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MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

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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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Press TV – Iran

‘P5+1 Must Respect Iran's N-Capability to Avoid Future Losses’

Sunday, March 18, 2012

A senior Iranian lawmaker has called on six world nuclear powers to acknowledge Iran’s capabilities in nuclear energy technology and spare themselves from potential future losses.

Head of Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee Alaeddin Boroujerdi told IRNA on Sunday that the United States and its allies have seen in recent months Iranian scientists produce the required fuel for the country's nuclear power plants, and fuel Tehran research reactor with indigenous 20-percent-enriched rods to yield radio drugs for the treatment of 800,000 patients.

He added that the key message of such achievements is that the Islamic Republic of Iran has fully mastered nuclear know-how, and that the P5+1 group - comprising Britain, China, France, Russia, the United States and Germany - will incur heavy losses if it refuses to accept the reality of Iran's capabilities.

Boroujerdi also stressed that Iran would make absolutely no concessions on its nuclear energy program.

The Iranian legislator called on nuclear powers to avoid the policy of confrontation with respect to Iran's nuclear energy program, and embark on constructive interactions with Tehran.

"Majlis lawmakers expect the Iranian nuclear negotiating team to change the situation, to obtain the cancellation of (UN) resolutions on Iran, and that the Iranian nuclear issue is taken from the Security Council and put back before the International Atomic Energy Agency board of governors," Boroujerdi pointed out.

He also reaffirmed Tehran’s determination to enter negotiations with the P5+1 only within the framework of its proposed package to discuss various issues, including regional crises, terrorism, narcotics and energy.

On February 15, Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Saeed Jalili sent a letter to Ashton saying Iran is ready to restart negotiations over its nuclear energy program with the P5+1 -- Britain, China, France, Russia, the US plus Germany.

On March 8, the P5+1 also announced its readiness to resume multifaceted talks.

Iran and the P5+1 held two rounds of multifaceted talks in Geneva in December 2010 and in the Turkish city of Istanbul in January 2011.

While Tehran says it is ready to continue talks based on common grounds, it has stressed that it will not give up any of its rights.

Jalili added that he welcomes Ashton’s position on respecting Iran's right to use peaceful nuclear energy according to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The US, Israel and some of their allies accuse Tehran of pursuing military objectives in its nuclear energy program.

Iran has refuted the allegations, arguing that as a signatory to the NPT and a member of the IAEA, Tehran is entitled to the peaceful use of nuclear technology.

<http://presstv.com/detail/232291.html>

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Ha’aretz Daily – Israel

19 March 2012

Ehud Barak to Sign Deal for Delivery of Sixth German-Made Submarine

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Germany will pay for a third of the deal, viewed as a major strategic agreement that will boost the Israeli navy's capabilities.

By Barak Ravid

Israel's Defense Minister Ehud Barak and his German counterpart Thomas de Maizière are scheduled to sign a deal in Berlin on Wednesday to supply the Israeli navy with a with a sixth German-made submarine. The German government will pay for a third of the deal, amounting to 135 million euro.

An Israeli official said that the deal has significant strategic significance for Israel's security.

The German parliament approved the agreement a few months ago after three years of negotiations. The parliament approved the deal only after Israel released the Palestinians tax money which it froze after UNESCO admitted the Palestinians as a member state.

According to the Israeli official, Barak will visit Germany on Tuesday and hold a series of meetings with Defense Minister de Maizière, Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle and German Chancellor Angela Merkel's National Security Adviser Christoph Heusgen.

The signing ceremony will be held on Wednesday, attended also by the former Israeli ambassador to Germany, Yoram Ben Zeev, who has worked intensely over the past three years to promote the submarine deal. The new ambassador to Germany, veteran diplomat Yaakov Hadas, will also attend the ceremony. Hadas presented his credentials last week.

Israel's submarine fleet, which numbers three German-made Dolphin vessels, is the navy's long-range strategic arm. The German government financed most of the costs of the first three submarines.

According to foreign reports, the submarines are equipped with cruise missiles which have a range of 1,500 kilometers and can carry nuclear warheads. According to those reports, the submarine fleet enables Israel to deliver a "second strike" in the case of a nuclear attack. The fleet also allows Israel to carry out intelligence-gathering missions far from its borders and to defend its territorial waters.

The construction of the fifth and sixths submarines in the German city of Kiel is almost complete, and they are scheduled to be delivered to the Israeli navy in 2013 and 2014 respectively. The two vessels are equipped with state-of-the-art systems that enable them to remain underwater for a longer period of time. A sixth submarine, scheduled to be delivered to Israel at least four years from now, will be even more advanced.

<http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/ehud-barak-to-sign-deal-for-delivery-of-sixth-german-made-submarine-1.419577>

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Press TV – Iran

Israel Intelligence Agrees Iran Is Not After N-Bomb: Report

Monday, March 19, 2012

Despite their saber-rattling, Israeli officials have generally accepted the US intelligence assessment that Tehran is not building a nuclear bomb, a report says.

The Associated Press report said Sunday that although Israeli leaders have been charging for years that Iran is trying to build nuclear weapons, their officials have accepted the more nuanced American view.

The US Intelligence Community has said in frequent reports, the latest of which was published in February, that there is no hard evidence showing Iran has decided to build a nuclear bomb.

The report added that several senior Israeli officials, who spoke to AP in recent days clearly, said Israel has come around to the US view that no final decision to build a bomb has been made by Iran.



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The officials, who are privy to Israeli intelligence, added that this is the prevailing view in the Israeli intelligence community.

On March 18, *The New York Times* published a report quoting a former top US intelligence official as saying that both Washington and Tel Aviv have reached a consensus over the peaceful nature of Tehran's nuclear energy program.

"There is not a lot of dispute between the US and Israeli intelligence communities on the fact" that Iran has not deviated from its nuclear energy program.

The Los Angeles Times reported on February 23rd that 16 US intelligence agencies agree Tehran was not seeking to build nuclear weapons.

The "highly classified" intelligence assessment was reportedly circulated among US policymakers early last year.

The US and Israel have been escalating their war rhetoric against Iran in recent months, claiming that there are diversions in the country's nuclear energy program towards a military one.

Tehran refutes such claims, saying that as a member of International Atomic Energy Agency and signatory to Non-Proliferation Treaty, it has every right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail/232450.html>

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Daily Star – Lebanon

Iran Will Produce Nuclear Weapons if Attacked: Russia

March 20, 2012

By Dmitry Zaks

MOSCOW: Russia warned Tuesday that Iran would have no option but to develop nuclear weapons if it came under attack from either the United States or Israel over its contested atomic programme.

"The CIA and other US officials admit they now have no information about the Iranian leadership taking the political decision to produce nuclear weapons," Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov told Moscow's Kommersant FM radio.

"But I am almost certain that such a decision will surely be taken after (any) strikes on Iran," Lavrov said.

The pre-recorded interview was aired shortly after Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei warned that his country was ready to strike back against either the United States or Israel "at the same level as they attack us".

Moscow has close military and commercial ties with Tehran and has only grudgingly backed four rounds of UN Security Council sanctions over Iran's suspected nuclear weapons development drive.

But Lavrov argued that Russia was not defending an ally but trying to avert a broader conflict or possible nuclear arms race from breaking out in the region.

He added that Israel's threats against Iran were only pushing other nations on poor terms with the West to consider pursuing their own nuclear weapon drives.

"This happening... around Iran are forcing a lot of Third World countries to pause and realise that if you have a nuclear bomb, no one will really bother you.

"You might get some light sanctions, but people will always coddle you, they will court you and try to convince you of things," Lavrov said.

He particularly raised the case of North Korea and its decision to both develop and test nuclear weapons -- a move that was never followed by a threat of an attack from the United States.

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"But we are all behaving responsibly" toward North Korea, said Lavrov.

"We are not proposing to bomb North Korea. We are all insisting on the immediate resumption of negotiations and looking for ways to make these negotiations productive."

He also repeated arguments from some Western military analysts saying that strikes could only set back but not permanently destroy any weapons programme Iran might have today.

"Scientists of almost all nations... agree that strikes against Iran can slow its nuclear programme. But do away with it, close it, eliminate it -- never."

Lavrov's comments represented one of Russia's most impassioned arguments to date against the start of another war on its southern periphery.

Russia had previously cautioned that such a campaign could lead to a mass flood of refugees to neighbouring countries like Azerbaijan. It has also warned of the dangers of possible reprisal attack from Iran.

But Lavrov appeared ready to drop that argument on Tuesday by noting that an attack against Israel could also endanger the lives of Palestinians.

"I am absolutely convinced that Iran will never decide to do this, if only because... a threat to destroy Israel will also destroy Palestine," he said.

He also went out of his way to strongly criticise Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad for repeatedly threatening to destroy the Jewish state.

"This is completely unacceptable... and we categorically condemn it," Lavrov said. "It is simply uncivilised and unworthy of a country as ancient as Iran."

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2012/Mar-20/167379-iran-will-produce-nuclear-weapons-if-attacked-russia.ashx#axzz1phrcbTaC>

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Yonhap News – South Korea

March 17, 2012

U.S. Says Food Aid 'Hard to Imagine' if N.K. Launches Satellite

WASHINGTON, March 16 (Yonhap) -- The U.S. State Department said Friday it will be "very hard to imagine" giving planned food aid to North Korea if the communist regime goes ahead with its plan to launch a satellite, a move seen as a disguise for a missile test.

"Were we to have a launch, it would create, obviously, tensions," department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said at a press briefing. "And that would make the implementation of any kind of a nutritional agreement quite difficult."

North Korea said earlier in the day that it will launch an earth observation satellite aboard a long-range rocket next month. The announcement came just weeks after Pyongyang 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 U.S.

"If they were to go forward with this launch, it's very hard to imagine how we would be able to move forward with a regime whose word we have no confidence in and who has egregiously violated its international commitments," Nuland said, referring to United Nations Security Council resolutions banning North Korea from using its ballistic missile program.

The North's Korean Committee for Space Technology said Unha-3 rocket carrying Kwangmyongsong-3 will blast off from its satellite launching station in North Pyongan Province between April 12 and 16 "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.

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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.

At the Pentagon, spokesman Navy Capt. John Kirby said the launch would be considered "destabilizing behavior" and called on Pyongyang to abide by its obligations under the U.N. resolutions.

He also stressed Washington's commitment to its alliance with Seoul.

"We continue to operate every day with our South Korean counterparts and we hold firmly to our alliance obligations and to security on the Korean Peninsula. That's not going to change."

About 28,500 U.S. troops are stationed in South Korea as a deterrent to North Korea, as a legacy of the 1950-53 Korean War that ended in a truce.

Meanwhile, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon issued a statement urging North Korea to "reconsider its decision in line with its recent undertaking to refrain from long-range missile launches."

The statement, attributed to Ban's spokesperson, said the secretary-general is "seriously concerned" by the North's announcement.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2012/03/17/43/0401000000AEN20120317001100315F.HTML>

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Korea Herald – South Korea

March 18, 2012

Pyongyang's Rocket Plans a Negotiations Tactic

By Choi He-suk

Pyongyang's announcement of a "satellite" launch on Friday was likely aimed at bolstering its bargaining position in future talks with Washington.

On Friday, Pyongyang's Korean Committee for Space Technology announced that a Unha-3 rocket carrying the Kwangmyongsong-3 satellite will blast off from the launching station in North Pyongan Province between April 12 and 16.

According to Pyongyang, the launch is scheduled to mark the centennial of its founder Kim Il-sung, who is referred to as "Kwangmyongsong" meaning "bright star." The deceased founder of North Korea is said to have been born on April 15, which is celebrated as one of the most important holidays in North Korea.

