



**USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER**  
**CPC OUTREACH JOURNAL**  
MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

**Issue No. 993, 30 March 2012**

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Al Bawaba – Jordan

## Iran and Powers to Resume Nuclear Talks Next Month

March 28th, 2012

Nuclear negotiations between Iran and the powers of the Group 5 +1 (United States, Russia, China, Britain, France and Germany) will resume on April 13 but the venue has yet to be determined, said head of Iranian diplomacy Ali Akbar Salehi on Wednesday.

The date for the negotiations was scheduled for April 13, said Salehi, who was quoted by the official *IRNA* news agency, adding that "the negotiations will be fixed in the coming days".

Turkey "has expressed its readiness to host the negotiations and remains one of the options. My personal view is that Istanbul is the best place," he said, according to *IRNA*.

"Turkey is ready to host future talks but everything depends on an agreement between Iran and the Group 5 +1," said the Turkish ambassador in Tehran, Umit Yardim, also quoted by *IRNA*.

Iran and the Group 5 +1 powers declared their readiness to resume nuclear negotiations, broken off since the last meeting in Istanbul held in January 2011. On Tuesday, the office of Catherine Ashton, the head of European diplomacy, told AFP that there was still no agreement on the place and the date of negotiations.

Salehi made these comments while welcoming at the airport in Tehran Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who arrived as head of an important ministerial delegation on a two-day official visit. He is expected to talk with Iranian officials on bilateral relations, and the regional situation, including Syria, where Iran and Turkey are in opposition, and the Iranian nuclear issue.

Turkey, which has offered to host the next nuclear talks between Iran and the powers, has strengthened its economic and trade relations with Iran in recent years and opposes new U.S. and European sanctions against Tehran.

<http://www.albawaba.com/main-headlines/iran-and-powers-resume-nuclear-talks-next-month-418859>

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Ha'aretz Daily – Israel

March 28, 2012

## Iran Could Recover from Attack on its Nuclear Sites within Six Months, Says U.S. Report

*U.S. congressional report says Israel and U.S. do not know exact location of Iran nuclear facilities, which may be dispersed in such a way that an Israeli attack would not be successful.*

By Haaretz

Iran could probably rebuild most of its centrifuge workshops within six months after an attack on its nuclear sites, according to a new report by U.S. congressional researchers, Bloomberg reported on Wednesday.

The report by analysts at the Congressional Research Service, citing interviews with current and former U.S. officials, said that the Islamic Republic's centrifuge "workshops" are widely dispersed and hidden, which could complicate a potential Israeli military strike.

According to the report, neither Israel nor the U.S. knows for certain where Iran's nuclear facilities are located and the possibility of dispersed nuclear sites makes any assessment of a military strike's success more difficult. It is "unclear what the ultimate effect of a strike would be on the likelihood of Iran acquiring nuclear weapons," Bloomberg quoted the report as saying.

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The congressional researchers said that, "An attack that left Iran's conversion and centrifuge production facilities intact would considerably reduce" the time Iran would need to resume its nuclear activities.

Moreover, the researches quoted a former U.S. official as saying that Iran could probably replicate most of its centrifuge workshops within six months.

The International Atomic Energy Agency has recently voiced "serious concerns" about possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear activities.

Iran denies suspicions that it is covertly seeking nuclear weapons capability, in part by coordinating efforts to process uranium, test high explosives and revamp a ballistic missile cone to accommodate a nuclear warhead.

<http://www.haaretz.com/news/diplomacy-defense/iran-could-recover-from-attack-on-its-nuclear-sites-within-six-months-says-u-s-report-1.421344>

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Journal of Turkish Weekly – Turkey

## **54 Pct of Turks Support Nukes if Iran Has Them**

Thursday, 29 March 2012

More than half of Turks support the option of Turkey's obtaining nuclear arms in case of a possible threat from a nuclear-missile armed Iran, while 35 percent believe that Turkey should not develop nuclear weapons, a recent public opinion survey revealed.

The survey, carried out by the Centre for Economics and Foreign Policy Studies (EDAM), asked "In reaction to a possible threat from a nuclear-armed Iran, should Turkey develop its own nuclear weapons or rely on NATO's protection?" According to the survey's results, 54 percent of participants supported the option of Turkey's nuclear armament, while 8.2 percent believe that NATO's security umbrella is sufficient, and therefore Turkey shouldn't develop nuclear weapons. Thirty-four percent of the participants believe that Turkey shouldn't develop nuclear weapons under any conditions.

<http://www.turkishweekly.net/news/133087/54-pct-of-turks-support-nukes-if-iran-has-them.html>

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Chicago Tribune

## **New Iran Talks may Focus on Higher-Grade Atom Work**

Fredrik Dahl, Reuters

March 30, 2012

VIENNA (Reuters) - Getting Iran to stop the higher-level uranium enrichment it started two years ago and has since sharply increased will be a priority when world powers re-enter talks with the Islamic Republic in April, Western diplomats and analysts say.

Tehran took a major step towards making potential atom bomb material after a previous attempt at diplomacy failed, spurning U.N. demands to halt all enrichment and, instead, ramping up uranium processing to 20 percent purity - goading the West to impose crushing sanctions on its banks and oil exports. That work may provide an initial focus of new talks, expected to get under way in mid-April and seen as a chance to avert the threat of Israeli air strikes on Iran's nuclear sites that could spark a Middle East war.

"We have the impression that the White House is interested in a realistic strategy - focusing on halting 20 percent enrichment of uranium as a first-step confidence-building measure," said Greg Thielmann of the Arms Control Association, a Washington-based research and advocacy group.

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Iran says it has a sovereign right to peaceful nuclear technology and has repeatedly rejected U.N. resolutions calling for a suspension of all uranium enrichment.

But it has at times appeared more flexible when it comes to the refinement of uranium to a fissile concentration of 20 percent that it began in early 2010 - much higher than the 3.5 percent it had been processing to previously.

Experts say that initially getting Iran to stop this higher-grade work could open a way to ease the deadlock.

A U.S. think tank, the Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS), said capping Iranian enrichment at 5 percent could form part of an interim deal that would give time for more substantial negotiations.

This and other priority measures would "limit Iran's capability to break out quickly," it said in a report.

### **MOUNTAIN BUNKER**

The United States, Britain, France, Russia, China and Germany are the six powers involved in diplomacy aimed at resolving the long-running row over Iran's atomic plans.

Diplomats and analysts say the first meeting could be the start of a "sustained" dialogue although they do not expect a quick breakthrough after a gap of more than a year since the last round of talks ended without progress.

"I would regard an outcome of the first session in April that results in a continuing process of talks to be positive, even if there is no meeting of the minds on substance at that point," said Thielmann.

Persuading Iran to cease higher-grade enrichment, the pace of which it has trebled since late last year, may be a crucial point in the talks tentatively set to start on April 13, probably in Istanbul.

Earlier this month, Russia and China joined the four Western powers in expressing "regret" over Iran's expansion of higher-grade enrichment, most of which is now taking place deep inside a mountain to better protect it against Israeli or U.S. attacks.

That activity - which compares with the 3.5 percent level usually required to fuel nuclear power plants - would "indeed be a priority," one Western envoy said.

Other diplomats stressed that an initial focus on 20 percent enrichment should not be seen as "legitimizing" lower-level work as the U.N. Security Council has demanded a full suspension. France, in particular, is believed to be concerned about this.

"These are obligations stemming from Security Council resolutions ... you can't pick and choose," one European official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

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

Iran denies Western accusations of a nuclear weapons agenda.

### **TOUGHER INSPECTIONS**

In September, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said Tehran would stop refining uranium to 20 percent if it is guaranteed fuel for a medical research reactor in Tehran - that needs higher grade uranium than that required for power generation - seeking to revive a fuel swap deal that fell apart in 2009.

But that offer may be overtaken by events, as Iran has since made some progress in making its own fuel, said proliferation expert Mark Fitzpatrick of the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), a London-based think tank.

"Persuading Iran to part with its stockpile of 20 percent enriched uranium would be even more difficult," he said.



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

It has steadily increased uranium enrichment and now has enough 3.5 and 20 percent material for some four bombs if refined further, Western experts say.

Many analysts believe it may be unrealistic to demand that Iran suspend all enrichment as its leaders have invested so much national and personal prestige in the project.

In return for allowing limited, low-level enrichment, those analysts argue, Iran would need to accept much more intrusive U.N. inspections to make sure there is no military diversion.

Inspections and monitoring of Iran's nuclear program should be expanded significantly, a former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

"This would be a far more important goal of successful negotiations with Iran than to persist in our insistence that Iran suspend or freeze enrichment," Thomas Pickering added, according to a copy of his March 28 address.

*Editing by Robin Pomeroy*

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/sns-rt-us-nuclear-iran-talksbre82t0w2-20120330,0,7067609,full.story>

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Bloomberg News

## **IAEA's Amano Says His Focus Is Nuclear Sites, Not Missile**

By Sangwon Yoon and Yuji Okada

March 28, 2012

Yukiya Amano, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna, spoke to reporters in Seoul today after meeting government officials. He was also in the South Korean capital for the Nuclear Security Summit, which ended yesterday.

Amano on North Korea's plan for a rocket-launch that it says will be used to put a satellite into orbit, and on the nation's nuclear facility at Yongbyon: "We are following the issue of the satellite launch carefully. We cannot be indifferent but our focus is of course the monitoring and verification of the suspension of the activities in Yongbyon."

On sending inspectors to North Korea: "My position and the IAEA's position is that we have started initial consultation with North Korea, and with other countries which are members of the six-party talks." "Precisely speaking, nothing has been decided. The discussion has just started so nothing concrete has been decided."

On how difficult nuclear monitoring is in North Korea:

"Things won't go easy. It takes time. Last time, it took about several months for inspectors to arrive after the decision was made. I am not sure how long it will take this time. Generally speaking, monitoring is very special work. So planning this work takes time. I have to hear details about the agreement between the U.S. and North Korea. We also need to discuss what exactly we can do."

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-03-28/iaea-s-amano-says-his-focus-is-nuclear-sites-not-missile.html>

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China Daily – China

## **US Suspends Food Aid to DPRK**

March 29, 2012

By Zhao Lei in Washington DC (China Daily)

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A high-ranking Pentagon official confirmed on Wednesday that the United States has suspended its planned food aid to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

The decision came amid serious concern in the international community over Pyongyang's March 16 announcement of a new rocket launch in April, which the DPRK claims will carry a satellite and is for scientific purposes.

