapon. It is quite possible to make an improvised nuclear device from highly enriched uranium or plutonium being used for civilian purposes. And there is a black market in such material. There have been 18 confirmed thefts or loss of weapons-usable nuclear material. In 2011, the Moldovan police broke up part of a smuggling ring attempting to sell highly enriched uranium; one member is thought to remain at large with a kilogram of this material.

A terrorist nuclear explosion could kill hundreds of thousands, create billions of dollars in damages and undermine the global economy. Former Secretary General Kofi Annan of the United Nations said that an act of nuclear terrorism “would thrust tens of millions of people into dire poverty” and create “a second death toll throughout the developing world.”

Surely after such an event, global leaders would produce a strong global system to ensure nuclear security. There is no reason to wait for a catastrophe to build such a system.

The conventional wisdom is that domestic regulations, U.N. Security Council resolutions, G-8 initiatives, I.A.E.A. activities and other voluntary efforts will prevent nuclear terrorism. But existing global arrangements for nuclear security lack uniformity and coherence.

There are no globally agreed standards for effectively securing nuclear material. There is no obligation to follow the voluntary standards that do exist and no institution, not even the I.A.E.A., with a mandate to evaluate nuclear security performance.

This patchwork approach provides the appearance of dealing with nuclear security; the reality is there are gaps through which a determined terrorist group could drive one or more nuclear devices.

Obama’s initiative in launching the nuclear security summit process in Washington in 2010 helped focus high-level attention on nuclear security issues. Unfortunately, the actions produced by the 2010 Washington Summit and that are planned for the upcoming Seoul Summit are voluntary actions that are useful, but not sufficient to create an effective global nuclear security regime.

The world cannot afford to wait for the patchwork of nuclear security arrangements to fail before they are strengthened. Instead, we need a system based on a global framework convention on nuclear security that would fill the gaps in existing voluntary arrangements. This framework convention would commit states to an effective

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standard of nuclear security practices, incorporate relevant existing international agreements, and give the I.A.E.A. the mandate to support nuclear security by evaluating whether states are meeting their nuclear security obligations and providing assistance to those states that need help in doing so.

Nuclear terrorism is a real and present danger for all states, not just a few. Preventing it is an achievable goal. The current focus on nuclear security through voluntary actions, however, is not commensurate with either the risk or consequences of nuclear terrorism. This must be rectified. If the Seoul Nuclear Security Summit makes this a priority, there can be an effective global nuclear security regime in place before this decade ends.

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<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/16/opinion/nuclear-terrorism-a-clear-danger.html>

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National Post – Ontario, Canada

OPINION/Editorial

Iran's Mullahs Aren't Interested in 'Deterrence'

National Post

March 16, 2012

In a column published in the Washington Post on Thursday, Fareed Zakaria grants that the Iranian nuclear program would be an unpleasant thing for the world to live with. But, he concludes, if Iran does build the bomb, the mullahs can be boxed in with a Cold War-style strategy of deterrence.

"The U.S. effort, in collaboration with almost the entire international community, to prevent [Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon] is the right policy," Mr. Zakaria wrote on March 15. "But were Tehran to persist, were its regime to accept the global isolation and crippling costs that would come from its decision, a robust policy of containment and deterrence would work toward Iran as it did against Stalin's Soviet Union, Mao's China, Kim Jong Il's North Korea and the Pakistani military."

Mr. Zakaria is correct to note that the deterrent effect of nuclear weapons helped keep the Cold War from turning hot. But nuclear deterrence between the United States and the U.S.S.R. was a stabilizing influence only because America's sole possession of the bomb between 1945 and 1949 was itself destabilizing: Fear of American atomic power motivated the Soviet Union to keep an enormous ground army in eastern and central Europe after the Second World War ended. Once both sides were fielding atomic weapons, and effective means of delivering them, control of Europe became less important than sheer national survival: Each side knew that the other side possessed the power to destroy not merely Paris and Berlin, but Moscow and Washington, and all points in between.

Likewise has the Pakistani arsenal proven a counterbalance to Indian superiority - numerical, military and economic. Pakistan itself is a ramshackle entity full of Islamists and regional separatist movements, and its scientists (A.Q. Khan, in particular) have been a leading source of illicit nuclear proliferation. But insofar as Pakistani-Indian relations go, the doctrine of mutually assured destruction has helped prevent a full-blown conventional war between the two powers (though, of course, Pakistani proxies do continue to target India through terrorism, as with the 2008 Mumbai attacks).

Iran would be in a roughly analogous situation if it were the case that it was facing an existential threat from a nuclear-armed neighbour - say, Iraq or Israel. But Iraq's WMD program (such as it was) was extinguished along with Saddam Hussein. As for Israel, the antagonism between Iran and the Jewish state is almost exclusively a product of Iran's nuclear program itself, and the many Iranian threats to annihilate the Jewish state that have

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accompanied it. Israel and Iran share no border, have no territorial disputes and pose no threat of invading one another with conventional forces. While the two nations do come into strategic conflict in Lebanon and Gaza, that is only thanks to Iran's support of groups pledged to Israel's destruction.

In other words, it cannot be said that Iranian nukes would serve to "stabilize" a pre-existing conflict between two mutually antagonistic powers, such as was the case in the Cold War, and the conflict between India and Pakistan. Rather, Iranian nukes would serve to empower a theocratic dictatorship infected with an (unrequited) hatred of a tiny state in the same neighbourhood. If Iran's nuclear program ended tomorrow, so would any threat of Israeli or American air raids.

Unlike the United States, U.S.S.R., India, China, Pakistan or Israel, Iran is not building a bomb in order to negate an enemy's conventional military advantage, real or perceived. America feared the Red Army. The Soviets feared the U.S. Air Force. China feared both the Soviets and America. India feared China. Pakistan feared India. And Israel feared everyone. There's an argument to be made that Iran had good reason to think it needed nukes in 2003, when U.S.-or NATOled armies had toppled the regimes on either side of it in Iraq and Afghanistan. But a lot has changed since then.

Israel already has accepted the presence of heavily armed Iranian proxies on its border. An Iranian bomb would be something new and more menacing, and would radically reshape the Middle East, making it more unstable and therefore more dangerous. It likely would cause Arab regimes to build their own nukes - including regimes that, like Iran, are ruled by Islamists. Addled as some Islamist leaders are by dreams of martyrdom and heavenly virgins, it is not impossible to imagine that one or more of these regimes - Iran included - could launch a nuclear attack, even under the full knowledge that they would be destroyed in return.

The concept of "deterrence" doesn't work on those who want instability instead of stability, war instead of peace, and who seek their reward in the next world instead of this one. Of all people, Fareed Zakaria, who styles himself a savvy observer of Asia and the Middle East, should understand that.

<http://www.nationalpost.com/opinion/Iran+mullahs+aren+interested+deterrence/6310268/story.html>

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