The announcement comes only two weeks after Pyongyang agreed to a moratorium on missile and nuclear tests and freeze uranium enrichment in exchange for 240,000 tons of food aid from the U.S.

As such, observers here say that Pyongyang may be following a long-established pattern of engaging in dialogue then following with a provocation.

On June 15, 1999, the navies of the two Koreas engaged in the first fire fight since the end of the Korean War in 1953. The incident occurred a week before vice ministerial-level talks between the two Koreas.

Three years later on June 29, 2002, the two navies once again clashed in the West Sea. As with the 1999 incident, the skirmish took place while Pyongyang was engaged in diplomatic talks. On April 30, Pyongyang had agreed with Washington to hold bilateral talks. Earlier the same month, its late leader Kim Jong-il had met with South Korea's former Unification Minister Lim Dong-won and agreed to reestablish relations with Seoul.

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In 2009, when North Korea launched the Kwangmyongsong-2 satellite, Pyongyang and Seoul were negotiating matters regarding the Gaeseong Industrial Park. Seoul and Washington had rejected the claims that the launch was part of a peaceful space program, and concluded that Pyongyang was testing ballistic missile technologies.

According to Dongguk University assistant professor of North Korean Studies Kim Yong-hyun, the pattern is part of Pyongyang's attempts to strengthen its negotiating power.

He said that the planned launch may be another example of Pyongyang's "brinkmanship," a ploy Pyongyang has employed in the past to gain the upper hand in negotiations.

In addition to strengthening its hand in diplomatic talks, the launch may also be an attempt to influence the upcoming general elections in South Korea.

In recent years, North Korean provocations have sometimes resulted in the public voting for progressive parties that take a softer approach to North Korea, as seen in the 2010 local elections when the opposition parties emphasized the need for peace after the sinking of the South Korean warship Cheonan in March of that year.

According to reports, Pyongyang's new leader Kim Jong-un is said in January to have ordered pro-North Korean elements in the South to "give the traitors (conservatives) a decisive defeat in this year's general and presidential elections."

While the international community has condemned the plans, Pyongyang claims that the rocket launch will be for "peaceful purposes," and that it will be an important step "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."

However, the location of and the equipment installed at the facility Pyongyang is likely to launch the rocket from are fueling doubts about such claims.

The facility from which the rocket will be launched in April is considered likely to be the facility in Dongchang-ri in North Pyongan Province on the western side of North Korea. Previously North Korea had launched rockets from the Musudan-ri facility on the eastern side of the peninsula.

The Dongchang-ri facility has a larger launch tower than the facility in Musudan-ri, allowing larger rockets including intercontinental ballistic missiles to be fired.

In addition, Dongchang-ri's proximity to the Yongbyon nuclear complex is also raising concerns that the new facility allows nuclear materials to be transported more easily should Pyongyang succeed in developing a nuclear warhead.

The Dongchang-ri facility is located 70 kilometers away from the Yongbyon complex, while the Musudan-ri facility is about 300 kilometers away from the nuclear complex.

<http://www.koreaherald.com/national/Detail.jsp?newsMLId=20120318000276>

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Korea Herald – South Korea

N. Korea Says Will Invite Foreign Experts to Observe Satellite Launch

March 18, 2012

North Korea said Saturday it would invite foreign experts and journalists to observe a satellite launch which has sparked widespread condemnation and US threats that it could jeopardise food aid.

The Korean Committee for Space Technology "will invite experienced foreign experts on space science and technology and journalists" to observe the blast-off next month, the official news agency said.

The North announced Friday it would launch a long-range rocket carrying the satellite between April 12-16 to mark the 100th anniversary of the birth of its founding president Kim Il-Sung.



The United States, Japan, South Korea and the EU said the plan, announced just 16 days after Pyongyang agreed to suspend long-range missile tests in return for the US food aid, would breach a UN ban imposed after previous missile launches.

Pyongyang insists the programme is part of peaceful space research, while the US and other nations see it as a disguised missile test.

UN Security Council resolution 1874, passed after the North's missile launch and nuclear test in 2009, bans the country from carrying out any ballistic missile launches for any purpose.

The North's official news agency said it had told the International Civil Aviation Organisation, the International Maritime Organisation, the International Telecommunication Union and other bodies about the upcoming launch.

The main newspaper Rodong Sinmun said the rocket will take a "safer" flight path compared to previous launches that strayed into Japanese airspace.

The new flight orbit showcased the country's advancing "technological prowess" and "economic power", Professor Ko Yong-Hae from the Kim Il-Sung University wrote in the paper published Saturday.

Ko said a "safe flight orbit has been chosen so that carrier rocket debris to be generated during the flight would not have any impact on neighbouring countries".

The North's announcement appeared to jeopardise a February 29 agreement with the United States, which had raised hopes of eased tensions under new leader Kim Jong-Un.

The North agreed to suspend its uranium enrichment programme, along with long-range missile launches and nuclear tests, in return for 240,000 tonnes of much-needed US food aid.

The US State Department called the proposed launch "highly provocative" and a threat to regional security.

And it voiced doubt over whether it could move ahead with providing the food aid if Pyongyang followed through with its threat.

"Were we to have a launch, it would create obviously tensions and that would make the implementation of any kind of nutritional agreement quite difficult," State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said.

Nuland said that US diplomats told their North Korean counterparts prior to the February 29 agreement that a missile launch would be a "deal breaker".

South Korea and Japan condemned the plan. Russia also voiced concern and UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon called on North Korea not to go ahead.

EU foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton said she was "deeply concerned" and called on the North to confirm that it will refrain from the launch "as a matter of urgency".

Even China, the North's closest ally, expressed concern.

Vice foreign minister Zhang Zhijun met Ji Jae-Ryong, Pyongyang's ambassador, on Friday to express Beijing's worries, the official Xinhua news agency said.

"We sincerely hope parties concerned stay calm and exercise restraint," Zhang was quoted as saying.

The North's last long-range rocket launch on April 5, 2009, also purportedly to put a satellite into orbit, brought UN Security Council condemnation and tightened sanctions.

Pyongyang quit six-party nuclear disarmament talks in protest at the censure and conducted its second atomic weapons test the following month.



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The North insists its satellite launches are for peaceful scientific purposes while the US and other nations see them as a pretext for missile tests.

The North has said a Unha-3 rocket will launch a home-built polar-orbiting earth observation satellite. Repeating its arguments of 2009, it said such satellites assist economic development and are in line with the peaceful use of space.

The launch "will greatly encourage the army and people... in the building of a thriving nation", it added, as it prepares a mass celebration for the April 15 centenary and as the young Kim tries to burnish his image as a strong leader.

The North said the rocket would be launched southward from a new site it has been developing at Tongchang-ri on the northwest tip of the country.

The Unha-3 is known outside the North as the Taepodong-3 and is theoretically capable of reaching US territory, said Baek Seung-Joo of the Korea Institute for Defence Analyses.

<http://www.koreaherald.com/national/Detail.jsp?newsMLId=20120318000043>

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Space Daily.com

N. Korea Seeking to Develop Nuclear Missile: Seoul

By Staff Writers

Seoul (AFP) March 19, 2012

South Korea accused North Korea Monday of trying to develop a nuclear-armed missile through a satellite launch next month, after Pyongyang dismissed international calls to abandon the exercise.

"Our government defines North Korea's so-called working satellite launch plan as a grave provocation to develop a long-distance delivery means for nuclear weapons by using ballistic missile technology," said presidential spokesman Park Jeong-Ha.

The North announced Friday it would launch a long-range rocket between April 12 and 16 to put a satellite into orbit for peaceful purposes.

The United States and other nations see the exercise as a thinly veiled long-range missile test, which would breach a United Nations ban and violate last month's denuclearisation deal with Washington.

The North is thought to have enough plutonium for perhaps six to eight nuclear weapons, but it is unclear whether it can yet build an atomic warhead for a missile.

The launch is timed to coincide with mass celebrations marking the 100th anniversary of the birth of founding president Kim Il-Sung.

It will come just after an April 11 election in which the South's ruling conservative party -- bitterly opposed by Pyongyang -- seeks to retain parliamentary control.

The issue could also overshadow next week's Seoul nuclear security summit, to be attended by US President Barack Obama and other world leaders.

Seoul said it would work closely with the United States, Japan, China, Russia and the European Union to handle the issue during the summit, the biggest-ever diplomatic gathering in the South.

The North on Sunday rejected international protests, calling the criticism "a base move... to encroach upon our sovereignty".

On Monday official news agency KCNA described Seoul's accusation over the launch as "an odd smear campaign" and said the satellite "is an issue fundamentally different from that of a long-range missile".

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The launch by the impoverished but nuclear-armed state seems likely to kill off a February 29 agreement with Washington, which had raised hopes of eased tensions under young new leader Kim Jong-Un.

The North agreed to suspend its uranium enrichment programme, along with long-range missile launches and nuclear tests, in return for 240,000 tonnes of much-needed US food aid.

It maintains that a satellite launch is not a missile test.

The US, Japan, Russia and UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon have called for a change of heart and even China, the North's closest ally, expressed concern.

On Monday US State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland voiced hope the North would call off the launch, noting that the five other nations that had been involved in six-party nuclear disarmament talks were united.

"We were heartened that every single one of the six-party talks participants made clear that they think this would be an extremely bad idea and a violation of UN Security Council resolutions," she said.

"We are hoping and expecting that (North Korea) will take that to heart."

The North's first nuclear test in October 2006 came three months after a long-range rocket launch.

Its most recent such launch on April 5, 2009, purportedly to put a satellite into orbit, brought UN Security Council condemnation and tightened sanctions.

The North quit the six-party nuclear disarmament talks -- with China, Japan, Russia, South Korea and the United States -- at the censure and conducted its second atomic weapons test in May 2009.

Some analysts see a similar scenario this time.

"Seen in the previous cases, North Korea has a pattern of conducting nuclear tests after missile tests," Yun Duk-Min, of the South's Institute for Foreign Affairs and National Security, told the Korea JoongAng Daily.

Seoul's defence ministry also suggested a nuclear test may follow the launch.

"We will thoroughly guard against potential additional military provocations or a nuclear test, as the North is highly likely to repeat its actions back in 2009 when it fired a long-range rocket," a spokesman told a briefing.

He said the South and its US ally would intensively monitor areas around Tongchang-ri, the North's new launch site in the extreme northwest.

The North said it has notified international aviation and maritime bodies of the flight path. Media reports said the first stage was projected to fall about 140 kilometres (87 miles) off the South Korean coast, in international waters between China and the South.

The second stage was tipped to splash down 190 km east of the Philippines.

http://www.spacedaily.com/reports/N_Korea_seeking_to_develop_nuclear_missile_Seoul_999.html

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Wall Street Journal

March 19, 2012

Japan Considers Downing Planned North Korea Missile

By KELLY OLSEN

TOKYO—Japan's Defense Minister Naoki Tanaka said he would consider ordering the country's military to shoot down a North Korean missile if it poses a danger to Japan, after Pyongyang said last week it plans to launch a rocket to send a

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satellite into space in April. South Korea said such a launch would be a "grave provocation" aimed at developing the ability to deliver a nuclear weapon via a long-distance missile.

"I am considering ordering measures to destroy [any] ballistic missile, with the approval of the prime minister," Mr. Tanaka said Monday in response to a question in parliament by Aiko Shimajiri, an opposition party lawmaker from the southern island prefecture of Okinawa.