"We have been forced to suspend our activities to provide nutritional assistance to North Korea," Peter Lavoy, acting assistant secretary of defense for Asian and Pacific security affairs, told a House Armed Services Committee hearing on the Korean Peninsula security issue on Wednesday. The Seoul Nuclear Security Summit was concluded on Tuesday in Seoul.

The US believes that the DPRK's announced launch "reflects their lack of desire to follow through on their international commitments", he said.

Lavoy said the US government suspects the DPRK will use some event, such as the centennial commemoration of the late leader Kim Il-sung's birth and the parliamentary and presidential elections in the Republic of Korea (ROK), to "enhance its strategic weapons of mass destruction in this year".

"Our suspicions were confirmed when North Korea announced on March 16 that it plans to conduct a missile launch between April 12th and 16. This planned launch is highly provocative because it manifests North Korea's desire to test and expand its long-range missile capability."

Lavoy added the expected launch "would be in direct violation of Pyongyang's international obligations, including UN Security Council Resolutions 1718 and 1814", according to a statement he made before the committee.

General James Thurman, commander of United Nations Command Korea and the US-ROK Combined Forces Command, who testified alongside Lavoy in the hearing, said the US "in a very uncertain period on the Korean Peninsula with the possibility of unexpected events leading to miscalculation".

The DPRK "continues to expand significant resources in its pursuit of a robust nuclear strike capability opposition from the international community" and it will "strongly resist efforts to curtail its nuclear weapons and associated delivery platforms", he said.

"Why we're not providing that food assistance at this point is because our confidence in their ability to meet their agreements has been diminished. We do not use it as a lever to change their policies," Lavoy said.

He also mentioned that debris from a DPRK rocket could cause casualties, according to the Associated Press.

He said North Korea has indicated the rocket will be launched southward. Lavoy said it highly likely that is intended to land somewhere close to the Philippines or Indonesia, though the ROK and the Japanese island of Okinawa could also be affected.

Thurman said US officials are "working closely with allies and other partners in the region to try to discourage North Korea from launching the missile".

Under an agreement reached in late February, the DPRK agreed to suspend its uranium enrichment, nuclear and long-range missile tests and to allow UN inspectors to return to the country.

In return, the United States agreed to provide the DPRK with 240,000 tons of nutritional assistance. The two sides met early this month in Beijing to discuss details for the aid.

Speaking through the Korean Central News Agency, the official media, the DPRK said on Wednesday the satellite launch is intended to help estimate crop production and analyze the country's natural resources, according to Xinhua.

The KCNA report also quoted an unnamed deputy director of the Space Development Department of the Korean Committee for Space Technology, who said the DPRK government will show that the satellite is peaceful and scientific in nature. The deputy director added that the DPRK will invite foreign experts and journalists to witness the launch.



He said the invited experts and journalists would see the satellite and its carrier rocket, Unha-3, at the Sohae Satellite Launching Station, as well as the preparation site in the General Launch Command Center.

During a Monday meeting with US President Barack Obama on the sidelines of the Seoul Nuclear Security Summit, President Hu Jintao said China hopes the US and the DPRK will continue its dialogue and honor the recent consensus reached between each nation.

[http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/2012-03/29/content\\_14940210.htm](http://usa.chinadaily.com.cn/2012-03/29/content_14940210.htm)

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Yonhap News – South Korea  
March 29, 2012

## **N. Korea to Allow Foreign Experts to Observe Rocket Launch**

SEOUL, March 29 (Yonhap) -- North Korea has said it will open key satellite facilities to foreign experts and reporters to allow them to observe a satellite launch next month, in an apparent attempt to fend off mounting international criticism.

The North also said the 100-kilogram earth observation satellite will circle along the solar synchronous orbit at an altitude of 500 kilometers for two years, in a rare revelation of technical details of its satellite.

The move came after South Korea, the United States and other regional powers accused North Korea of trying to conduct a ballistic missile test, which is banned under a U.N. resolution.

In defiance of international warnings, North Korea has vowed to go ahead with its rocket launch set between April 12 and 16 to put the satellite into orbit.

The launch is timed with the 100th anniversary of the birth of late President Kim Il-sung, the country's founder and grandfather of current leader Kim Jong-un, which falls on April 15.

"We will organize special visits going beyond the international usage to show with transparency the peaceful, scientific and technological nature of the satellite," an official of the Korean Committee for Space Technology said Wednesday, according to the North's official Korean Central News Agency.

The official said the North will take the foreign delegations to a launch site ahead of the rocket launch and later to the General Satellite Control and Command Center in Pyongyang where they will "see the satellite being launched in a relevant place."

The North did not give any details on which foreign delegations would visit the communist country for what could be the first outside observation of a rocket launch.

The North's official told the KCNA the satellite "will assess the distribution of forests and natural resources" of the North and "collect data necessary for weather forecast, natural resources prospecting and others."

The official also said the satellite, mounted with a video camera, will send observation data, including pictures to the General Satellite Control and Command Center in Pyongyang.

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

Meanwhile, Japan's Tokyo Shimbun reported, citing an unidentified source, that North Korea began fueling a rocket and could launch the rocket around April 12 or 13. Last week, the North said its preparations for the rocket launch "have entered a full-fledged stage of action."



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A senior South Korean official denied the report, however, saying it made no sense to fuel the rocket this early as it is a last step before a launch. The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said fueling usually takes place one or two days before a launch.

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/northkorea/2012/03/29/12/0401000000AEN20120329002451315F.HTML>

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Wall Street Journal

March 29, 2012

## **Pyongyang's New Leader, Nuclear Policy Worry Tokyo**

By KELLY OLSEN

TOKYO—North Korea's development of nuclear and ballistic missile technology against the uncertain political background of a young leader attempting to consolidate power marks a potential new level of danger for regional security, according to a report by the research arm of Japan's Ministry of Defense.

The East Asian Strategic Review, by the National Institute for Defense Studies, draws the situation surrounding security on the divided Korean peninsula as unpredictable as ever.

"Concerns over the nuclear situation are becoming more acute," the report says, citing the possibility that the North may have succeeded in nuclear miniaturization. "If this leads to North Korea gaining the ability to mount its nuclear warheads on ballistic missiles, it would pose a major threat to countries in the region, including Japan," the report states.

The review covers developments in 2011, and so doesn't address North Korea's recent announcement of a plan to launch a rocket between April 12 and 16, which Pyongyang says is aimed at putting a satellite into space for peaceful purposes.

The launch announcement by North Korea, which already is under heavy international sanctions for its previous missile and nuclear development, has been met with widespread condemnation, particularly from South Korea, Japan and the U.S. They say the planned launch is in violation of sanctions imposed by the United Nations.

Tokyo is particularly sensitive to North Korean missiles, which flew over northern Japanese territory in 1998 and in 2009. This time, North Korea says it will launch toward the south, which could see the rocket fly over islands in the Japanese prefecture of Okinawa. Japan says it may shoot down the rocket if it threatens to hit its territory.

Hiroyasu Akutsu, a professor at the ministry's institute and an expert on North Korea, said there is little chance Pyongyang will reconsider its plan despite the international outcry.

He cited similar circumstances in 2009 when North Korea asserted its sovereign right to carry out a space launch.

"North Korea is confident that China will ultimately support it even if it carries out the launch," he said, adding that the country's new regime under Kim Jong Eun is trying to establish itself. "Because of this, for domestic reasons they are also in a situation where they can't call off the launch," he told reporters Thursday at a briefing on the report's release.

The third-generation leader of North Korea, who remains largely unknown, took the helm of the nation after the death in December of his father, Kim Jong Il. The rocket launch is said to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the birth of his grandfather Kim Il Sung, North Korea's founder.

"It is entirely unclear whether a young leader short of experience and charisma can, over the longer term, cement the foundations of the regime by securing the support of the military, maintaining internal stability, reviving the economy and achieving a favorable shift in external relations," the report states.

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Other topics in the report include last year's earthquake and tsunami disaster in Japan, the territorial dispute in the South China Sea involving China and Southeast Asian countries and the possibility of defense-budget cuts in the U.S. harming its military capabilities.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304177104577311333691064456.html>

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Mainichi Daily News – Japan

## **N. Korea Nuclear, Missile Issue Getting More Serious: Gov't Think Tank**

March 30, 2012

TOKYO (Kyodo) -- The Defense Ministry's think tank said in an annual report Friday that North Korea's nuclear and missile development is becoming increasingly serious, warning of a growing threat to Japan and regional security.

"If North Korea's downsizing of nuclear warheads makes progress and it makes them capable of being loaded on ballistic missiles, and the range of the missiles is extended, this would constitute a grave threat to Japan, the United States and South Korea," the National Institute for Defense Studies said in its 2012 East Asian Strategic Review.

The 243-page report which analyzes East Asian and global security issues also noted that North Korea is believed to be able to conduct a third nuclear test, following those in October 2006 and May 2009.

Pyongyang's new regime led by Kim Jong Un, who came to power following the death of his father Kim Jong Il, could take provocative action such as a missile launch and nuclear test as a means of consolidating its power base and drawing aid from other countries, the review also said.

North Korea announced earlier this month that it will launch a satellite in mid-April to mark the centennial of state founder Kim Il Sung's birthday, but this is widely seen as a disguise for a long-range ballistic missile test.

In dealing with the North Korean nuclear and missile issues, Eiichi Katahara, director of the institute, said Thursday at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan that Japan needs to enhance its missile defense as well as its security alliance with the United States and diplomatic efforts involving China.

In its chapter devoted to China, the report said, "By continuing to take assertive actions in the South China Sea, China has increased a sense of wariness toward it among neighboring countries in East Asia."

While China is modernizing the equipment of its People's Liberation Army, the review pointed out that discontent among veterans over their reemployment could lead to social instability.

On the United States, the paper expressed alarm that the drastic reduction in its defense budget against the backdrop of a swelling fiscal deficit could "cause significant damage to U.S. military capabilities."

As for Southeast Asia, the report said that Myanmar is aiming to reduce its dependence on China with its transition to civilian rule and is enhancing relationships with the United States, Europe and Japan.

To limit Chinese influence in the South China Sea, the Philippines is moving closer to the United States, while Vietnam is taking more cautious steps in doing so, it said.

Following the March 2011 earthquake, tsunami and ensuing nuclear crisis, the think tank also noted that lessons should be learned from "complex contingencies" such as by establishing decision-making mechanisms and enhancing transportation capabilities.