Mr. Tanaka said such a decision would be carried out in line with the law governing the Self Defense Forces, Japan's military, but he added that it remains unclear whether North Korea will launch a rocket in mid-April and that Japan is studying the matter.

Japan was on high alert in April 2009 when North Korea launched a rocket that Pyongyang said was aimed at putting a satellite into orbit, but Tokyo took no action to try to bring it down as it was deemed to pose no danger.

North Korea said last week the latest rocket will be launched in a southerly direction—rather than an easterly one as in 2009—which could take it over the Okinawan archipelago stretching from the Japanese mainland toward Taiwan.

Mr. Tanaka said Japan could deploy PAC-3 missile interceptors and Aegis ships to be ready if the rocket posed any danger to Japanese territory, saying the move could be similar to the response in 2009.

"If it is decided that there is a danger, we are preparing to take these procedures," Mr. Tanaka said, apparently referring to the decision-making process required for any attempt to shoot down the missile.

Japan's military has never tried to shoot down an incoming missile, although it has practiced such action. Experts say achieving success isn't impossible, but it isn't easy and would depend on numerous factors, such as how early the missile could be tracked.

Though North Korea said the 2009 launch was a space rocket, experts said it was actually a ballistic missile and that no satellite was ever detected in space. North Korea said the launch was successful and that a satellite was deployed. North Korea also launched a missile that flew over Japan in 1998.

Park Jeong-ha, spokesman for South Korean President Lee Myung-bak, said Pyongyang was hiding its true intentions.

"The government defines the North Korean working satellite-launch plan as a grave provocation to develop a long-distance means for delivering nuclear weapons by using ballistic missile technology," Mr. Park said in Seoul. He added that his country was studying countermeasures and would discuss the issue with the U.S., Japan, China, Russia and the European Union during a global Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul next week.

North Korea announced Friday the launch would take place sometime about the time the country celebrates the 100th anniversary of the birth of its founder, Kim Il Sung, on April 15. Pyongyang has drawn international criticism as well as various economic and other sanctions in recent years for its nuclear and missile tests.

Soo-ah Shin in Seoul contributed to this article.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304636404577290663278213638.html>

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Korea Times – South Korea

March 20, 2012

North's Mixed Signals could Reveal Internal Differences

By Kim Young-jin

North Korea's mixed moves over a nuclear deal with the United States could reflect competing views within the communist state's fledgling regime, an expert said Tuesday.



USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER
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MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

Pyongyang last week announced it would launch a long-range rocket in mid-April to mark the anniversary of its founder Kim Il-sung, a move that Washington said would breach a recent agreement to provide food aid to the North in exchange for nuclear concessions.

But the North Korean regime lead by Kim Jong-un, who has taken over after the death of Kim Jong-il, his father, has also invited U.N. nuclear inspectors back into the country, a key part of the U.S. deal.

Yoo Ho-yeol, a North Korea expert at Korea University, the moves could reflect differing views between soft and hard-liners within the regime.

“There could be some kind of conflict between the North’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who want to make progress with the United States and the military which is pushing for the rocket launch which was probably already planned,” he said.

“They seem to have decided in favor of the launch and are now rationalizing it as a matter of sovereignty.”

Pyongyang has drawn heavy criticism for the plan, which it says intends to put a satellite into orbit for scientific purposes. Seoul believes it is a cover for a long-range missile test using the same technology that would advance the North’s nuclear weapons program.

Many analysts have connected the launch test to Kim Jong-un’s need to consolidate his power, saying the regime will use it to show progress in the impoverished country’s drive to modernize. Pyongyang has said it will emerge as a “strong and prosperous” country this year.

While most say the North appears to be transitioning smoothly in the aftermath of Kim Jong-il’s death in December, questions still linger over the leadership of Kim Jong-un, who is thought to be only in his late twenties.

Bahng Tae-seop, an analyst with the Samsung Economic Research Institute, said while he did not believe a “severe cleavage” had emerged, the moves reflected two consistent voices emanating from the North.

“This is typical of Pyongyang’s two-track policy. On one hand, the hardliners are saying we need to protect the country and become ‘strong and prosperous.’ On the other, they are saying ‘We can be more flexible.’”

The North last month agreed to place a moratorium on missile and nuclear tests and suspend its uranium enrichment at Yongbyon in exchange for 240,000 tons of U.S. aid, which would come in the form of high protein biscuits and other items targeting high-risk groups such as children.

Other observers speculated the North could be attempting to raise the stakes for negotiations with the rocket launch, saying that Washington pulling away from the deal could make it look as if it were failing to live up to its stance that humanitarian assistance should be apolitical.

Other theories include Pyongyang perhaps planning to back out of the launch, making the regime look suddenly reasonable after years of isolation.

http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2012/03/116_107327.html

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Wall Street Journal

March 20, 2012

China Seeks Peacemaker Role on North Korea

By ANDREW BROWNE in Beijing and EVAN RAMSTAD in Busan, South Korea

China again expressed its "concerns and worries" over rocket-launch plans announced by North Korea ahead of an international nuclear summit in Seoul, as Beijing seeks to portray itself as a peacemaker amid rising pressure on Pyongyang from the U.S. and its allies.

Issue No. 990, 20 March 2012

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But North Korea's chief nuclear negotiator warned during a visit to Beijing against any attempt to interfere with the launch, a day after Japan's defense minister said he would consider shooting down a North Korean missile if it poses a danger to that country.

"The satellite launch is, in every aspect, a part of North Korea's rights for a peaceful space development [program]," Ri Yong Ho, the Pyongyang official, told Chinese state-run television on Monday, in an interview that aired Tuesday. He was emerging from a Monday night meeting with Chinese envoy Wu Dawei.

"Regarding the planned peaceful satellite launch, should others apply a double standard or inappropriately interfere with our rights, we would have no choice but to respond," Mr. Ri said, without elaborating.

North Korea said last week that it would launch a satellite-bearing rocket that could take it over Japan's Okinawan archipelago. Experts point to a similar launch in 2009 that they say was actually a ballistic missile, noting no satellite was ever detected in space. In a dispatch, Pyongyang's Korean Central News Agency said: "The launch of the working satellite is an issue fundamentally different from that of a long-range missile."

The launch plans mark a setback to apparent progress in U.S. efforts to negotiate a halt to North Korea's nuclear ambitions after the death of dictator Kim Jong Il and the ascension of his son, Kim Jong Eun. The U.S. has said a launch would threaten a new deal reached Feb. 29 to deliver food aid in return for a North Korean nuclear moratorium. South Korea said such a launch would be a "grave provocation" aimed at developing the ability to deliver a nuclear weapon.

Mr. Ri insisted that Pyongyang's satellite launch didn't contravene its nuclear deal with Washington. "Our stance is to proceed with the U.S.-North Korea agreement reached on Feb. 29," he said.

A senior Chinese Foreign Ministry official on Tuesday reiterated Beijing's worries over the launch, first expressed on Friday. It is "urgent for relevant parties to remain calm and prevent the situation from escalating and going out of control," Luo Zhaohui, the director-general of the ministry's Department of Asian Affairs, told a news briefing. He repeated a Foreign Ministry statement that China has "expressed its worries and concerns."

But China's Assistant Foreign Minister Ma Zhaoxu told the same briefing that the issue of North Korea and its satellite launch would not be on the agenda at the global nuclear-security summit in Seoul next week. Chinese President Hu Jintao will attend the summit along with other world leaders. Officials in Seoul say North Korea's nuclear ambitions and weapons program will be discussed on the sidelines of the summit.

China has at times expressed reservations about North Korea's weapons programs and aggression against South Korea but has been careful to avoid moves that could destabilize the country. China is the isolated country's major benefactor and its largest trading partner.

Siegfried Hecker, a nuclear scientist based at Stanford University who has visited North Korea's nuclear facilities seven times, said at a conference in Busan, South Korea, on Tuesday that China "holds the key to the price" North Korea will pay if it moves forward with its weapons pursuit. "The U.S. and South Korea hold the key to benefits they will get" for ending it, he added.

Mr. Hecker, who was shown a uranium enrichment facility when he last visited the North in November 2010, said the rocket launch "makes a mockery" of the Feb. 29 agreement.

Min-Jeong Lee contributed to this article.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303812904577293240010681050.html>

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Korea Times – South Korea

March 20, 2012

N. Korea Invites IAEA, Presses on with US Deal

Issue No. 990, 20 March 2012

*United States Air Force Counterproliferation Research & Education | Maxwell AFB, Montgomery AL
Phone: 334.953.7538 | Fax: 334.953.7530*



By Kim Young-jin

North Korea announced Monday it had invited the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) back into the country as part of an agreement with the United States, despite Washington's warning that a long-range rocket launch planned by the Stalinist state could stifle the deal.

Concern has soared since the North announced the launch, which it asserts is to put a satellite into orbit, but is widely seen as cover for a long-range missile test using the same technology.

Washington says the move would be a "deal breaker" after the North agreed last month to nuclear concessions including an IAEA-monitored shutdown of its uranium enrichment activities at Yongbyon in exchange for nutritional assistance. It would also breach U.N. Security Council sanctions.

The deal included a moratorium by Pyongyang on missile and nuclear tests.

News of the IAEA invitation came from North Korea's chief nuclear envoy Ri Yong-ho, who maintained the launch should be handled separately from the deal.

"In order to implement the agreement, we've sent a letter of invitation to the IAEA to send inspectors to our country," he said after talks with its main ally China in Beijing.

The move comes amid soaring international concern over the launch announced last Friday. Japan, Russia and other nations have called for the North to drop the plan, while China has expressed concern. Seoul has called it a "grave provocation" aimed at developing a long-range ballistic missile capable of delivering nuclear warheads.

In Washington, State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said any invitation of the IAEA would be beneficial, but stressed the administration's stance against the launch.

"It doesn't change the fact that we would consider a satellite launch a violation not only of their U.N. obligations but of the commitments they made to us," she told reporters.

The invitation, later confirmed by an IAEA spokesperson, comes three years after the North expelled the agency before restarting its nuclear activities at the site.

The North's moves have thrown diplomatic efforts to curb the growth of its nuclear program into deep limbo. The deal was said to be paving the way for resumption of six-party denuclearization talks that include the two Koreas, the United States, Japan, Russia and China.

Analysts say the rocket launch is tied to Pyongyang's campaign to consolidate power for leader Kim Jong-un, who took over as leader after the death of his father Kim Jong-il. It is slated to take place around April 15, the 100th anniversary of the birth of country founder Kim Il-sung, the current leader's grandfather.

Details on the IAEA invitation including what access the experts would be given were not immediately available.

The North is believed to have more than 1,000 missiles including intermediate range missiles capable of striking Japan as well as U.S. bases in the Pacific.

The launch would be Pyongyang's third announced attempt since 1998 to send a satellite into space aboard a long-range rocket.

Despite the North's repeated claims to an inherent right to the peaceful use of space, any testing of multi-stage rockets has been banned under U.N. Security Council Resolution 1874, which was put in place after the country's second nuclear test, in 2009.

Experts say North Korean engineers apply the learning that takes place during the launches to missile development.

http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2012/03/116_107329.html

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Xinhua News – China

KCNA: DPRK's Satellite Launch Not Contradictory to DPRK-U.S.

Agreement

March 20, 2012

PYONGYANG, March 19 (Xinhua) -- The Democratic People's Republic of Korea(DPRK) asserts that planned launch of Satellite Kwangmyongsong-3 not contradictory to DPRK-U.S. Agreement, the official news agency KCNA reported Monday.

It said that South Korea media, busy with "odd smear campaign" over the issue of DPRK's satellite launch, have claimed the Satellite Kwangmyongsong-3 is an inter-continental ballistic missile and a violation of the agreement reached at the DPRK-U.S. high-level talks on Feb. 29.

According to the KCNA, South Korean newspaper Dong-A Ilbo said that "the north reduced the DPRK-U.S. agreement to a scrap of paper in 15 days," and KBS (Korean Broadcasting Station)said "this showed the north's will to take initiative, while boosting its negotiating power."

The KCNA noted that the DPRK has already decided to put moratorium on nuclear test, long-range missile launch and uranium enrichment in Nyongbyon "while fruitful talks are under way and allow the IAEA to monitor it."

The DPRK's plan for satellite launch "poses no problem as it is prompted by its noble desire to put the country's science and technology on a higher level," it said, adding that it is an issue fundamentally different from that of a long-range missile.

The DPRK has asserted its legitimate right of launching satellites, manufactured by itself to mark the 100th birthday of late President Kim Il Sung, in mid-April.

Shortly after the DPRK announced the planned satellite launch, the United States said it will be hard to provide food aid if Pyongyang moves ahead with the launch.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2012-03/20/c_131476451.htm

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The Nation – Pakistan

Pakistani Nukes Safe under NCA, Says Gilani

By Online

March 18, 2012

ISLAMABAD - Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani was given a detailed presentation Saturday by senior officials of the Strategic Planning Division and Pakistan's Ambassador to China Masood Khan, who is also the chief negotiator on nuclear security, at the PM's House.

The meeting was also attended by Foreign Minister Hina Rabbani Khar, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Khalid Shameem Wayne, Lt-General (r) Khalid Kidwai, foreign secretary and others.

The Nuclear Security Summit is scheduled in Seoul from March 26 to 28. The PM said the world recognised that Pakistan had evolved excellent security arrangements for its nuclear assets under the auspices of the National Command Authority (NCA), which enjoyed full backing of the Parliament because it was created by an act of Parliament.



Gilani said the Seoul summit represented the continuity because he had earlier attended the event in Washington in April 2010, adding that it amounted to Pakistan's abiding commitment to its nuclear assets and civilian nuclear plants' safety and security.

Earlier, the prime minister was briefed about the technical dimensions of the safety and security of nuclear assets including the state of art training to the personnel deputed at the nuclear installations.

The meeting also discussed the initiatives to augment the security mechanism in the light of the Fukushima incident in Japan by adopting a new technology in the mechanism.

Masood Khan briefed the premier from diplomatic point and said Pakistan had played a major role in strengthening the mechanism of the IAEA, which had recognised the contributions. The ambassador said the Seoul forum would provide an excellent opportunity to project Pakistan as a responsible nuclear power state of the world.

<http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/islamabad/18-Mar-2012/pakistani-nukes-safe-under-nca-says-gilani>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

Bulava Missile in for More Tests

20 March 2012

A series of test launches for the Bulava intercontinental missile are planned for the summer, a source at the Russian Navy said on Tuesday.

Russian Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov said earlier in the day the Bulava will enter service in October.

It was not immediately clear how many launches will be conducted or whether their outcome could affect the plans to adopt the missile.

Russian experts have questioned how wise it is to adopt the troubled Bulava missile for service, suggesting it would cause more security problems than it would solve.

Military analyst Viktor Baranets said it was a "reckless" and "dangerous" move since the missile was underdeveloped.

"In its current form the missile could be even more dangerous for the [Russian] navy than for an enemy navy," he said.

President Dmitry Medvedev said in late December that the Bulava SLBM flight tests were completed and it will now be adopted for service with the Russian Navy.

Russia successfully test launched two Bulava missiles on December 23.

Only 11 of 18 or 19 test launches of the troubled Bulava have been officially declared successful.

However, some analysts suggest that in reality the number of failures is considerably higher. Russian military expert Pavel Felgenhauer said that of the Bulava's first 12 test launches, only one was entirely successful.

Despite several previous failures officially blamed on manufacturing faults, the Russian military has insisted that there is no alternative to the Bulava.

The Bulava (SS-NX-30) SLBM, developed by the Moscow Institute of Thermal Technology (since 1998), carries up to 10 MIRV warheads and has a range of over 8,000 kilometers (5,000 miles). The three-stage ballistic missile is designed for deployment on Borey-class nuclear submarines.

MOSCOW, March 20 (RIA Novosti)

http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20120320/172285922.html



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RT – Russia

Medvedev: Anti-Missile System to Counter US Shield by 2017

20 March 2012

The Russian president has ordered the military forces to be seriously re-equipped so that the country can counter the US missile defense system in Europe after it is deployed.

Dmitry Medvedev made this announcement at a Defense Ministry meeting in Moscow.

"We are not closing the doors for communication, but we really need to prepare ourselves to the change of situation. We need to be fully armed by 2017-2018 and could answer within the framework of my address made in November last year," Medvedev said.

The president was referring to a speech in which he made clear that Russia could make a disproportionate answer to the US missile defense – in the form of newer missiles that can easily penetrate the defense and repositioning of the strike forces so that the missile defense itself could be easily destroyed if such need arises.

Medvedev also said that the suggestions to participate in the missile defense program were not helpful in the case of the US-European plans as the system would still weaken Russia's military potential and tilt the strategic balance in the world.

After the president's speech at the roundtable, Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov announced that his ministry had already begun implementing measures in response to the missile defense plans.

"The situation with the US and NATO missile defense plans is not easy. The Defense Ministry has begun implementing military-technical measures approved by the Russian president," Serdyukov told a meeting of the Defense Ministry on Tuesday.

At the same time, the minister echoed the president in the readiness to continue the dialogue with foreign partners. The official said that Russia will be holding an international conference on missile defense in Moscow on May 3-4 and promised that the country's position will be further clarified at this meeting.

<http://rt.com/politics/orders-re-equipment-missile-defense-981/>

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ITAR-TASS – Russia

RVSN Rearms 10 Regiments with Topol-M, Yars Systems

20 March 2012

MOSCOW, March 20 (Itar-Tass) — Russia's Strategic Missile Forces (RVSN) have completed the re-equipment of 10 regiments with the state-of-the-art Topol-M and Yars missile systems, Russian Defence Minister Anatoly Serdyukov said at an expanded meeting of the ministry's Collegium on Tuesday.

"In the ground-based RVSN component, the rearmament of 10 regiments with the Topol-M and Yars strategic missile systems has been completed," he said. *"The share of advanced missile systems in the ground-based strategic nuclear forces has increased from 13 to 25 percent."*

The Topol-M is a cold-launched, three-stage, solid-propellant, silo-based or road-mobile intercontinental ballistic missile. Yars (RS-24) is a MIRV-equipped, thermonuclear intercontinental ballistic missile.

"The strategic nuclear forces still remain a reliable guarantor of deterring aggression," the minister said. *"Their required numerical strength and the three-component structure have been preserved,"* he added.



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<http://www.itar-tass.com/en/c154/370486.html>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

Russian Air Force Adopts New Cruise Missile

20 March 2012

MOSCOW, March 20 (RIA Novosti, Alexander Stelliferovsky)

A new cruise missile has entered service with the Russian Air Force's strategic long-range arms division, Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov said on Tuesday.

He did not provide any details, only saying it was an air-launched long range missile.

AF chief Col Gen Alexander Zelin previously said the new cruise missile was developed by the Takticheskoye Raketnoye Vooruzhenie (Tactical Missile) defense corporation and that its specifications were secret. He said the new missiles would also be installed in fifth-generation fighters.

Douglas Barrie, an air warfare analyst at the London-based International Institute of Strategic Studies, said the new weapon was likely to be "either the Kh-555 or Kh-101/102."

The Kh-555 is a new conventionally-armed variant of the Kh-55 nuclear-armed cruise missile, which has been in service since the 1984 on Tu-95 and Tu-160 bombers.

Kh-101 is a stealthy nuclear armed cruise-missile under development by the Raduga design bureau, along with a conventionally-armed variant (Kh-102). Globalsecurity.org claims the weapon was test-fired in October 1998. Some reports claim the weapon is itself a derivative of Kh-555.

Serdyukov also said Russia's fleet of Tu-160 Blackjack and Tu-95MS Bear strategic bombers will be modernized.

Defense Ministry spokesman Vladimir Drik earlier said the AF's strategic long-range arms division will receive more than 10 modernized Tu-160M Blackjack bombers by 2020.

The new bombers will be adapted to carry advanced cruise missiles and bombs.

Zelin said in January the AF will soon deploy an advanced tactical air-to-air missile that will greatly enhance its operational effectiveness. The missile will be carried by MiG-31BM Foxhound supersonic interceptors/fighters and will subsequently be used by other warplanes.

Zelin did not identify the missile but experts believe it could be the K-37M, also known as RVV-BD, or AA-X-13 Arrow as it is known to NATO.

The K-prefix denotes a weapon in development while the M indicates a modification. An export variant of the weapon, known as RVV-BD, was shown at MAKS 2011. The BD suffix may stand for the Russian words bolshoi dalnosti, or long range.

http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20120320/172284223.html

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U.S. News & World Report

U.S. Nukes Face Up to 10 Million Cyber Attacks Daily

The head of the National Nuclear Security Administration says America's nuclear weapons face a massive number of cyber attacks every day, and are calling for a budget increase in order to enhance security.

By Jason Koebler

Issue No. 990, 20 March 2012

United States Air Force Counterproliferation Research & Education | Maxwell AFB, Montgomery AL
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March 20, 2012

The computer systems of the agency in charge of America's nuclear weapons stockpile are "under constant attack" and face millions of hacking attempts daily, according to officials at the National Nuclear Security Administration.

Thomas D'Agostino, head of the agency, says the agency faces cyber attacks from a "full spectrum" of hackers.

"They're from other countries' [governments], but we also get fairly sophisticated non-state actors as well," he said. "The [nuclear] labs are under constant attack, the Department of Energy is under constant attack."

A spokesman for the agency says the Nuclear Security Enterprise experiences up to 10 million "security significant cyber security events" each day.

"Of the security significant events, less than one hundredth of a percent can be categorized as successful attacks against the Nuclear Security Enterprise computing infrastructure," the spokesman said—which puts the maximum number at about 1,000 daily.

The agency wants to beef up its cybersecurity budget from about \$126 million in 2012 to about \$155 million in 2013 and has developed an "incident response center" responsible for identifying and mitigating cyber security attacks.

In April of last year, the Department of Energy's Oak Ridge National Laboratory was successfully hacked and several megabytes of data were stolen, D'Agostino said. Internet access for workers at the lab was disconnected following the breach.

Adam Segal, a cybersecurity expert with the Council on Foreign Relations, says it's likely that a majority of those 10 million daily attacks are automated bots that "are constantly scanning the Internet looking for vulnerabilities."

"The numbers are kind of inflated on that front," Segal says, adding that it's extremely unlikely that hackers would be able to remotely launch a nuclear warhead, because those systems are "airgapped" or disconnected from standard internet systems. But the Stuxnet computer worm, discovered in 2010, was widely spread to supposedly-secure uranium enrichment plants in Iran, Indonesia and India, shutting those systems down.

The NNSA says they are not aware of any viruses or malware that could remotely launch a nuclear warhead, but the "Stuxnet worm is a very real example of how sophisticated malware can cause physical damage to industrial systems."

Segal says Stuxnet was a lesson—no matter how secure a computer system appears to be, it can be breached. Many experts said the worm was so sophisticated that it had to have been developed by a team of hackers associated with a national government.

"Stuxnet showed that airgapping is not a perfect defense," Segal says. "Even in secure systems, people stick in their thumb drives, they go back and forth between computers. They can find vulnerabilities that way. If people put enough attention to it, they can possibly be penetrated."