<http://mdn.mainichi.jp/mdnnews/news/20120330p2g00m0dm096000c.html>

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Seattle Times

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Friday, March 30, 2012

## Japan Will Intercept NKorean Rocket if Threatened

*Japan's defense minister Friday ordered missile units to intercept a long-range rocket expected to be launched by North Korea if the rocket or its fragments threaten to hit Japan.*

The Associated Press

TOKYO — Japan's defense minister Friday ordered missile units to intercept a long-range rocket expected to be launched by North Korea if the rocket or its fragments threaten to hit Japan.

The Unha-3 rocket is expected to fly past western Japan after its launch from North Korea's west coast sometime between April 12 and 16. The plan has raised concerns that a failed launch, or a falling stage of the rocket, could endanger Japanese lives or property.

Friday's order from Defense Minister Naoki Tanaka came at a meeting of Japan's national security council and followed earlier instructions for the military to prepare to intercept the rocket if it enters Japanese territory.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Osamu Fujimura urged people to stay calm, saying the military is preparing "just in case.

"We don't believe anything would fall over Japan's territory. Please carry out your daily lives and business as usual," he said.

A statement from the Defense Ministry said Japan would send destroyers equipped with Aegis missile defense systems to the Pacific and East China Sea and deploy mobile Patriot missile launchers in Okinawa. An interceptor missile unit is also likely to be deployed in Tokyo, although the capital is far from the expected flight path.

North Korea has said the launch will send a satellite into orbit to study its crops and natural resources. Japan, the United States and other countries claim the launch is a cover for testing long-range missiles, in violation of international agreements.

Seoul has also warned it might shoot down any parts of the North Korean rocket heading for South Korean territory.

Japan mobilized its interceptor units but did not follow through when North Korea launched a rocket in 2009.

Interceptor missiles on the Japanese destroyers would be the first line of defense, and the land-based Patriot missiles would be a backup. Japan has successfully tested its interceptor missiles but has never used them in a real-world situation.

[http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/nationworld/2017870494\\_apasjapannorthkorealaunch.html](http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/nationworld/2017870494_apasjapannorthkorealaunch.html)

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IBNLive – India

March 28, 2012

## Mumbai: BARC Security Breached 25 Times in Two Years

By Shoaib Ahmed, CNN-Indian Broadcasting Network (IBN)

Mumbai: The Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC), India's premier nuclear facility in Mumbai and also most vulnerable to a possible terror attack was on top of the list of sensitive buildings surveyed and video-taped by 26/11 terror attacks planner David Coleman Headley. Headley surveyed the BARC complex for a possible terror strike.

Intelligence agencies have now reported, despite stepped-up security after the Mumbai terror attacks, at least 25 intrusions have been reported in two years. While Intelligence agencies noted 10 intrusions in 2010, another 15 were reported in 2011. The intrusions took place both from the coastline next to the complex and the various entry points.

The Intelligence Bureau (IB) had warned the BARC after the intrusions were detected.



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In August 2011, a mystery boat triggered panic when it was noticed on the Mumbai coastline right behind BARC near the mangroves. Several instances of entry into the complex using fake documents have also been reported. Fake IDs have also been used to gain entry. In November 2011, a man with a spy camera was also apprehended inside the complex.

While the nuclear plant has multi-layered security, most vulnerable is the housing complex meant for hundreds of scientists.

Sources indicate that there is a lack of unified command and control, as security is handled by both Atomic Energy Commission and Central Industrial Security Force.

Two major slums around the complex pose a serious security threat. So do unguarded storm water drains and unplugged entry points.

Headley was specifically instructed by his handlers to explore BARC as a terror target. Apart from capturing videos from a taxi, he had also hired a boat to examine potential landing spots near the nuclear facility.

Though he was arrested in 2009, what's worrying intelligence agencies is that the sensitive data may have already reached his handlers across the border.

<http://ibnlive.in.com/news/mumbai-barc-security-breached-25-times-in-2-years/243563-3.html>

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Economic Times – India  
30 March, 2012

## **Indo-Pak Nuclear Exchange Possible if Pakistan Continues to Back Terror: James Miller**

Press Trust of India (PTI)

WASHINGTON: Observing that India and Pakistan have a complex history characterised by "animosity, mistrust, and conflict", a top Pentagon official has warned that there is a potential of a nuclear exchange between them if Islamabad continues to support terror groups against the neighbouring country.

"Support by elements of Pakistan's military and intelligence services for violent extremist organisations targeting India has the potential to result in military confrontation that could rapidly escalate to a nuclear exchange," James Miller said in written answers submitted to the Senate Armed Services Committee during a confirmation hearing for the post of Undersecretary of Defence for Policy.

He noted that India and Pakistan have "a long and complex history characterised by animosity, mistrust, and conflict."

Current efforts at dialogue through a renewed comprehensive dialogue have yielded few concrete results on the core security issues, especially regarding the resolution of territorial disputes, Miller said.

However, the efforts have increased people-to-people exchanges and trade relations between the two nations, and have provided each side greater insight into the other's positions, he said.

"Although progress is slow, the trajectory is positive and offers the promise of increased confidence-building measures," Miller said.

He said India's actions in South and Central Asia generally align with US goals: increasing economic growth and political stability through strengthened democratic institutions, and developmental assistance to help prevent radicalisation.

Regional stability ultimately depends on cooperation among India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, he asserted.

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"Transparency in the India-Afghanistan and Pakistan-Afghanistan bilateral relationships is critical to reduce misunderstanding and mistrust between India and Pakistan," he told the lawmakers.

"The ongoing transition of lead responsibility for security in Afghanistan to Afghan forces, and the strategic partnerships Afghanistan has been negotiating with the United States and other international partners are important steps toward demonstrating long-term commitment of the international community, addressing conditions that create uncertainty, and stabilising the region," Miller said.

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics/nation/indo-pak-nuclear-exchange-possible-if-pakistan-continues-to-back-terror-james-miller/articleshow/12467348.cms>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

## **Bulava Missile in for Two More Test Launches**

29 March 2012

At least two test launches for the Bulava intercontinental missile are planned for the fall, a source at Russia's United Shipbuilding Corporation said on Thursday.

The launches will be conducted in October or November from aboard the Alexander Nevsky Project 955 nuclear powered submarine.

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

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.

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 29 (RIA Novosti)

[http://en.rian.ru/military\\_news/20120329/172468571.html](http://en.rian.ru/military_news/20120329/172468571.html)

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Journal of Turkish Weekly – Turkey

## **U.S., Russia may Compromise on Missile Shield in 2 Years**

Thursday, March 29, 2012

RIA Novosti

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U.S. President Barack Obama hopes to reach a compromised agreement with Russia on the American missile defense system in Europe next year or in 2014, Josh Earnest, White House's deputy press secretary, said.

"There is some work to be done to reach an agreement with Russia... And the President is hopeful that in the next year or two we can start to demonstrate some tangible progress in finding common ground on this missile defense system," Earnest told a daily press briefing.

Earlier in the week, a live microphone captured President Obama telling Russian counterpart Dmitry Medvedev that he would have more room to negotiate on missile defense after the November presidential election. The unusually frank exchange between the two leaders took place on Monday on the eve of a global nuclear safety summit in Seoul.

The slip-up was quickly jumped upon by Obama's Republican rivals, who accused him of secretive deal-making on U.S. national security.

NATO and Russia agreed to cooperate on a European missile defense system at the NATO-Russia Council Summit in Lisbon in November 2010.

Russia believes that the development of the concept and architecture of European missile defense should be implemented on an equal basis and provide adequate confidence-building measures and transparency in terms of defense.

U.S. officials have repeatedly said the missile defense system would not be directed against Russia and that the U.S., NATO and Russia would benefit from its strategic capacity and cooperation.

<http://www.turkishweekly.net/news/133062/u-s-russia-may-compromise-on-missile-shield-in-2-years.html>

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Bloomberg News

## **Russia Sees U.S. Missile Plan at Point of No Return by 2020**

By Ilya Arkhipov  
March 29, 2012

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said a U.S. plan to build a missile shield in Europe will be past the point of no return by 2020, when it reaches the fourth phase of its development.

"There's no chance now of us reaching an agreement" with the current administration of U.S. President Barack Obama, whose position didn't change during talks with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev at a nuclear security summit in Seoul this week, Ryabkov said in an interview in New Delhi today.

"We already tried to come to an agreement on missile issues with the Republicans and we will continue to try" if they return to the White House," Ryabkov said. Whoever wins this year's presidential elections, Russia is ready to discuss the matter further, he added.

The U.S. isn't sharing any secret data on missile defense with Russia, Ryabkov said.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-03-29/russia-sees-u-s-missile-plan-at-point-of-no-return-by-2020-1-.html>

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British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) News – U.K.  
March 28, 2012

## **France's Enduring Nuclear Deterrent**

By Jonathan Marcus, BBC Defence and Diplomatic Correspondent



The Cold War may have long since ended, but France still maintains a fleet of nuclear-armed submarines and strike planes - and more than 300 warheads. Why? And are the French people still comfortable with being a nuclear power?

At the end of January Francois Hollande, the Socialist Party's candidate for the French presidency, visited the naval base at l'Isle Longue near Brest.

This is home to four nuclear-powered, ballistic missile-carrying submarines. While there, Mr Hollande went on board one of the boats - Le Triomphant - a visit he used to reaffirm his support for the country's independent nuclear deterrent.

In France there is an absence of any real political debate about the future of its nuclear arsenal.

### **Wide support**

As Bruno Tertrais, a Senior Research Fellow at the Foundation for Strategic Research (FSR) in Paris told the BBC, "the nuclear consensus has always been broader in France than in the UK. Few French politicians challenge the relevance of nuclear deterrence and even fewer would like Paris to unilaterally disarm."

Mr Hollande, he says, "has taken a very conservative stance on nuclear deterrence early in the campaign, and this did not create any major debate."

Francois Heisbourg, a special adviser at the FSR, agrees. "In the presidential election," he says, opinion polls show "the candidate of the sole party opposed to the nuclear force, the Greens, is credited with only between 1% and 3% of the vote".

Support for the deterrent is deeply rooted in French society and history, ever since it became a nuclear power in the 1960s. Jean Dominique Merchet, a French defence specialist, says: "The national consensus remains very strong - it's a heritage not only of the Gaullist-era (the 1950s and 1960s) but most deeply of the national catastrophe of May-June 1940. The nuclear deterrence is a sort of guarantee of 'never again!'"

The French nuclear deterrent has two basic elements; a sea-launched and an air-launched component. The Force Oceanique Strategique (FOST) rests upon four missile-carrying Triomphant-class submarines. This is considered the minimum needed to keep one vessel at sea at all times. These submarines are gradually being adapted to carry a new ballistic missile - the M51 - and between now and 2015 a new nuclear warhead will also be deployed.