D'Agostino said with the agency facing so many hacking attempts, its employees have to remain vigilant.

"All it takes is one person to let their guard down," he said. "This is going to be, in my view, an ever-growing area of concern."

Segal says any successful hackers would likely have to have an intimate knowledge of the programming languages used by the Department of Energy.

"There'd probably have to be a state-based actor behind it. You have to understand a lot about the systems," he says. "Hacking into the Department of Energy and looking for nuclear secrets—how to build a bomb, is probably much easier than trying to take over a bomb or a launch code, and probably of more interest to the Russians or the Chinese or the Iranians."

<http://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2012/03/20/us-nukes-face-up-to-10-million-cyber-attacks-daily>



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Global Security Newswire

Pentagon Undecided on Nuclear Warhead for New Cruise Missile

March 20, 2012

By Elaine M. Grossman, *Global Security Newswire*

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. Defense Department has yet to determine which nuclear warhead will be fielded on a weapon that replaces the 1980s-vintage Air Launched Cruise Missile, according to Pentagon and combatant command officials (see *GSN*, Feb. 24).

Defense officials are "carrying out an Analysis of Alternatives to be completed this fall for an ALCM follow-on system," John Harvey, a Pentagon nuclear force official, said last month. "Plans are to sustain the ALCM and the W-80 warhead, [the] ALCM warhead," until the new missile, the Long-Range Stand-Off weapon, "can be fielded," he said.

Manufactured between 1979 and 1990, the cruise missile's W-80 warhead is deployed aboard 85 nonstealthy Air Force B-52 bombers to give the 1960s-era planes an ability to launch nuclear weapons without having to enter heavily defended airspace. The warhead has a variable explosive power of 5 to 150 kilotons, or roughly one-third to 10 times the yield of the nuclear weapon dropped on Hiroshima.

The Pentagon had earlier planned a major overhaul of the warhead to extend its service life, a recent Congressional Research Service report states. Initial studies were to begin in late fiscal 2029. By 2039, the W-80 nuclear explosive package and firing set would have received a major refurbishment, according to fiscal 2008 charts prepared by the Energy Department's nuclear security agency.

However, it appears that the plans for W-80 life extension have been suspended, if not outright canceled. A Senate appropriations bill in June 2006 said "W-80 life-extension activities" were "no longer supported by the Nuclear Weapons Council and the Department of Defense," and as a result Congress ceased funding for them.

At the time, the Pentagon and the joint Energy-Defense Department council anticipated that a version of the new "Reliable Replacement Warhead," optimized for cruise missiles, would be designed and built.

However, upon taking office, President Obama canceled his predecessor's program to build new nuclear warheads, siding with critics who argued that the stockpile could instead be kept viable for years to come without introducing new weapons (see *GSN*, Aug. 19, 2009).

Defense and Energy leaders "were willing to sacrifice the W-80 [life-extension effort] when they thought they could get the RRW," said Hans Kristensen, who directs the Nuclear Information Program at the Federation of American Scientists. "Now they can't get the RRW," he said.

That means the administration must instead "explore the use of existing warheads" for the future cruise missile, Harvey said last month in a speech at a nuclear weapons symposium.

The Air Force plans to retain today's Air Launched Cruise Missiles through 2030, according to fiscal 2013 budget documents. Current expectations are, though, that the workhorse B-52 bomber will remain flying at least a decade longer -- "beyond the year 2040," the Air Force says.

Harvey suggested that the LRSO weapon is needed to ensure that the aging Stratofortress bomber can retain its stand-off nuclear capability after today's Air Launched Cruise Missile becomes obsolete or is retired. The missile has a range of more than 1,500 miles.

"Modern air defenses put the bomber stand-off mission with ALCM, the current strategic cruise missile deployed with the [B-52] bomber, increasingly at risk," he said on Feb. 15 at the Arlington, Va., event.



The Air Launched Cruise Missile for now is undergoing a maintenance program to keep it functioning properly, according to the Air Force. Roughly 1,140 of the cruise missile's nuclear version, the AGM-86B, are fielded in today's arsenal.

At the same time, the Analysis of Alternatives currently under way is aimed at determining what capabilities and technologies would be appropriate for the Long-Range Stand-Off weapon. Fiscal 2013 budget plans include more than \$600 million for development of the future cruise missile over the next five years.

If no major overhaul is presently planned that would extend the W-80's service life, what nuclear warhead would go aboard the new Long-Range Stand-Off cruise missile?

"The DOD has not ruled in or out a life extension program for the W-80, the decision has not been made," Navy Capt. Jeff Bender, a U.S. Strategic Command spokesman, said last week in response to queries. Based in Omaha, Neb., Strategic Command determines military requirements for nuclear weapons and would take responsibility for them if ever used in combat.

"The W-80 is one of three candidate warheads for the future Long-Range Stand-Off missile," Bender stated by e-mail. "If the W-80 is selected for the LRSO weapon system, it will require a life-extension program in the future."

A major warhead life-extension effort of this kind would require about a decade's advance notice, so that design studies and preparations could be carried out, Thomas D'Agostino, who heads the National Nuclear Security Administration, told reporters on March 8.

Harvey -- who serves as principal deputy assistant Defense secretary for nuclear, chemical and biological defense programs -- said another candidate warhead for the new cruise missile is the B-61, several variants of which are fitted on gravity bombs and are now being readied for service life extension (see *GSN*, March 15).

The first life-extended B-61 warhead should be available by 2019, according to D'Agostino. Kristensen said the bomb warhead's potential use on a new cruise missile, though, would be likely to require significant additional modifications and flight testing.

The third warhead alternative for the new cruise missile, Harvey said, is the W-84, which was designed in the late 1970s for use on the since-banned Ground-Launched Cruise Missile. The W-84 is a B-61 derivative that is closely related in design to the W-80.

Which warhead is ultimately selected for the cruise missile replacement could depend on a variety of factors, Kristensen said. Some warheads feature more modern security devices -- such as "permissive action links" that require secret codes before activating -- or nuclear explosive cores that resist accidental ignition if caught in a blaze.

"If safety and security are the issue, they would use the W-84 because it has the best permissive action link and fire-resistant pit," said Kristensen, comparing it to the W-80 and B-61.

All three of the potential LRSO warheads use insensitive high explosives, a key safety feature that make warheads less likely to detonate if accidentally dropped or hit with a bullet, for example, according to the Washington-based analyst.

Kristensen opined, though, that Defense and Energy officials seem to be asking the wrong question.

"One can always fiddle with whether it's necessary to use this or that warhead. But my fundamental question is whether it's necessary to have a nuclear-armed cruise missile," he said in a Monday telephone interview. Today's Air Launched Cruise Missile has conventional as well as nuclear variants.

"Given the overwhelming capability that we have in the highly accurate, long-range ballistic missile force -- and the gravity bombs that can also be delivered by aircraft -- it's hard for me to see why an air-delivered nuclear cruise missile is needed, as well, in this day and age," Kristensen said. "If the mission is deterrence, then it's clearly not needed."

The Air Force, by contrast, sees the new weapon system as central to its ability to carry out its nuclear responsibilities.



“The LRSO weapon system will be capable of penetrating and surviving advanced integrated air defense systems from significant stand-off range to prosecute strategic targets in support of the Air Force's global attack capability and strategic deterrence core function,” the service stated in fiscal 2013 budget documents, submitted to Congress last month.

<http://www.nti.org/gsn/article/pentagon-undecided-nuclear-warhead-new-cruise-missile/>

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Korea Times – South Korea

OPINION/Op-Ed

March 18, 2012

NK's Rocket Launch

By Tong Kim

It seems harder to figure out what North Korea is up to now under Kim Jong-un's leadership. Only 16 days after North Korea agreed with the United States on Feb. 29 to impose a moratorium on long-range missile tests and to suspend uranium enrichment and other nuclear activities, the North announced a plan to launch another satellite rocket.

The announcement came while Washington was fine-tuning the details on its provision of nutritional assistance to the North, and one week after Pyongyang's Vice Foreign Minister Ri Yong-ho told an American audience in New York that his country would honor its commitment under the Feb. 29 agreement. Many believed that the North would not launch a missile test thanks to the positive outcome of recent U.S.-DPRK talks.

If North Korea launches a new long-range rocket, as it said it would between April 12 and 16 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Kim Il-sung's birthday, it will be a third such attempt _ with its two previous failed attempts to put a satellite in an orbit in 1998 and 2009. As in 2009, the North Koreans would claim again that the purpose is a peaceful exploration of space. Nonetheless, it will be viewed as a provocative missile test, because the same technology is used for satellites and ballistic missiles.

Several puzzling questions are being raised regarding Pyongyang's motivation for conducting new launch. Is there a schism in the North Korean leadership or a division between the military and the foreign ministry? Does Kim Jong-un, unlike his father Kim Jong-il, lack control over the competing groups in the regime? Is he only a figurehead, acting on the script written for him to visit military units and other spots of importance? Is the North Korean leadership testing U.S. will to abandon its “hostile policy?”

My answers to these questions would be negative, except that Kim Jong-un, who seems to be still consolidating his power base, may not have as strong control as his father did. Some diplomatic sources reportedly think there is time for dissuading the North Koreans to cancel its rocket launch. I don't think such efforts would succeed. Did Kim change his mind since he authorized First Vice Foreign Minister Kim Gye-gwan to agree on suspending missile tests? Alternatively, did the North Korean leadership deliberately cheat us again?

Although Kim Jong-un must have been involved in the making of the conflicting decisions, it is not knowable whether he personally fully understands the ramifications of another launch at this point. He will quickly learn that he cannot have it both ways.

There is some empirical evidence that due to a system of compartmentalization, the foreign ministry or even the military is excluded from sensitive information on nuclear and missile programs. In 2000, Kim Jong-il said, “Nobody, even the military, except for the scientists working on the project, knew about the rocket” of 1998, which later was labeled the Taepodong-1 missile.

Kim Gye-gwan possibly did not know about a missile launch plan that was in the making, when he agreed on the missile moratorium. He well understands that another launch would cancel the U.S. plan to provide nutritional assistance and create a new obstacle on the path to improve relations with America.



The State Department's spokesperson has already said that a launch would make "the implementation of any nutritional agreement very difficult" and "to move forward with a regime whose word we have no confidence in." The North Koreans remember their 2009 attempt only brought on stiffer sanctions through the U.N. Resolution 1874, which they would violate with this intended new launch.

Pyongyang's leadership is caught between two incompatible options between badly needed food assistance and the political and military significance of another missile test to show Kim Jong-un's strength as the North enters its declared 2012 threshold of "a strong and prosperous state."

The North Koreans do not really appreciate vitamins and biscuits in the form of food assistance. They traditionally eat rice and other grains for meals. Colin Powell once said, "They can't eat plutonium." But, they also live on pride, eating frugal meals. It is highly likely that they will carry out their launch in an attempt to put their satellite into space.

As they did with their 2009 launch, they have informed the international aviation and maritime authorities of the range of time for the launch and the rocket's trajectory to prevent possible damage from debris. This at least is a constructive result of U.S.-DPRK talks from the past.

For the first North Korean test in 1998, they did it without any announcement. The same DPRK negotiator, Kim Gye-gwan, was quiet when his American counterpart raised safety concerns of civilian carriers underneath the flying rocket. The American representative then said, "Did your country ever think of the safety of those carriers?"

Ri Yong-ho made an interesting comment in New York, "Unlike his previous generation, our new leader wants to have peace, not confrontation, with the United States ... We would be ready to give up nuclear weapons, if the United States concludes the relationship of an alliance with us and provides us with a nuclear umbrella."