The French Navy's attack submarines also play a part in defending its nuclear missile boats and a third element - a highly secure communications network - ensures the effectiveness of the FOST as a whole.

The air-launched component of the deterrent force is also being modernised. This rests upon an air-delivered cruise missile - the ASMP-A or Air-Sol Moyenne Portee Ameliore (improved air-to-ground medium range missile), with a relatively new warhead introduced in October 2009.

The missile has a range of some 500km and is carried by the French-built Mirage 2000N - a squadron of which are based at Istres in the Bouches-du-Rhone, southern France. In July 2010 a squadron of new Rafale jets stationed at Saint-Dizier, north-eastern France, took on part of the nuclear role. But air-to-air tankers, crucial to the strike force, may need to be replaced soon.

Overall though, France's nuclear deterrent has benefited from a steady process of improvement. Mr Heisbourg says limited decisions, like an upgrade of the M51 submarine-launched ballistic missile, or possible successors to the Triomphant class itself, will presumably come up for consideration towards the end of the next presidential term. "But," he argues, "the big decisions can wait for some 10 years or so."

### **Shared fleets?**

In 2010, France and Britain agreed to pursue closer cooperation in nuclear matters, establishing for the first time a joint simulation centre to for their nuclear arsenals.



"The London treaties," Mr Tertrais says, "build on two decades of in-depth conversations about nuclear deterrence. They're pragmatic, reflecting a bottom-up, cost-cutting approach by two countries which have similar requirements. They have a very symbolic value: for the first time, the two European nuclear powers embark in a close technical cooperation on sensitive nuclear matters."

The Anglo-French treaties make it clear that other areas of nuclear cooperation could be considered in the future. The idea of combined patrols has cropped up regularly in both the French and the UK debates over the past two decades. In effect it would mean pooling the two countries' nuclear ballistic missile-carrying submarines.

Mr Heisbourg suggests that any idea of joint patrols would be a non-starter. "I am not sure what is meant by joint patrols," he told the BBC. "Is this one country delegating the possibility to launch a nuclear war on its behalf? When stated thus the idea sounds, and is, barmy. If it is not that, what is it supposed to mean?"

David Yost, a professor at the US Naval Postgraduate School, at Monterey in California, has watched the evolution of French nuclear thinking for decades. He sees the Anglo-French cooperation as, paradoxically, a means of reaffirming the independence of the two countries' deterrent forces.

"France and the United Kingdom intend to save money by pooling certain support activities for their nuclear forces. An additional motivation may be sending a signal of mutual political backing for each country's long-term commitment to war-prevention through nuclear deterrence."

"'Joint or shared deterrence with alternating patrols' implies that the French government would be willing to rely on London to protect France and that the British government would be prepared to count on Paris to protect the United Kingdom in circumstances in which national forces were not available," he adds.

"This prospect appears remote at present and inconsistent with one of the declared goals of the cooperation - to make it possible for both countries to maintain their national security and autonomy in grave international crises."

### **Reducing warheads**

Mr Tertrais argues that with Britain and France determined to maintain their nuclear deterrents there are other avenues for 'Europeanisation'. "The two countries could state together, more clearly than they have in the past, that their deterrents protect the whole of Europe and that they would consult their partners, time and circumstances permitting, if they ever were to consider using nuclear weapons."

Mr Heisbourg is sceptical such an idea would work in practice. "The war in Libya," he says, "was a small, UN-mandated and winnable operation, but only half of the EU's and Nato's members actually supported it." This, he adds, showed the limits of - and the lack of support for - the notion of the Europeanisation of defence.

But what about disarmament? France, along with other nuclear powers - the US, Russia, China and the UK - is committed, at least on paper, to pursuing negotiations to scrap nuclear weapons altogether.

"Since the late 1980s France has eliminated approximately half its nuclear warheads and all of its ground-based delivery systems," Professor Yost says. "In 2008 President Nicolas Sarkozy announced that France's entire arsenal amounted to 'fewer than 300 warheads'.

"France ratified the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in 1998 and dismantled its nuclear test site in the South Pacific. France also stopped producing plutonium and enriched uranium for weapons and dismantled the production facilities for these materials."

Professor Yost says French officials do not rule out participating someday in negotiations to limit France's nuclear forces.

This may, however, be a long way off, he says. "French policy on nuclear disarmament has explicitly stressed the idea that the goal should not be simply the abolition of nuclear weapons but the achievement of increased security for all."

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-radio-and-tv-17512596>



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Military Times.com

## **STRATCOM Boss: Improve Nuke C3 Network**

By Brian Everstine - Staff writer

Tuesday Mar 27, 2012

The head of U.S. Strategic Command told lawmakers Tuesday that the command, control and communications component of the nation's nuclear force is in need of improvement, and that keeping the system updated is problematic.

"I will always be a little uncomfortable about the network," Air Force Gen. Robert Kehler told the Senate Armed Services Committee. "I will tell you that I think there is more to be done."

Specific issues in the command and control of nuclear weapons are being addressed by the \$14 billion Advanced High Frequency satellites, the first of which reached orbit last year with the next launch scheduled for next month. Six are scheduled to be launched through 2017 to replace the current Milstar system and be able to resist signals jamming.

However, Kehler said that the command has seen issues with ground control terminals, which have lagged the deployment of the satellites, and said the satellite's full capability will not be realized at first.

"That means we're going to have to use older terminals," he said. "We won't get full capability out of the satellites at first. We're working that program."

Additional issues include ensuring a secure communications connection with bombers and upgrading the ground-based part of nuclear command and control.

The administration's fiscal 2013 budget includes an about \$7 million increase for the Air Force's nuclear weapons support and about \$80 million for nuclear weapons modernization, along with \$161 million for new STRATCOM headquarters at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

<http://militarytimes.com/news/2012/03/air-force-stratcom-robert-kehler-boss-says-improve-nuke-c3-network-032712w/>

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The Star – Malaysia

Wednesday, March 28, 2012

## **Pentagon Sees N.Korea Cyber Threat, 2012 Provocations**

By Paul Eckert

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - North Korea has added sophisticated cyber attack capabilities to its arsenal of threatening weapons and this year is rife with opportunities for military provocations from Pyongyang, beginning with a controversial rocket launch next month, senior U.S. defence officials said on Wednesday.

In a sign North Korea is moving forward with its announced plan to launch a rocket in mid-April, a U.S. official confirmed the United States had detected activity that looked like launch preparations at a facility near the country's north-western border with China.

The U.S. military officials told the House of Representatives Armed Services Committee that North Korea's large conventional military, nuclear weapons programs, ballistic missiles and newer capabilities in cyber warfare all threatened the United States and its allies in the Asia-Pacific region.

Army General James Thurman, the commander of U.S. Forces Korea, told the panel that a skilled team of hackers was the newest addition to North Korea's capabilities that also include chemical and biological weapons.

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"Such attacks are ideal for North Korea, providing the regime a means to attack (South Korean) and U.S. interests without attribution, and have been increasingly employed against a variety of targets including military, governmental, educational and commercial institutions," he said in prepared comments.

Thurman, who leads the 28,000 U.S. troops in South Korea, told the panel that the power transfer following the death in December of leader Kim Jong-il "appears to be proceeding without discernible internal challenges and with significant Chinese political and economic support."

Kim's untested son, Kim Jong-un, estimated to be 28 years old, has eased into power surrounded by allies of his father with so far "no indications the regime will depart significantly from Kim Jong-il's policies," said Thurman.

Peter Lavoy, acting assistant secretary of defence for Asia and Pacific Security Affairs, told the panel the potential for provocations from North Korea in 2012 was a "major concern" of the Pentagon.

#### MISSILE COURSE A CONCERN

From the U.S. perspective, the first provocation will be a North Korean ballistic missile launch slated for between April 12 and 16. But South Korean elections in April and December might also tempt Pyongyang to take actions to influence Seoul's domestic politics, he said.

Pyongyang says the rocket to be launched to mark the 100th birthday of deceased state founder Kim Il-sung will carry a weather satellite into orbit. But most outsiders say it is a disguised test of a long-range missile that violates key U.N. Security Council resolutions that ban any such launches.

"This planned launch is highly provocative because it manifests North Korea's desire to test and expand its long-range missile capability," said Lavoy. He said the announcement of the launch also broke a missile moratorium North Korea agreed to on February 29 with Washington in exchange for food aid.

The website GlobalSecurity.org published satellite imagery last week of a launch pad and tower without a rocket at the Tongchang-dong launch site. A U.S. official indicated there were signs the North Koreans were getting the site ready.

"The U.S. has seen indications that the North Koreans are preparing to launch a long-range rocket," said the official.

Pentagon spokeswoman Leslie Hull-Ryde said the United States and South Korea were monitoring North Korea, but declined to comment on specific intelligence on the launch.

Many of North Korea's neighbours are concerned about next month's launch of a rocket, which North Korea has said would travel southward toward the Philippines or Indonesia, Lavoy told U.S. lawmakers.

"I don't know if we have any confidence on the stability of the missile or what the impact will be," he said.

The planned launch has put on hold diplomatic efforts to coax North Korea back into talks over its nuclear weapons programs that have been frozen for three years.

Pyongyang often shifts tactics between diplomacy and confrontation, said Thurman.

"History tells us that Pyongyang will shift from diplomatic to provocative behaviour when conventional diplomacy has run its course and the North Korean leadership perceives coercive diplomacy offers a better chance to realize its objectives," he said.

*Additional reporting by David Alexander and Mark Hosenball; editing by Lisa Shumaker and Mohammad Zargham.*

[http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2012/3/29/worldupdates/2012-03-28T221543Z\\_1\\_BRE82R1I7\\_RTROPTT\\_0\\_UK-USA-KOREA-NORTH&sec=Worldupdates](http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2012/3/29/worldupdates/2012-03-28T221543Z_1_BRE82R1I7_RTROPTT_0_UK-USA-KOREA-NORTH&sec=Worldupdates)

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Washington Times



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## Inside the Ring: Nuclear Risk

By Bill Gertz, *The Washington Times*  
Wednesday, March 28, 2012

The commander of U.S. strategic nuclear forces told a Senate hearing this week that defense budget cuts are undermining the urgently needed modernization of strategic nuclear forces through delays in planned upgrades.

Air Force Gen. C. Robert Kehler, commander of U.S. Strategic Command, based in Omaha, Neb., said Tuesday at a hearing of the Senate Armed Services Committee that budget cuts pose “acceptable” risk levels for U.S. strategic nuclear deterrence against current nuclear-armed enemies.