Pyongyang is preparing another launch, while making this kind of strategic statement, which should be worth Washington and Seoul exploring further on a long-term basis, in consideration of the shifting balance of power in Northeast Asia.

The writer is a visiting research professor at Korea University and a visiting professor at the University of North Korean Studies. He is also an adjunct professor at Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies.

http://www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/opinion/2012/03/137_107174.html

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency
OPINION/Analysis

North Korea's Space Program Not to Lift off Any Time Soon

19 March 2012

By Konstantin Bogdanov, RIA Novosti military commentator

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) is making a third attempt to convince the world that it can launch spacecraft. Although Pyongyang claims that two satellites have been orbited, independent analysts are unable to detect them. Even if the third launch attempt proves successful, it is unlikely to be completely functional.

Pyongyang to Launch Third Satellite Soon

North Korean officials have announced plans to launch another spacecraft soon. A spokesperson for the Korean Committee of Space Technology has told the Korean Central News Agency that the launch will take place between April 12 and April 16. The satellite will be called Kwangmyŏngsŏng (Bright Star)-3.

Leading regional and world powers have called on the government of North Korea to renounce this idea. Japan, the Republic of Korea (South Korea), France and U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton personally have made statements to this effect.

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All the concerned parties note that the satellite's launch will become yet another glaring violation of UN Security Council resolutions on North Korea's rocket and missile programs. But this is nothing new for Pyongyang.

North Korea's Clandestine Missile Program

The North Korean rocket and missile program has been made possible by numerous violations of missile technology control regimes. After obtaining the required technology to produce R-17 Elbrus / SS-1 Scud-B tactical missiles, North Korea has managed to upgrade them considerably.

North Korea's so far substandard missiles do have a sufficiently long range. However, Pyongyang is only reliably capable of building tactical weapons at this stage. Advanced North Korean engineering products remain unreliable. Analysts describe their combat potential as unimpressive.

However, North Korea's neighbors, including the Republic of Korea and Japan, are inclined to take Pyongyang seriously, particularly against the backdrop of two nuclear tests, which were officially announced by Pyongyang in 2006 and 2009, respectively.

North Korea's space program obviously has a military dimension. In effect, satellite launches are being used to convince the United States that, if necessary, Pyongyang will be able to keep the United States in check. North Korean sources claim that a nuclear-tipped intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) capable of reaching North America is currently being developed. This is the main aspect of an intricate situation created by Pyongyang strategists.

Space Launches and Wishful Thinking

Unlike purely military missile projects, the North Korean space program is an exercise in collective solipsism, a philosophical concept implying that only the self is sure to exist. But it appears that Pyongyang is now set to launch its third satellite.

Two spacecraft have been launched to date. But both launches were somewhat unusual.

The first North Korean launch vehicle, a converted Taepodong-1 ICBM, lifted off on August 31, 1998. On September 4, 1998, the North Korean media announced the launch of its first national man-made satellite. Media reports claimed that the spacecraft was broadcasting the melodies of two immortal revolutionary hymns / marching songs, "The Song of General Kim Il Sung" and "The Song of General Kim Jong Il." The official report said the satellite was also broadcasting the "Juche, Korea" signal in Morse code at a frequency of 27 megahertz. The media report also listed the specific parameters of the satellite's orbit.

This landmark North Korean science and technological breakthrough had one major flaw. No satellite was ever detected at an orbit with the officially mentioned parameters. U.S. and Russian tracking stations were unable to locate the spacecraft, which, as North Korea claimed, was swiftly revolving around the planet and broadcasting signals and melodies. Incidentally, no signals or melodies were received at any of the announced frequencies or any other frequencies.

North Korea attempted to launch another spacecraft using an upgraded Taepodong-2 ICBM in the spring of 2009. The national media once again claimed that the launch had been successful. The two popular marching songs were again broadcast at a frequency of 470 megahertz.

Independent analysts claimed that, just like its predecessor, the satellite had fallen into the Pacific Ocean or that, at best, it had entered a low orbit and fallen to Earth before tracking stations were able to register anything. In either case, no spacecraft was identified, and no one heard any marching songs.

The two satellites reportedly praising both great North Korean leaders exist only in the imagination of those who mostly receive information about the world from the North Korean media. Such people live in a gigantic inner empire, which has already started implementing its own space program, and which will soon unlock the secret of thermonuclear fusion.



This probably explains the fact that North Korea's Bright Star will never create any neologisms similar to the Soviet-era Sputnik spacecraft. A genuine North Korean space launch could be converted into a surge of absolutely sincere labor and ideological enthusiasm. This could also help awaken the country and facilitate its development.

However, Pyongyang is forced to simulate successful launches for the lack of any real success, which is not forthcoming. The country's government probably does not want to think about the mental turmoil of its citizens after they learn about the real state of affairs. North Korean officials probably think that the issue will become irrelevant after the country, at long last, manages to orbit a spacecraft that broadcasts marching songs about the two generals.

The opinions expressed in this article are the author's and do not necessarily represent those of RIA Novosti.

<http://en.ria.ru/analysis/20120319/172270803.html>

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Chosun Ilbo – South Korea

OPINION/Editorial

March 19, 2012

Will the N.Korean Regime Never Learn?

North Korea on Friday announced it will launch a satellite on a rocket between April 12 to 16 from a launch pad in Tongchang-ri, North Pyongan Province to mark the centenary of nation founder Kim Il-sung. The rocket will be fired in a southwesterly direction, it added. In 1998, North Korea test-fired a long-range missile disguised as a space rocket, and in 2006 and 2009 it did the same with the next version of the missile.

Now the North is apparently attempting to test-fire a missile with an even longer range. The first in 1998 flew over Japan and traveled 1,620 km, while the second in 2006 fizzled. The next one in 2009 traveled around 3,200 km before it crashed in the Pacific Ocean.

North Korea's missile launch would be a breach of an agreement only struck with the U.S. in Beijing in late February to temporarily suspend nuclear and missile tests. The announcement also poured cold water on hopes fueled by the agreement that the Kim Jong-un regime will be more flexible than the previous leadership and a resolution to the North Korean nuclear impasse is in sight.

More worrying is that North Korea conducted nuclear tests three months after the 2006 missile launch and one month after the 2009 launch, strongly suggesting that the missiles were designed to carry nuclear payloads.

North Korea's state-run media reported recently that Kim Jong-un was at the launch pad along with his father Kim Jong-il for the 2009 launch and said he was determined to "stage war should the enemy intercept" the missile. Judging from those comments and North Korea's plan to launch a long-range missile on Kim Il-sung's 100th birthday, Kim Jong-un appears to have no intention of giving up his father's legacy of nuclear weapons and missiles.

But even allowing for its fixation with nuclear arms, it is ominous that the North should plan such a provocation less than a month after it reached an agreement with Washington to refrain from these tests. Pyongyang appears to have forgotten that the Obama administration scrapped plans for talks with the North shortly after the 2009 missile launch. The U.S. did seek negotiations after the 1998 and 2006 launches, but it eventually lost any confidence in talks after the North repeatedly reneged on its pledges.

The North's refusal to learn from the mistakes of the Kim Jong-il regime and readiness to blow a golden opportunity for renewed dialogue with the U.S. gives rise to serious worries about what is going on in the secretive state.

http://english.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2012/03/19/2012031901274.html

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USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER
CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL
MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

Washington Post
OPINION/Fine Print

How Bad would Iran Be with the Bomb?

By Walter Pincus
March 19, 2012

Which would be worse if sanctions and diplomacy fail: the aftermath of an Israeli or U.S. attack on Iran to set back its nuclear program, or the Tehran regime having the bomb?

Of course, one hopes the sanctions/diplomacy route succeeds. But what if it doesn't?

If you measure the level of public discussion, hands down the worst would be having Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, and/or President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad armed with nuclear weapons.

However, within the intelligence community and among its retirees there are some experienced analysts who believe that Iran's leaders with nuclear weapons wouldn't be much different than they are today, with their first concern being holding on to power, not using a weapon to wipe out Israel and thereby bring about their own destruction.

That approach has been sensibly argued by Paul Pillar, a former senior CIA intelligence analyst and a national intelligence officer for the Near East and South Asia from 2000 to 2005. He was deeply involved back then when internal doubts about Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction programs were low-keyed by CIA leaders and ignored by the George W. Bush White House.

"An Iran with a bomb would not be anywhere near as dangerous as most people assume, and a war to try to stop it from acquiring one would be less successful and far more costly than most people imagine," Pillar writes in the current issue of Washington Monthly.

Pillar, who teaches at Georgetown University, points out that despite all the "belli-cosity and political rhetoric" about the issue, the idea of an Iran with the bomb "has been subjected to precious little careful analysis." Conventional wisdom is that Tehran's leaders would become more dangerous to their neighbors and the United States, Pillar states.

He cites the repeated stereotyping that Iran's rulers are "religious fanatics who value martyrdom more than life, cannot be counted on to act rationally and, therefore, cannot be deterred." Pillar notes that the past 30 years have proved that although they promote martyrdom to defend the homeland, "they have never given any indication of wanting to become martyrs themselves."

Pillar says that since the 1979 revolution against Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, the Islamic Republic of Iran has conducted a "cautious" policy toward the world. He acknowledges targeted assassinations in the 1980s and 1990s of exiled dissidents, but avoids mentioning Tehran's anti-Americanism, its threats to Israel and its support of Hamas and Hezbollah, groups the United States and Israel consider terrorist organizations. He also fails to mention Iran's military aid to dissident forces in Iraq.

Of course, Americans forget that the United States and Britain overthrew the popularly elected government of Iranian Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddegh in August 1953 — something all Iranians remember. Americans also ignore Washington's open policy of "regime change" in Tehran, promoted most prominently during the Bush years.

There is no lack of bitterness on both sides. That may prevent Americans from weighing Pillar's cold analysis that "Iran's rulers are constantly balancing a very worldly set of strategic interests" and from thinking "principles of deterrence are not invalid just because the party to be deterred wears a turban and a beard."

There are two other possible dangers associated with Iranians having the bomb — they would arm terrorists, or they would feel shielded and become more generally aggressive. The Bush administration used the former to help build support for invading Iraq: Saddam Hussein would give a nuke to terrorists.

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As the CIA argued in 2002 about Hussein, Pillar says Iran's leaders have no incentive to lose control over a nuke. In Iran's case, any use by terrorists would be traced to Tehran and bring swift retaliation. Tehran, he argues, would use nukes only in self-defense.

As for making Iran bolder in supporting terrorist groups, Pillar argues that Tehran's main reason for obtaining the bomb is "in deterring aggression against one's own country."

Pillar also questions why the argument that any Israeli/U.S. attack on Iran to set back its nuclear program uses the "best case" scenario that Tehran's response would be limited, while only a "worst case" analysis is made of Iran getting the bomb. If the armed attack by Israel or the United States is analyzed under "worst case" scenarios, Pillar says, "we would be hearing about a regional conflagration involving multiple U.S. allies, sucking in U.S. forces beyond the initial assault."

He said such an attack also "would be an immediate political gift to Iranian hard-liners."

An attack on Iran's nuclear facilities of course would disrupt oil markets and raise gas prices. Look at what just the threat of such an attack is doing.

"War or a world with an Iranian bomb are not the only alternatives," Pillar says. Talks are planned; diplomacy plus sanctions are still in play.

Even if Iran gets a bomb, "Israel would retain overwhelming military superiority with its own nuclear weapons — which international think tanks estimate to number at least 100 and possibly 200," Pillar says. With its military assets, Israel "would continue to outclass by far anything Iran will have," he concludes.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/how-bad-would-iran-be-with-the-bomb/2012/03/16/gIQAz8sxNS_story.html

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The Moscow Times – Russia
OPINION/Op-Ed

A Trial Marriage on Missile Defense

20 March 2012
By Steven Pifer

During his campaign to return to the presidency, Vladimir Putin sharply criticized U.S. missile defense plans for Europe, claiming they pose a threat to Russia's strategic missiles. U.S. officials argue that Russia has no cause for concern. This difference has blocked an agreement between NATO and Russia on missile defense cooperation. To get out of this stalemate, the sides should consider a "trial marriage" in which they could test their compatibility before signing up for the long haul.

The United States intends to deploy missile defenses in Romania and Poland later this decade, as part of a plan approved by NATO leaders in November 2010. The Kremlin asserts that those defenses will threaten Russia's strategic missiles. Moscow thus has demanded a legal guarantee that U.S. missile defenses not be directed against Russia before it will engage in a cooperative missile defense arrangement with NATO.

Washington says its missile defenses will lack the range and velocity to reach Russian strategic missiles and that it is ready to allow Russian experts to observe U.S. missile interceptor tests to confirm this. Washington maintains, moreover, that day-to-day missile defense cooperation would deepen Russian understanding of U.S. capabilities and, in the process, reassure Moscow that they pose no threat to Russia.

A legal guarantee on missile defense would require Senate ratification — at least two-thirds of the votes. But this is all but a nonstarter, since it is unlikely that the Senate would ratify anything that even hints at constraints on missile defense.



The Russians, however, have an understandable point. They do not want to lock themselves into a missile defense arrangement with NATO that might someday develop capabilities against their own strategic missiles. There is a relationship between strategic offense and missile defense.

So how about a trial marriage?

Under such a deal, NATO and Russia would agree to provisional cooperation on missile defense for a fixed period — say, four years. NATO would acknowledge at the outset that Russia has strong concerns about U.S. missile defense capabilities and that Moscow's agreement to provisional cooperation with NATO in no way prevents Russia from deciding against making this cooperation permanent.

This arrangement would allow the sides to move past the current stalemate over a legal guarantee. They could put in place — on a provisional basis — practical elements of missile defense cooperation, where the views of both sides already converge on key points.

First, NATO and Russia could establish procedures for reciprocal transparency about missile defense systems and plans. This could include information on numbers and locations of missile defense components. It could also include information on the range and velocity of missile interceptors and procedures to allow the other side to observe tests. This would give Moscow better information on how to assess whether there is a risk to its missiles.

Second, the sides could work out a program of joint NATO-Russia missile defense exercises. They have carried out joint theater missile defense exercises in the past, so they have a foundation on which to build.

Third, NATO and Russia could establish two jointly manned centers. A data fusion center would combine early warning information provided by NATO and Russian radars and other sensors. The enhanced data would give both sides a better picture of the ballistic missile environment in Europe. The second center could explore how the sides might deepen their cooperation, if only on a provisional basis.

If U.S. officials are correct, this kind of transparency and day-to-day interaction would alleviate Russian concerns about a threat from U.S. missile defenses. If, however, the Russians remain concerned after four years, all bets would be off. They could stop the transparency exchanges, halt the exercises and shut the doors at the two joint centers. NATO would accept this possible outcome in advance.

Moreover, nothing in this arrangement would prevent the Russians from taking steps that President Dmitry Medvedev outlined in a statement in November, such as upgrading Russian air and space defenses and arming Russian missiles with advanced penetration aids to overcome missile defenses. The Kremlin fears that a threat to Russia's strategic missiles could develop in six or eight years — well past the four years of a provisional arrangement.

NATO should invite Moscow to attend a NATO-Russia meeting in Chicago during the annual NATO summit in May. At the meeting, the alliance should propose that the centerpiece be a provisional missile defense cooperation agreement that would last four years, unless both sides decided to extend it. Putin should consider this option. Moscow would lose nothing by agreeing to this because it could always walk away at any moment. But if things worked out, NATO and Russian missile defenders might decide to make it a lasting partnership.

Steven Pifer, a retired U.S. Foreign Service officer, directs the Arms Control Initiative at the Brookings Institution.

<http://www.themoscowtimes.com/opinion/article/a-trial-marriage-on-missile-defense/455144.html>

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Chicago Tribune
OPINION/Political Analysis

Momentum Stalls on Obama Nuclear Agenda

By Matt Spetalnick and Alister Bull

Tuesday, March 20, 2012

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*United States Air Force Counterproliferation Research & Education / Maxwell AFB, Montgomery AL
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Washington (Reuters) - Shortly after taking office, U.S. President Barack Obama set the goal of eventually ridding the world of nuclear weapons as a central theme of his presidency and pledged dramatic steps to lead the way.

But after lofty rhetoric and a few steps forward, Obama is facing fresh doubts about whether he is willing to take the political, diplomatic and budgetary risks that may be needed to bring his vision closer to reality.

At home, arms-control advocates who once extolled his ambitious plans are complaining about funding cuts for several key nuclear security programs, while critics on the right are leveling election-year accusations that his policies weaken America's strategic deterrence.

At the same time, Obama's efforts to spur global cooperation to prevent nuclear terrorism, which he once called the "single biggest threat" to U.S. security, have been overshadowed by the more urgent challenges of thwarting Iran's and North Korea's nuclear development.

All of this is weighing on Obama's broader nuclear agenda as he heads to Seoul next weekend for the second Nuclear Security Summit. He inaugurated the event earlier in his tenure.

"The nuclear-free vision thing has run up against facts on the ground," according to an outside expert who advises the White House on national security. "So, for now, there's going to be an abundance of talk and not much serious action."

Granted, it's been more than just talk up to this point.

Obama unveiled a revamped policy in 2010 renouncing development of new nuclear weapons and restricting use of those already in Washington's arsenal. He followed that up by signing a landmark arms reduction deal with Russia last year.

He secured specific commitments from world leaders at the inaugural 2010 summit in Washington to help keep bomb-grade material out of terrorists' hands, and independent experts say most of the pledges are being met though many were modest in scope.

But momentum has slowed on Obama's nuclear agenda and, with the November 6 presidential election looming, chances for major new advances look doubtful.

Underscoring a sense of caution, defense and national security officials have spent months debating a secret set of new options being prepared for Obama to help guide future arms-control talks. Ideas range from maintaining the status quo to reducing warheads by up to 80 percent, an official has said.

But the administration appears reluctant to push publicly on such a divisive issue as the election campaign gathers pace.

'MAGIC SHOWS'

While some in Obama's liberal base are disappointed he has not done more, conservatives see his nuclear policies as a point of vulnerability that Republican candidates can exploit.

"Instead of dealing with real nuclear threats like Iran and North Korea, he's going to magic shows and talking about a world without nuclear weapons, which would be a much less safe world for the United States," said John Bolton, who was U.N. ambassador under Obama's Republican predecessor, George W. Bush. The hawkish ex-official has endorsed Mitt Romney for the Republican presidential nomination.

Meanwhile, anti-proliferation groups, which credit Obama with raising the global profile of nuclear security, are also voicing complaints. They are unhappy that the fiscal squeeze in Washington has translated into reduced spending on several nuclear security programs in his budget plan for fiscal 2013.

Ken Luongo, president of the Partnership for Global Security, a non-governmental research organization, called cuts in Obama's budget request to secure weapons of mass destruction "an assault on common sense."



Two programs at the Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration were pinched hard. Funding for the Global Threat Reduction initiative, designed to secure nuclear material at civilian sites around the world, was cut by \$32 million to \$466 million, and will be down \$500 million over the next four years compared with the levels envisaged a year ago.

A senior administration official insisted, however, that part of the drop reflected completion of an upgrade of Russian nuclear infrastructure and removal of Russian nuclear material.

A bigger hit was taken by the International Nuclear Materials Protection and Cooperation program, designed to improve security at vulnerable stockpiles of nuclear weapons in countries deemed to be of special concern. Its funding request was trimmed by \$259 million in 2013 to \$311 million.

Despite that, arms-control experts sees signs of progress on nuclear security efforts and caution against complacency when Obama and more than 50 other leaders meet on Monday.

Amid skepticism about the chances for meeting the Washington summit's headline pledge to safeguard all of the world's nuclear materials within four years, they are now pushing for voluntary arrangements to be turned into enforceable standards.

U.S. officials expect new commitments from several countries but are playing down the chances of any breakthroughs in Seoul. "It's (going to be) a bit of a report card and also figuring out what has to be prioritized," a senior official said.

NOT ON THE GUEST LIST

Iran and North Korea are not on the guest list or the agenda. But on the sidelines, Obama will urge world powers, particularly Russia and China, to help ratchet up pressure with sanctions and diplomacy.

But Obama is expected to keep a cautious line with countries in attendance, including Pakistan, whose ties with Washington are strained. Experts see Pakistan as the biggest area of risk because it has a large stockpile of weapons-grade material and faces internal security threats from militant groups.

Obama set expectations high in a 2009 speech in Prague, declaring it was time to seek "a world without nuclear weapons." He acknowledged it was a long-term aspiration, but his high-flown oratory helped him win the Nobel Peace Prize.

Taking that vision much farther will not be easy, even if Obama wins a second term.

With Republican opposition as strong as ever to the United States joining the global nuclear test-ban treaty, Obama for now has had to shelve his earlier promise to push for ratification.

Another arms accord with Moscow will be an even tougher sell to conservatives who say Obama he has not moved fast enough to modernize the U.S. strategic arsenal, a pledge he made in return for Republican votes that helped ratify the START treaty.

"Their commitment to it (nuclear modernization) was weak ... It turns out at the first challenge they folded," said U.S. Senator Jon Kyl, a leading Republican on nuclear issues, adding that it would be harder to trust Obama the next time.

Meantime, the ultimate test of Obama's nuclear agenda could well be what happens in coming months with Iran. Its development of nuclear arms - something it denies it seeks - could spark war with Israel and an arms race in the Middle East.

Additional reporting by Caren Bohan, Susan Cornwell and David Alexander; Editing by Paul Simao.

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/politics/sns-rt-us-nuclear-obamabre82j064-20120319,0,1587749.story>

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Bangkok Post – Thailand



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OPINION/Opinion

US Should Test North Korea's Space Exploration Claim

21 March 2012

By Carl Baker

The instinctive reaction to last week's announcement by North Korea that it plans to launch a satellite next month was to denounce it as a violation of the "Leap Day deal".

That arrangement involved "simultaneous unilateral announcements" offering nutritional assistance from the United States while North Korea promised to place a moratorium on its nuclear programme, including long-range missile launches.

We all know what will happen next. The US demands additional sanctions, North Korea withdraws from its part of the bargain, and tensions increase.

Let me suggest a way to avoid another rerun: rather than insisting the launch violates the long-range missile launch moratorium, Washington should test the North Korean claim that it is launching a satellite and not a missile by accepting Pyongyang's offer to allow experts and journalists to observe the launch.

While most analyses of the North's rationale for making this announcement involve Pyongyang palace intrigue, this approach is mistaken.

The planned launch has been a long time in the making. The use of a new test facility suggests that it is part of a long-term strategy and is not being driven by an internal power struggle as much as it is by the desire to establish the legitimacy of the satellite programme. That does not mean the announcement is not provocative. It is clearly meant to create discord and provoke responses from multiple parties.

Therefore, the US would be well-served to be more nuanced in its response. There is a real potential for what North Korea is calling the US bluff on Washington's oft-repeated pledge that it bears no hostile intent toward North Korea.