In an exchange with Sen. Jeff Sessions, Alabama Republican, Gen. Kehler said the U.S. nuclear arsenal is “safe, secure and effective.”

“And so today I believe that that deterrent force could meet its objectives,” he said.

But the four-star general then voiced worries about funding cuts for programs to modernize the W76 strategic warheads used on submarine-launched nuclear missiles and to upgrade aircraft-dropped B61 nuclear bombs.

“We have weapons that are beginning to reach their end of life,” he said. “What the budget reductions did was it slowed the delivery of those [modernized] weapons.”

The delay in the W76 is “manageable,” Gen. Kehler said, and the B61 life extension begins next year but will not produce its first weapon until 2019, instead of 2017 as needed. “I believe that’s manageable risk as well,” he said.

Gen. Kehler said Stratcom also is studying ICBM and submarine missile warheads for “commonality” in future life-extension efforts.

The current budget allows for managing the risk of weakening the nuclear force deterrent, but “the issue is what happens beyond ‘13,” he said.

“And that’s where the two secretaries of energy and defense have said that we do not have the complete plan in place for what happens beyond ‘13,” Gen. Kehler said. “That concerns me.”

A plan to upgrade a uranium processing facility remains in place, but there is no plan to upgrade a chemical and metallurgical building used in nuclear weapons processing that is now five to seven years later in the budget process than needed.

“I’m concerned about that. I am concerned about our ability to provide for the deployed stockpile. And that is my No. 1 concern here,” Gen. Kehler said.

Congressional Republicans have said President Obama has reneged on promises made during the 2010 Senate ratification debate to provide full funding for nuclear weapons upgrades in exchange for many senators’ support for the New START agreement with Russia.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/mar/28/inside-the-ring-nuclear-risk/>

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The Moscow Times – Russia

## Obama Asked to Explain Remark to Medvedev

29 March 2012

Reuters

WASHINGTON — House of Representatives Speaker John Boehner asked U.S. President Barack Obama on Wednesday to state clearly and publicly whether he planned any concessions to Russia on the U.S. missile defense program.

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Boehner said in a letter to Obama that he was alarmed by the president's overheard remarks Monday assuring President Dmitry Medvedev that he would have "more flexibility" to deal with contentious arms control issues after the Nov. 6 presidential election.

Obama and Medvedev were attending a nuclear security summit in Seoul and were unaware that their conversation was being picked up by microphones as reporters were led into the room.

"Given the specter you have raised of shifting positions, it would be appropriate that you state publicly and clearly that no unilateral concessions will be made to the Russians, before or after the election," Boehner, a Republican, wrote to Democrat Obama.

Boehner said it was "troubling that you would suggest to Russian leaders that their reckless ambition would be rewarded with greater 'flexibility.'"

If Obama is planning concessions on missile defense, Boehner said, the president should report them and consult "immediately" with the appropriate committees in Congress.

Obama's remarks had been pounced on earlier by Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney, who called them troubling and said Russia was "our No. 1 geopolitical foe."

But Boehner refused to criticize Obama while the president was still out of the United States. Obama returned Tuesday evening.

Another senior Republican, former presidential candidate John McCain, also took aim at Obama on Wednesday for the comments to Medvedev, saying Obama was "playing fast and loose with national security."

McCain, a senator, lost the White House to Obama in the 2008 presidential election.

<http://www.themoscowtimes.com/news/article/obama-asked-to-explain-remark-to-medvedev/455745.html>

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Atlanta Journal-Constitution  
Thursday, March 29, 2012

## **US Reviews Research Risks amid Bird-Flu Debate**

By Lauran Neergaard, Associated Press

WASHINGTON - The Obama administration is ordering a government-wide review of scientific research that could raise biosecurity concerns in the wake of fierce controversy over some man-made strains of the deadly bird flu.

The policy released Thursday tightens oversight of high-stakes research involving dangerous germs, work that could bring a big payoff but which also could cause harm if the research ever is misused.

The new U.S. policy doesn't mean there's anything wrong with doing this kind of research, including recent experiments in Wisconsin and the Netherlands that created easier-to-spread versions of the bird flu.

"These were important experiments to perform," stressed Dr. Anthony Fauci of the National Institutes of Health, which is posting the new policy Thursday on its biosecurity website.

The policy lays out steps to help scientists and government agencies determine which projects raise particular concerns about biosecurity and how to ensure that risks from the research are carefully managed from the start.

The policy comes as biosecurity advisers to the government began a two-day meeting Thursday to reconsider whether the public ever should hear the full details of those bird-flu experiments.

Bird flu only occasionally sickens people, mostly after close contact with infected poultry, but it can be deadly when it does. Scientists long have feared it might mutate to spread more easily and thus spark a pandemic. Two NIH-funded

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labs were studying how that might happen when they created strains of this H5N1 virus that some mammals — ferrets — can spread by coughing or sneezing.

The work triggered international debate when the U.S. government urged that details be kept secret so would-be terrorists couldn't copy the strains, and critics worried that a lab accident might allow the viruses to escape. But flu experts meeting at the World Health Organization disagreed, saying the research should be published eventually.

The researchers have said the airborne virus didn't actually kill the ferrets and that publishing their findings would help other scientists monitor bird flu's evolution in the wild as well as test vaccines and treatments. The government will consider the biosecurity advisers' recommendations as it decides next steps.

Fauci said in an interview Thursday that the bird flu experiments were conducted under very strict safety protocols. The new biosecurity policy probably wouldn't have prevented the big debate over what to do with the results, but its call for regular reviews might have offered advance warning about the coming dilemma, he said. Instead, the scientific community was caught by surprise.

There already are strict government rules on how to handle certain germs that might be of interest to bioterrorists, but Fauci said the new policy makes clear steps for assessing and managing risks with such research. He predicted dilemmas like the bird-flu research would be rare.

The NIH has completed its own biosecurity review and found fewer than 10 projects that met the criteria for further risk management, he said.

<http://www.aic.com/health/us-reviews-research-risks-1401707.html>

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Minneapolis Star Tribune

## **Diplomat: Russia, US Need to Do Their 'Homework' to Settle Missile Defense Dispute**

By VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV, Associated Press

March 30, 2012

MOSCOW - Russia and the United States need to do their "homework" on the technicalities of a proposed NATO missile defense shield in order to settle a dispute that has strained relations, the U.S. State Department's top arms control official said Friday.

The U.S. insists the shield is needed to fend off an Iranian missile threat, but Moscow has rejected those assurances and voiced concern that it will eventually grow powerful enough to challenge Russia's nuclear deterrent.

Acting Undersecretary of State Rose Gottemoeller said Russian and U.S. technical experts should meet to discuss the shield's specifics.

She said such talks should prove that Russia and the U.S. can cooperate on the shield and "that the technical capabilities of the system are simply not those that would undermine Russian strategic offensive forces."

"The more we can be talking about that among technical experts, the greater predictability for the Russian Federation, the greater confidence in what the system can and can't do," she said during a visit to Moscow.

Earlier this week, during a nuclear security summit in Seoul, President Barack Obama told Russian President Dmitry Medvedev in remarks unintentionally caught on a microphone that he would have more room to negotiate on the shield if he is re-elected in November.

Obama's Republican Party rivals pounced on the remarks, accusing him of secretive plotting over American national security.

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Seeking to contain the gaffe, Obama said he wants to spend the rest of the year working through technical issues related to the missile defense dispute with the Russians, and that it was not surprising that a deal couldn't be completed quickly.

Asked about Obama's remarks to Medvedev, Gottemoeller said the U.S. president "wasn't talking about any secret deals or anything like that. He was stating the political realities of 2012."

"In terms of big national initiatives, policy initiatives it's just the reality of the situation that in an election year it's more difficult to accomplish that," she said. "But I see the possibility for homework, as I call it, not only in missile defense cooperation, but in preparing the groundwork for new nuclear reduction negotiations as well."

She said Obama's policy of a "reset" in relations with Moscow has led to ongoing improvement in U.S.-Russian ties, featuring such achievements as the New START arms reduction treaty and Russia's providing a transit corridor for military supplies to the U.S. and other NATO forces in Afghanistan.

"We just have to continue to remember that it's in the U.S. national interest, as well as we believe in Russian national interest, to engage in a wide-ranging agenda of cooperation," Gottemoeller said.

<http://www.startribune.com/world/145123855.html>

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London Guardian – U.K.

## **Former Cern Scientist Faces Terror Trial in France**

*French-Algerian Adlene Hicheur accused of conspiring to organise attacks with north African wing of al-Qaida*

By Angelique Chrisafis in Paris

Thursday, 29 March 2012

A former nuclear scientist at Switzerland's Cern laboratory, famous for its Hadron collider that aims to recreate the conditions of the big bang, has gone on trial for allegedly plotting terror attacks in France.

Adlene Hicheur, 35, who is French-Algerian, is accused of conspiring to organise attacks with the north African wing of al-Qaida. His lawyers argue that he only sent some angry emails, never took steps to gather weapons or commit an attack, and there was no proof of any concrete terrorist intentions.

Hicheur, who has been on remand for two and a half years, told the court the investigation had been dishonest, and full of confusions and imprecision.

Hicheur was arrested in October 2009 at his parents' home in south-east France, hours before he was to take a flight to Algeria to work on a property purchase, his defence team said. A postdoctoral researcher based at a university in Lausanne, he had been on contract at the Cern laboratory for nuclear research, studying big bang theory and the origins of the universe.

French intelligence services were reportedly alerted to him after a statement from al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) was sent to President Nicolas Sarkozy's Elysée Palace in early 2008. Police then intercepted his emails.

While on sick leave Hicheur had allegedly railed in various emails about the need to punish western governments for anti-Muslim wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, according to an order by judges sending the case to trial.

French investigators studied about 35 emails between Hicheur and an alleged contact in AQIM. Some cited possible targets, including a French military barracks in the Alps.

Investigators have said Hicheur admitted under police questioning that he believed a contact in the email correspondence, a man in Algeria named Mustapha Debchi, was part of AQIM. A police search of Hicheur's computer turned up a file folder titled "tempo AQMI", using the group's French-language acronym.

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Magistrates investigating the case said the email exchanges crossed the line of simple debate or ideas into the sphere of terrorist violence.

Debchi allegedly sought to persuade Hicheur to carry out a suicide bombing, which he refused, responding that it was against Islam and he had no intention of dying prematurely, the court documents showed. In one email, Debchi allegedly asked Hicheur: "Don't beat around the bush: are you prepared to work in a unit becoming active in France?"

The defence team contest Debchi's identity and deny there is any evidence of concrete intention to commit an attack.

A week after police in Toulouse shot dead the self-proclaimed jihadist Mohamed Merah for killing seven people in a series of gun attacks on soldiers and schoolchildren, Hicheur's trial over "criminal association with a view to plotting terrorist attacks" has made headlines in France.

His defence team has warned against parallels with the Merah case, which they say is very different. "I think that there should be no confusion between Mohamed Merah and Adlene Hicheur," Hicheur's lawyer, Patrick Baudouin, said in a pre-trial briefing, describing Merah as a "crazy, dangerous criminal", with an arsenal of weapons who had received arms training in Pakistan.

"For Adlene Hicheur, there is nothing like that. He has a family, friends, working colleagues, a stable entourage. He has never been in Afghanistan nor in any other such country."

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/mar/29/cern-scientist-terror-trial-france>

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Sydney Morning Herald – Australia

## **Revealed: bin Laden's Life on the Run**

By Declan Walsh

March 31, 2012

Osama bin Laden spent nine years on the run in Pakistan after the September 11, 2001, attacks, and in that time he moved between five safe houses and fathered four children, at least two of whom were born in a government hospital, his youngest wife has told Pakistani investigators.

The testimony of Amal Ahmed Abdul Fatah, bin Laden's 30-year-old wife, offers the most detailed account yet of life on the run for the bin Laden family in the years preceding the US commando raid in Abbottabad last May that killed the 54-year-old al-Qaeda leader.

Her account in a police report dated January 19 contains manifest flaws: Fatah's words are paraphrased by a police officer, and there is noticeably little detail about the Pakistanis who helped her husband evade his US pursuers. Nevertheless, it raises more questions about how the world's most-wanted man managed to shunt his family between cities spanning Pakistan, apparently undetected and unmolested by the otherwise formidable security services.

Bin Laden's three widows are of great interest because they hold the answers to some of the questions that frustrated Western intelligence in the years after September 11. They are under house arrest in Islamabad, and their lawyer expects them and two adult children - bin Laden's daughters Maryam, 21, and Sumaya, 20 - to be charged with breaking Pakistani immigration laws on April 2. A conviction carries a possible five-year jail sentence.

The wives have co-operated with the authorities to varying degrees. Investigators say the older women, named in court documents as Kharia Hussain Sabir and Siham Sharif, both citizens of Saudi Arabia, have largely refused to co-operate with investigators. But Fatah, who was wounded in the raid in which her husband died, has spoken out.

The report, by a joint investigative panel made up of civilian and military officials, was first mentioned in the Pakistani newspaper *Dawn* on Thursday. *The New York Times* later obtained a copy of the filing.

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In Washington, US officials said that while they could not confirm every detail of the report, it appeared generally consistent with what is known and believed about bin Laden's movements.

In the report's account, Fatah said she agreed to marry bin Laden in 2000 because "she had a desire of marrying a mujahid". She flew into Karachi in July that year and, months later, crossed into Afghanistan to join bin Laden and two other wives at his base on a farm outside Kandahar.

The September 11 attacks caused the bin Laden family to "scatter," the report said.

She returned to Karachi with her newborn daughter, Safia, where they stayed for about nine months. They changed houses up to seven times under arrangements brokered by "some Pakistani family" and bin Laden's elder son, Saad.

Other senior al-Qaeda figures were also in Karachi, a sprawling city of about 18 million people. Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the architect of the September 11 terrorist attacks, claims to have personally killed *The Wall Street Journal* reporter Daniel Pearl there during this period; Pearl was captured at a house in Rawalpindi in March 2003. Fatah said she left Karachi in the second half of 2002 for Peshawar, the capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, where she was reunited with her husband. The US pursuit of bin Laden was running high. Al-Qaeda operatives had attacked an Israeli-owned hotel in Kenya and nightclubs in Indonesia, and with CIA intelligence resources not yet diverted to Iraq, the search was firmly focused on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border area.

Bin Laden, according to his wife, took his family deep into rural mountain areas of northwest Pakistan - but not into the tribal belt where much Western attention was focused.

At first they stayed in Shangla District in Swat, a picturesque area about 130 kilometres north-west of the capital, Islamabad, where they stayed in two different houses for between eight and nine months.

Then in 2003 they moved to Haripur, a small town even closer to Islamabad, where they stayed in a rented house for two years. Here, Fatah gave birth to a girl, Aasia, in 2003 and a boy, Ibrahim, in 2004 - both of whom were delivered in a local government hospital. The police report says that Fatah "stayed in hospital for a very short time of about 2-3 hours" on each occasion. A separate document says she gave fake identity papers to hospital staff.

Finally, in mid-2005, according to Fatah, bin Laden and his family moved to Abbottabad, 32 kilometres east of Haripur, where she gave birth to another two children: Zainab in 2006 and Hussain in 2008.

Fatah told investigators that the houses in Swat, Haripur and Abbottabad were organised by their Pashtun hosts, identified as two brothers named Ibrahim and Abrar, whose families stayed with them throughout.

Ibrahim is believed to refer to Abu Ahmed al-Kuwaiti, a Pakistani-born Pashtun who grew up in Kuwait and who was known to US intelligence as "the courier," because he carried the al-Qaeda leader's messages.

When US Navy SEAL commandos stormed the Abbottabad house last May, they killed bin Laden, and shot Fatah, who was in the same room, in the leg. She survived but four others were killed in the raid: the courier, his wife Bushra, his brother, Abrar, and bin Laden's 20-year-old son Khalil.

On Tuesday a cousin of Fatah's in Yemen said she was being held in a basement. "She limps from a bullet wound in her knee and she's suffering from psychological trauma and very low blood pressure," Hameed al-Sadeh told Reuters.

Fatah's account, if proven, suggests that US military forces came tantalisingly close to bin Laden in late 2005. In October of that year, a powerful earthquake struck north-western Pakistan, killing at least 73,000 people. For weeks afterwards, US Chinook helicopters, diverted from Afghanistan and carrying relief supplies, passed overhead on their way into the quake zone. Meanwhile, Pakistan's military ruler, Pervez Musharraf, a close ally of the Bush administration, repeatedly claimed that bin Laden was sheltering across the border in Afghanistan.

The Pakistani decision to prosecute the three wives and two children goes against an earlier recommendation from the police that they should be deported to Saudi Arabia and Yemen. Pakistani analysts said that suggested that Pakistani intelligence may have hidden reasons for detaining the family.



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"I think the government wants to hang onto them through a trial procedure so that the investigation can be completed," said Dr Riffat Hussain, a defence analyst. "And I think the Americans are quite keen to have access to Osama's wives too."

**The New York Times**

<http://www.smh.com.au/world/revealed-bin-ladens-life-on-the-run-20120330-1w3kv.html>

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Foreign Policy

OPINION/The World of Threats

## Genetic Weapons, You Say?

By David E. Hoffman

Tuesday, March 27, 2012

In the Russian government lately, there's been some careless talk about biological weapons.

Prime Minister Vladimir Putin published a series of essays about the country's problems as part of his bid to return to the presidency. The **essay** on national security, published in *Rossiiskaya Gazeta* on Feb. 20, argued that Russia needs to prepare for threats of the future.

"The military capability of a country in space or information countermeasures, especially in cyberspace, will play a great, if not decisive, role in determining the nature of an armed conflict," Putin wrote.

Then he added:

"In the more distant future, weapons systems based on new principles (beam, geophysical, wave, genetic, psychophysical and other technology) will be developed. All this will, in addition to nuclear weapons, provide entirely new instruments for achieving political and strategic goals."

Putin said Russian needed to be prepared "for quick and effective responses to new challenges."

Putin seemed to be making the general point that weapons which are based on genetically-engineered pathogens -- biological weapons -- could be a future threat. Many others have expressed fears about this as well.

Then, last Thursday, Putin gathered some of his leading cabinet ministers to talk about implementing the ideas in his essays. The Russian government has published a **transcript** of the session. Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov pledged to come up with a plan to implement 28 tasks set by Putin. Among them, he said:

"The development of weapons based on new physical principles: radiation, geophysical, wave, genetic, psychophysical, etc."

Putin did not react, but he should have stopped this loose talk. "Genetic" weapons -- and more broadly, all biological weapons -- are banned by the 1972 Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. Russia has insisted that it is in compliance and is not working on biological weapons of any kind. (The Soviet Union, in earlier decades, built a massive biological weapons program in violation of the treaty, which it had signed.)

Last December, at the Seventh Review Conference of the treaty in Geneva, the Russian Federation vowed that it "fully and unwaveringly carries out its obligations" and "does not develop, produce, stockpile, acquire or retain" biological or toxin weapons.

Perhaps someone needs to remind the defense minister and the re-elected president.

*David E. Hoffman is a Pulitzer Prize-winning author and a contributing editor to Foreign Policy.*

[http://hoffman.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/03/27/genetic\\_weapons\\_you\\_say](http://hoffman.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/03/27/genetic_weapons_you_say)

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People's Daily – China

OPINION

## How Far Away Are We From Nuclear Terrorism?

By Jiao Shixin (Jiefang Daily)

March 28, 2012

*Edited and Translated by People's Daily Online*

Nuclear terrorism refers to the use, or threat of the use of nuclear weapons or other nuclear-related measures in acts of terrorism, which can cause enormous destruction.

Nuclear terrorism can take many forms. The simplest form is building a dirty bomb, which uses explosives to release nuclear and other radioactive material resulting in nuclear pollution and radiation damage. As the decay of uranium and other nuclear materials normally takes hundreds of thousands of years, a dirty bomb attack can cause lasting damage to a country or region. Instead of acquiring a ready-made nuclear weapon, terrorists may attack nuclear power plants or nuclear facilities to achieve their destructive goals. Compared to potential threats from nuclear states, nuclear terrorism is a nearer and more urgent threat.

The International Atomic Energy Authority recorded more than 1,500 incidents where nuclear and other radioactive material had been lost, stolen, or possessed without authorization between 1993 and 2008 when the global financial crisis occurred. It also recorded more than 1,600 incidents of nuclear smuggling during the period, over 20 of which involved the smuggling of nuclear material that was enough to build a simple atom bomb.