From Pyongyang's perspective, US insistence that an attempted satellite launch is the same as a missile launch is a clear manifestation of that hostility. While the US (and much of the rest of the world) is satisfied that there is no difference between North Korea's satellite programme and a missile programme, North Korea clearly did not get that memo. And they may have a case.

Some basic terminology seems to be a big part of the problem _ and we don't have to be rocket scientists to make sense of rocket science.

Most basically, a long-range missile or a satellite is attached to a rocket. For a satellite, the intent is to propel it out of the earth's atmosphere and into an orbit around the earth and keep it there. In contrast, a long-range missile is launched into space so the missile re-enters the earth's atmosphere and hits its intended target without burning up as it re-enters.

In short, the payloads are distinct but the rocket propulsion systems are basically the same.

That confusion was evident in a Sunday Korea Herald editorial that argued the planned launch "is a missile launch and a satellite launch put together".

Even the United Nations Security Council resolutions that address North Korea's ballistic missile programme, misuse the term.

UNSC Resolution 1695, which demands the suspension of the missile programme, recalls that "the DPRK launched an object propelled by a missile without prior notification to the countries in the region ..."

Similarly, following North Korea's second attempted satellite launch in 2009, the UNSC Presidential Statement condemning the attempt as a violation of UNSC Resolution 1718, "[d]emands that the DPRK not conduct any further

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nuclear test or launch of a ballistic missile" and "[d]ecides that the DPRK shall suspend all activities related to its ballistic missile programme and in this context re-establish its pre-existing commitments to a moratorium on missile launching." Similar language appears in UNSCR 1874 when it "[d]emands that the DPRK not conduct any further nuclear test or any launch using ballistic missile technology." Unfortunately, but probably for good reason, the precise relationship between the ballistic missile programme and the satellite programme was not addressed.

Nevertheless, a missile is not a satellite, nor is it a rocket. Some refuse to accept the difference, insisting it is impossible or unnecessary to make a distinction.

Thus, one influential analyst (who knows better) responded to the latest announcement by dismissing the difference between a missile and satellite launch and confused the issue further by suggesting that "a moratorium on missile launches that includes an exception for space launches is like a moratorium on nuclear testing that permits "peaceful nuclear explosions _ pointless".

From North Korea's perspective, that is the equivalent of being denied the right to develop aerospace technology to prevent it from building airplanes that could deliver a bomb.

Of course, there is real concern about the intent behind the North Korean satellite programme since a great deal of dual-use technology is involved.

If you can propel a satellite into space, then you can propel a missile into space. But that does not make the difference between them meaningless.

The problem is exacerbated by the world's refusal to acknowledge that North Korea has the right to launch satellites even if it is only to warble paeans to Kim Il-Sung. In 1998, after the first attempted satellite launch by North Korea, it took the US almost two months to reluctantly acknowledge that the event was a satellite launch and not a long-range ballistic missile test. In 2009, the UNSC presidential statement essentially equated the satellite launch with North Korea's 2006 ballistic missile barrage, leading most people to conclude there is no difference.

Leaving the definition of a missile vague has helped avoid a confrontation in the UN over sanctions. By referring to the North Korean long-range missile programme in the sanctions resolutions and presidential statements, the UNSC has provided a loophole for those who have quietly supported North Korea's "independent right to the use of outer space".

North Korea exploits this distinction, not only by screaming insults at those who would deny it the right to launch a satellite, but by changing its approach to launches.

In 1998, much of the consternation in the international community was because North Korea attempted the launch without warning. In 2009, it followed all necessary protocol by notifying the appropriate international agencies. This time, it announced that the launch will take place from a new launch site at Tongch'ang Dong on the West Coast and will be aimed in a southerly direction-on about the same path as the recent satellite launch attempts by South Korea _ and has invited everyone to come and watch. Pyongyang can argue that each step has been taken to further legitimatise its right to engage in satellite launches and to make them less provocative.

Most significantly, the issue goes to the heart of North Korea's assertion that the US retains a hostile policy. From Pyongyang's perspective, the US refusal to accept the legitimacy of the launch when there are potentially exculpatory details, shows Washington's real intent. By announcing that it is inviting international experts and journalists to observe the launch, North Korea is focusing attention on its right to engage in space exploration. That is part of the provocation.

Calling the US bluff presents a serious dilemma for the Obama administration. Acknowledging a distinction between missiles and satellites would likely be interpreted as a signal of weakness to political opponents and allies alike _ not a good move in an election campaign. But, refusing to acknowledge the difference gives North Korea an excuse to walk away from its nuclear moratorium.



One alternative would be to re-introduce the issue in the UN and demand that the satellite programme be explicitly included in the language of any resolution to remove any doubt that sanctions are intended to apply to it and not just the long-range ballistic missile programme. One suspects that a similar approach failed in 2009. The US and its friends pretended the issue was settled while North Korea (with at least implicit support from others) proceeded under the assumption it was not.

North Korea clearly does not intend to stop its pursuit of a satellite programme. Therefore, perhaps the best strategy would be to accept the North Korean offer to observe the launch and push for more transparency. This would undermine Pyongyang's claim that the US has "hostile intent" and force it to accept demands for more transparency.

This would reassure the US that this really is a satellite launch and not a missile test. It would make any attempt to launch a long-range missile more provocative and could be characterised as a clear breach of UN sanctions.

It would also provide an opportunity to learn more about the new launch facility and the propulsion system.

Some will reject this approach, claiming that allowing North Korea to proceed with the launch gives it the opportunity to test the propulsion system that would be used for a long-range ballistic missile. But it seems better than the alternative _ a return to stalemate. Maybe it is time to call North Korea's bluff rather than get sucked back into the tactical tit-for-tat that has allowed Pyongyang to control the strategic game for years.

Carl Baker is director of programmes at Pacific Forum CSIS. It originally appeared in the Pacific Forum CSIS Pacnet series.

<http://www.bangkokpost.com/opinion/opinion/285264/us-should-test-north-korea-space-exploration-claim>

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OPINION/Op-Ed

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Pie in the Sky, Pyongyang Style

By Donald Kirk

SEOUL - North Korea's claim of a serious scientific reason for planning to fire off a long-range missile next month with a satellite for a payload is couched in such sincere-sounding lingo that one has to wonder if the North's scientists and engineers actually may have something in mind there.

Kwangmyongsong-3, as North Korea has dubbed the satellite, "is a precious result of scientific researches conducted by scientists and technicians". The sole reason for wanting to put it in orbit, according to Pyongyang's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA), is "to develop and utilize working satellites indispensable for the country's economic development, pursuant to the government's policy for the peaceful development and use of space".

But what, one might ask, is the significance of the number 3 after Kwangmyongsong, which means "brilliant star"? The answer is that North Korea claims to have already launched numbers 1 and 2 when the DPRK, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, shocked the world by firing off earlier versions of the same missile with the satellite on board.

And "when the DPRK launched two experimental satellites, it strictly abided by relevant international regulations and practice", said KCNA. Those claims sounded so sincere at the time that Daniel Pinkston, the International Crisis Group's guru in Seoul, staged a well-attended press conference, put out releases and wrote commentaries telling everyone the North Koreans had every right in the world to go launching satellites, just like every other self-respecting country with big dreams.

The only problem was that the satellites were never seen in orbit by scientists in the US, Russia, South Korea and Japan and everywhere else they monitor that stuff. The DPRK mentions them only occasionally - and then to give the



impression they're comfortably circling the Earth doing whatever they were supposed to be doing, presumably to the same patriotic music they were said to be emitting when they were launched.

In truth, however, the real question is whether any satellites were launched at all - or whether the missiles that bore them in arcs over the western Pacific were carrying satellites or simply some shiny material designed to look like satellites at the time of liftoff. Why should an impoverished country like North Korea, begging for food from foreign donors bother to build a satellite when it could just as easily fabricate a dummy and convince its people the enormous investment is paying off?

This time, however, the story may be a little different. The occasion for the launch is the vast celebration for the 100th birth anniversary on April 15 of the North's founding leader, and still "eternal president", Kim Il-sung.

The North Koreans have been planning for this event for the past five years, at least. I saw bright lights shining with the anniversary date when I last attended the Arirang show in May Day stadium by the Daedong River in the capital Pyongyang three-and-a-half years ago. The Arirang show, featuring 50,000 people on one entire side of the stadium flashing cards to form mosaics of heroic scenes while another 50,000 prance, dance, parade and pirouette on the field, normally goes on nightly for weeks. It's hard to imagine any show more grandiose and glorious, but for sure the North Koreans will do their best to outdo past performances.

What could be better, then, than to put on a live launch for the whole world to see? As the KCNA dispatch, keeping a straight face, solemnly informed its readers regarding the launch of what it portentously called "the working satellite", the North has already "sent necessary information to the relevant international bodies according to international regulations and procedures". Not only that, but the DPRK also "expressed the will to invite experts and journalists of other countries to view the launching station".

In other words, unlike the previous launches, which no one knew about until the missiles-cum-satellites were airborne, hurtling far above the main Japanese island of Honshu, much to the annoyance of the Japanese, the next launch will be very much a public event. Public, that is, except that it strains all credibility to think that anyone with any expertise would be able to get close enough to the contraption pre-launch to see if the thing it's carrying was really a satellite.

The North Koreans, nothing if not skilled at bamboozling American negotiators, know they have to put up a bold front to pull this one off without seriously jeopardizing the deal they supposedly made in talks in Beijing on February 29. Remember that one? That was when the neophyte US special envoy, Glyn Davies, got succored by the wily North Korean veteran Kim Kye-gwan into more or less believing the North Koreans had agreed to a "moratorium" on testing of long-range missiles and, of course, nuclear devices.

Or did they? Is this thing down in writing, like a contract, or was it all wishful thinking, extrapolations from conversations, embroidered in agreed-upon announcements by both sides afterward? The bottom line for the North Koreans, regardless of what they do, is that they still want to be sure of getting 240,000 tons of food aid that the US promised in the same talks - not rice for the North's 1.1 million troops but biscuits and soy sauce and the like for pregnant women and kids below the age of five.

How are the North Koreans going to get the US to begin shipping in all that food, at the rate of 20,000 tons a month over the course of a year, if they've just fired a long-range missile that's capable in theory of carrying not merely a dummy satellite but a weapon of mass destruction, nuclear, biological or chemical, as far as the US west coast? And would they still have a chance if they happened to follow up the missile-cum-satellite launch with a third underground nuclear test - just as they did in May 2009 the month after their last missile launch?

Sure, no problem. For starters, the North Koreans can make a show of inviting in inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency to sniff around their main nuclear complex at Yongbyon, 96 kilometers north of Pyongyang.

The North Koreans kicked them all out, for the second time, three years ago before their last round of long-range-missile-and-nuclear tests, but there's no harm in having them back if that's what it takes to appease foreign critics. They won't go near the sites for launching missiles and testing nukes - they're nowhere near Yongbyon.



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As for getting all that food, the next step would be, fine, let's all return to the six-party talks, last held in Beijing in December 2008, including the US, Japan and Russia plus the two Koreas. Eventually, the talks would end in another statement, another agreement, and the shipments would begin.

Only this time, the North Koreans might bargain for the kind of food they want the most - fodder for the troops, not baby food for little kids. That might be a hard bargain, but the North's got a little time on its side.

Americans and South Koreans are both electing new presidents later this year, and new governments in Washington and Seoul may want to forgive and forget - that is, until the next crisis and the next cycle of talking and testing.

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<http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Korea/NC21Dg01.html>

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