Whether terrorist organizations have acquired enough nuclear material or the ability to make a nuclear bomb is still unknown. The economic turmoil caused by the financial crisis may increase the interests-driven illicit nuclear trade activity. In November 2010, the Georgian government arrested two smugglers who were trying to sell highly enriched uranium to Islamic extremist groups. The uranium sample was 89.4 percent enriched, enough to make an atom bomb. The two smugglers confessed that they could get much more highly enriched uranium from their supplier. It was the third time in seven years that highly enriched uranium had been intercepted in Georgia.

As human beings are increasingly relying on nuclear energy, terrorism risks that occurred in the nuclear power stations and nuclear facilities in the world are also increasing. At present, there are over 1,000 nuclear facilities that are supervised and protected by the International Atomic Energy Agency. The nuclear facilities in countries that have not joined in the "Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty," such as India, are not subject to the supervision. Therefore, the source of nuclear smuggling has not been completely blocked.

It is noteworthy that the loss of nuclear materials and nuclear matters caused by national unrest and regional conflicts has become more and more serious, which is also an important factor in the rising threat of nuclear terrorism. The collapse of the Soviet Union had led to confusion of the nuclear management and out of control and a large number of nuclear fuel and nuclear materials disappeared. The nuclear black markets appeared in Central Asia, Europe and the Balkans in the 1990s have also been active. All the problems, including the political turmoil in current Middle East countries, the deterioration of security situation in Iraq and the intensification of Iranian nuclear issue, may lead to the loss of nuclear materials and nuclear matters into the hands of individuals. Once the terrorists obtained nuclear weapons from these channels, the nuclear disaster facing humanity will come.

<http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90780/7772340.html>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

OPINION/Columnist

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## Due West: Obama's "Flexibility" Gives Putin Edge on Missile Defense

28 March 2012

Weekly column by Konstantin von Eggert

The scandal that the Obama-Medvedev open mic exchange in Seoul created both in the U.S. and in Russia is somewhat staggering. Obama's desire to continue the "reset" policy is evident. He thinks of it as one of the few unqualified successes of his presidency. While he is obliged to follow the line of his predecessor George W. Bush on missile defense in Europe, his real foreign policy interests (of which there are precious few) lie elsewhere.

Despite the adoration he still receives in Europe, he is much less interested in Transatlantic relations than previous post-WWII U.S. presidents have been. That he'll be prepared to compromise when the time is right is not so very surprising.

He will have to face a much tougher partner than Dmitry Medvedev after Vladimir Putin takes over the famous green presidential study in the Kremlin. First of all, Putin doesn't like America. All the explanations that that his anti-U.S. rhetoric is just an electoral trick are vacuous. The man says pretty much the same thing at every opportunity: America has discriminated against Russia in global affairs ever since the end of the Cold War, encroaches on its interests in the post-Soviet space and elsewhere, foments regime change wherever it pleases and, if not for Mr. Putin's staunch resistance, would have imposed a quisling government on Russia proper. Whether Russia's president-elect believes the latter to be at all possible is a matter for debate, but the general perception of America as competitive and hostile is no doubt part and parcel of Putin's and the Kremlin's thinking.

Obama's slip of the tongue does indeed give Mr. Putin an advantageous position in ballistic missile defense (BMD) negotiations – that is if Obama remains in the White House. The problem for both sides is that the Russian-U.S. policy agenda is woefully short. And it mostly consists of disagreements: the mysterious issue of BMD, still flaring despite the fact that both sides have ruled out the possibility of nuclear war between them; the long-standing Iranian problem with Russia refusing to see Iran as a threat to world peace; and the crisis in Syria, revealing Moscow's and Washington's differing views over humanitarian intervention and responsibility to protect. It seems that only on the topic of Afghanistan do Russia and the United States sincerely cooperate. Moscow sees the benefit of the NATO-led coalition fighting the war against the Taliban and thus protecting Russia's vulnerable Central Asian neighbors from an upsurge of Islamic fundamentalism. In addition Russia receives significant revenue from the air and ground transport corridors it provides the Western alliance.

The list of problems would have been longer but for the Obama administration's timidity over the rule of law, human rights and political freedoms in Russia. But bilateral relations will sink to new lows if Congress approves the so called "Magnitsky list," banning several dozen Russian officials allegedly involved in the unlawful imprisonment and death of lawyer and auditor Sergei Magnitsky from entering the U.S.

Actually, any steps by the U.S. administration that touch upon Russian domestic policies will be met with rage. Knowing that Obama wants his Russia policy to be his legacy, the Kremlin may well compromise on some issues (for example, gradually abandon its support for Bashar Assad's regime in Syria), so long as they do not concern the well-being and impunity of Russian bureaucracy. But with the protest movement in Russia gradually gaining strength, it will be increasingly difficult for the second Obama administration to pussyfoot around Russian domestic developments. As Russia changes, Vladimir Putin's rule will inevitably continue to weaken. The biggest challenge for any U.S. president, especially for Obama, may be to deal with a Kremlin that is assertive and defensive at the same time.

*The views expressed in this article are the author's and may not necessarily represent those of RIA Novosti.*

**Konstantin Eggert** is a commentator and host for radio Kommersant FM, Russia's first 24-hour news station. In the 1990s he was Diplomatic Correspondent for "Izvestia" and later the BBC Russian Service Moscow Bureau Editor.

<http://en.rian.ru/columnists/20120328/172443744.html>

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The Hill

OPINION/DEFCON Hill Blog

## **Kerry: Use Diplomacy to Stop Iran Making a ‘Mad Dash’ to Nukes**

By Jeremy Herb

March 28, 2012

Senate Foreign Relations Chairman John Kerry (D-Mass.) said Wednesday that the United States needs to use “hard-nosed diplomacy” with Iran to stop Tehran from making “a mad dash” to nuclear weapons.

“To have any prospect of success, we need an approach that gives diplomatic engagement space to breathe, without allowing Iran to play for time and drag us into a drawn-out process,” Kerry said at a Wednesday hearing on Iran.

Talk of military action against Iran to stop its nuclear program has increased in recent weeks, as Israel has said sanctions are not working and Iran has continued to push forward with its nuclear program.

The hearing’s witnesses, including retired Gen. James Cartwright, former Joint Chiefs vice chairman, and Ambassador Tom Pickering, former undersecretary of State, said there was reason for caution about using military force against Iran.

“The risks we and others would take, including Israel, are far more significant than the advantages we might achieve,” Pickering said.

Pickering said that military action against Iran could drive the country to build a nuclear weapon, which it has not yet decided to do.

Cartwright said that military force against Iran must remain an option, as President Obama has said it is, but he added that the Iranians remain several stages away from being able to develop a nuclear weapon and delivery system.

The Iranians are set to meet with the five permanent United Nations Security Council members and Germany for a new round of nuclear talks in April.

Kerry said that one high-level meeting was unlikely to “achieve a dramatic breakthrough.” He said it would be difficult to find a solution for both sides that gives the international community confidence Iran “neither has the capacity nor the desire to make a mad dash to nuclear weapons.”

Senate Foreign Relations ranking member Richard Lugar (R-Ind.) said Wednesday the United States needed to give Iran a plain choice with sanctions between pursuing its nuclear weapons program or maintaining its economic viability.

The April negotiations are coming as both the United States and European Union have imposed economic sanctions on Iran.

Congress has continued to look at further sanctions for Iran, but Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said during a recent visit to the United States that time is running short for sanctions to work.

Iran says that its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes, while the United States and its allies suspect Iran is looking to build a nuclear weapon.

Pickering said that past talks suffered because they tended to be a “series of one-night stands,” where one side gave an offer and the other rejected it.

He said that the sanctions could be effective against Iran if they also give Tehran a door to compromise. He suggested a proposal where Iran stops producing uranium at 20 percent enrichment in exchange for fuel that could make the medical isotopes which Iran says the uranium is for.

<http://thehill.com/blogs/defcon-hill/policy-and-strategy/218805-kerry-diplomacy-needed-to-prevent-iranian-mad-dash-to-nuclear-weapons>

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Chicago Tribune  
OPINION/News Columnist

## **Regardless of Obama's Gaffe, Nuclear Missile Defense Remains a Useless Endeavor**

By William Pfaff, *Tribune Media Services*  
March 28, 2012

PARIS -- One might hope that when President Barack Obama misspoke in front of an open microphone at the Seoul nuclear security conference on Tuesday, he knew he would draw attention to the need to end what has always seemed to be one of the biggest policy frauds of the present day: the scheme purporting to defend Europe and the United States from Iranian nuclear missiles.

The president said to the departing Russian president, Dimitri Medvedev, that he could not discuss the issue until the U.S. presidential election is over. He said the distraction and pressures of the race make it impossible to search for a compromise on this issue -- which is pretty obvious. The best "compromise," as he may understand, would be to drop the project as useless and a waste.

Mr. Obama had already told the press in Seoul that "the only way I get this stuff done is if I am consulting with the Pentagon, with Congress, if I've got bipartisan support and frankly, the current environment is not conducive to those kinds of thoughtful consultations."

Medvedev replied, "I understand. I will transfer this information to Vladimir [Putin: Russia's former and future president]."

Hearing of this secret confiding of such a message to the highest Russian authorities, Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney said, with deep concern for America's national security, that it was "an alarming and troubling development" that an American president would confide in his Russian counterpart that, in the mist of a presidential campaign, he can't get around to missile defenses.

Romney might have added, "meaningless missile defenses," since this has from the start been the salient characteristic of this project, so far as the American taxpayer is concerned, and it has been a Republican boondoggle from the start.

Since there currently are no Iranian strategic nuclear missiles, no Iranian nuclear weapons to put on them, and no conceivable advantage to be gained by Iran in destroying parts of Europe with nuclear blasts (and, without strategic missiles able to reach the United States, no way to turn American cities into nuclear rubble) -- and since, if Iran even tried to do any of these things, its own cities would quickly become radioactive ruin, it seems fair to say that the importance of this threat to the West is nil.

European missile defense against the threat of hypothetical Iranian nuclear missile attack is a make-work project for the American aerospace industry and always has been.

Israel has more cause than Europe to worry about missiles, but these are short- or middle-range and are not nuclear. Periodically these fall on Israeli frontier territory, fired by Palestinian militants. The Israelis tell us that Israel is now much safer; it has an "iron dome" missile defense to fend off the missiles, or at least some of them. They have deployed the iron dome against the threat from Gaza. It has worked well enough for Israel now to demand funds from the United States to build hundreds or thousands of such iron domes. A sensible U.S. president (could it be Obama? ... probably not) would reply to them that peace with the Palestinians would be cheaper.

All of this goes back to the late Edward Teller, who rejoiced in the title of "the father of the hydrogen bomb." It was early in the Ronald Reagan era that I happened to be in Berkeley, Calif., and was invited to an "important" lecture by Teller. I went, and while there were many hints and allusions to secret matters that we, the audience, were unqualified

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to know about (but would be dazzled by them if we did know), it was clear that he was telling us that he knew how to defend America against nuclear missiles.

Later he gave the same talk without the winks and hints to Reagan, who was enthusiastic and told Teller to go ahead. The first version of the idea that Teller offered, as I understood at the time, was to set off vast thermonuclear explosions in space where hostile missiles would have to travel, and the explosions would blow up the missiles. There was a problem in what this would do to the atmosphere and to those living underneath the explosions, I believe, but ever since then, work on "Star Wars" has continued in the aerospace labs and factories with little to show for it.

However, it kept a lot of physicists employed, and some of them now have come up with the iron dome. (What is there about the titles Israelis bestow on their military projects and campaigns? "Cast lead" - what was that supposed to mean? American operational code names are vainglorious and sappy - "Enduring Freedom," "Everlasting Peace," etc. Whatever happened to the stolid realism of the old brown-shoe army with Operations "Anvil," "Torch," "Overlord" and "Dynamo"?)

Back to the subject. The European nuclear shield against Iran was pretty obviously intended by the G.W. Bush administration to be the basis of a future threat to Russia (just as the Russians recognized). What to do with it now? Can it be turned into something useful and unthreatening? Could it quietly be dismantled?

Probably not. That is what Presidents Obama and Putin have to talk about.

*William Pfaff is a globally respected political commentator and author on international relations, contemporary history and U.S. policy. He is published in five countries and his column is syndicated by Tribune Media Services.*

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/columnists/sns-201203281800--tms--wpfafftr--v-a20120328mar28,0,3440796.column>

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Khaleej Times – U.A.E.

OPINION

## **Battling Al Qaeda**

By Ian Bremmer and David Gordon (World View)

29 March 2012

It's been nearly 11 months since the killing of Osama bin Laden and almost 11 years since 9/11 thrust Al Qaeda to the forefront of US national security.

Since then – in fits and starts after 2001, and at an accelerated pace in the last five years – the United States has been remarkably successful in degrading Al Qaeda's operational capacity and splintering the organisation, culminating in the raid in Abbottabad last May.

To state the obvious, all this is good news. The US homeland is safer, the world is a better place, and a reduced jihadist threat is allowing the United States to make a shrewd strategic pivot to the Asia-Pacific region.

But what is less appreciated is that while the threat to the homeland is diminished, the demise of "Al Qaeda central" is coinciding with a resurgence of radical extremist political activism. The two trends are connected, and present a growing challenge to US interests.

The fracturing of Al Qaeda has reversed Bin Laden's signal achievement: defying the truth that all politics is local and focusing the efforts of the most extreme elements on attacking the "far enemy," the United States.

In the absence of a leader, these groups, buttressed by the dynamics of the Arab Awakening and the US withdrawals from Iraq and Afghanistan, have re-entered domestic politics throughout the Middle East and South Asia. Their

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activities add a layer of complexity, uncertainty, fragility and danger to the region's trajectory and create enormous problems for US foreign policy.

Osama himself was aware of this development. According to reports of correspondence taken from his Abbottabad compound, Bin Laden fretted constantly that his operatives were too eager to direct their activities to local dynamics rather than the overarching anti-US cause.

These tensions – and the temptation among Qaeda operatives to strike softer local targets – sharpened as the US vise tightened and the operational control of an increasingly isolated Bin Laden weakened.

The killing of Bin Laden, continued US pressure, and the ascension of the unpopular Zawahri to leadership have reinforced the shift of Al Qaeda affiliates toward local issues, making the various regional branches less receptive to dictates from Zawahri, an Egyptian.

This new focus on the local is driving a resurgent influence for the most radical elements in areas in which Al Qaeda had in recent years become deeply unpopular. The US withdrawal from Iraq intensifies extremist opposition to the Shia Prime Minister, Nouri Kamal Al Maliki, as it's more clear than ever that it's his sect, not his ties to Washington that fires the radicals.

In Mali, the increased local activities of Al Qaeda in the Maghreb have contributed to a deteriorating security environment that allowed the long-simmering Tuareg rebellion to strengthen and fueled the discontent that led to last week's coup. For the United States, which had promoted Mali as a regional success story of flourishing democracy, this is a troubling development.

The return of extremists and their increasing influence in North Africa has surprised and disoriented even the region's moderate Islamists, with the electoral success of the Salafist Al Nour Party in Egypt challenging the Muslim Brothers and Tunisia's Ennahda-led government struggling to prevent Salafist influence from deterring much-needed foreign investment.

An influx of returning jihadists in Libya is injecting a radical ideological element to a transition already fraught with ethnic and tribal tensions. Here, as in South Asia and the Sahel, the localisation of the most extreme elements is changing the game.

It is in Syria where this dynamic is most acute and most challenging for the United States. The uprising against the Assad regime is in many ways a strategic plus for the United States, especially given the close cooperation between Damascus and Tehran. But sectarian dynamics in Syria make it very difficult for the United States to exploit or even manage its advantage.

The inability of the Syrian opposition to unite or gain purchase among ethnic and sectarian minorities results to a great extent from the perception that the strongest elements of the opposition to the Alawite Shia Bashar Al Assad are Sunni extremists. Minority groups fear they will treat them even more harshly than Assad has treated much of the Syrian population.

And the very fractiousness of the opposition that extremism fosters is increasingly allowing extremist elements to define the anti-Assad forces – fueling further fractiousness and, in a vicious cycle, creating even more openings for extremists.

Zawahri's call for jihad against the Assad regime – Al Qaeda's first such exhortation that is not against the United States or a close US ally – is both a testament to and a driver of these local dynamics. All of this makes rhetorical or military support for the Syrian opposition from the United States, Turkey or Saudi Arabia very difficult, and contributes to the stalemate we're now seeing.

America's very success in the war on Al Qaeda has created a paradox: While the most extreme elements have shifted their focus away from the United States, the complexity of the challenge that they pose for US foreign policy has only increased. The war on terror may be winding down, but managing its aftermath is just beginning.



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Foreign Policy

OPINION/Blog

## Whatever Happened to Arms Control?

By Stephen M. Walt

Thursday, March 29, 2012

There's been a lot of needless hoopla over Obama's "open mic" comment at the Nuclear Security Summit, including an almost certainly ghost-written piece by Mitt Romney here at FP. Obama was overheard telling Russian President Dmitri Medvedev that he "would have more flexibility" to negotiate a deal on missile defense after the election, which is both correct and hardly a state secret. The flap illustrates the main point I was trying to make a few days ago, when I wrote about how the absurdly long U.S. election cycle was a major impediment to a more effective foreign policy. (It may also be an impediment to Romney's chances, because the longer the campaign goes on, the more opportunities he has for foot-in-mouth moments that expose his ignorance about foreign policy, including his silly comment about Russia being our major geopolitical rival).

In any case, the incident got me thinking about how much the arms control agenda has changed since the heyday of the Cold War. Back then, there was a serious constituency in the United States pushing nuclear arms control, which saw it as key to reducing the risk of nuclear war, managing the U.S.-Soviet relationship, and dampening the danger of international conflict more generally. Arms control was intended to save some money, preserve each side's second-strike deterrent capabilities, and help stabilize the political relationship between Moscow and Washington. It was thus a key ingredient in the basic agenda of *détente*, which sought to keep U.S.-Soviet competition within bounds. (One can argue about how effective it was, but it is worth noting that nuclear war didn't occur, and the U.S. and its allies triumphed over the Soviet Union without fighting a war with them.)

Accordingly, the main items on the arms control agenda involved direct negotiations with our Soviet adversaries (the SALT and START treaties, the INF treaty on intermediate nuclear forces in Europe, etc.). These efforts involved tough and protracted negotiations between more-or-less equals (even though the U.S. and its allies were a lot stronger than the Soviet Union and its various clients), and there was no possibility of either side issuing ultimatums or imposing a one-sided deal on the other. The other main arms control item was the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and this arrangement resulted from tacit collusion *between* the two superpowers to preserve their own nuclear superiority. After all, the basic NPT deal allowed nuclear powers keep their own arsenals (in exchange for pledges to share nuclear technology and make some sort of long-term effort disarmament), while putting in place a regime that made it much harder for other states to join the nuclear club.

But what about now? Since the end of the Cold War, the "arms control" agenda has become decidedly one-sided. Yes, there's been a not-very-significant "New Start" treaty with Russia, which didn't alter the basic strategic relationship at all and which hardly anybody (including Governor Romney) has paid much attention to. The real action in arms control has been a series of U.S.-led efforts to get states to give up their existing arsenals or abandon existing nuclear programs. In the 1990s, we put tremendous pressure on Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus to give up the arsenals they inherited from the former Soviet Union, and we eventually succeeded. Then the United States nearly launched a preventive war against North Korea in 1994, and did various deals (e.g., the "Agreed Framework") to try to head off their development of nuclear weapons. We invaded Iraq in 2003 to stop Saddam's "Weapons of Mass Destruction" programs (which turned out to be fictitious -- our bad), and have been ratcheting up economic sanctions and waging a

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covert war against Iran to try to keep Tehran from getting too close to the nuclear weapons threshold. And we keep saying "all options are on the table," which is a threat to use force.

In short, instead of "arms control" being the product of mutual negotiation, as it was in the Cold War, it now consists of the United States making demands and ramping up pressure to get weak states to comply. Instead of being primarily a *diplomatic* process aimed at eliciting mutually beneficial cooperation (which might also help ameliorate mutual suspicions with current adversaries), arms control has become a *coercive* process designed to produce capitulation. This approach may have worked in a few cases (e.g., Libya, although even there the Bush administration made certain concessions to secure a final deal), but its overall track record is paltry. After all, North Korea eventually went ahead and tested a nuclear device, and escalating pressure on Iran has yet to convince its leaders to abandon their enrichment program. And as I've noted before, using military force would not eliminate Iran's ability to develop weapons if it wishes, and could easily convince them that they had no choice but to go ahead and weaponize.

Because material power is still the central currency in world politics, this tendency doesn't surprise me all that much. When the United States has to deal with near-equals, it understands that bargaining is necessary and that a successful outcome requires patience and compromise. But today, we think we can impose our will on almost anybody, so any sort of compromise is regarded as some sort of craven appeasement. But even a country as powerful as the United States cannot simply dictate to others -- as we should have learned by now from our experiences with Iraq, Afghanistan, and a few others -- and a disdain for genuine diplomacy (as opposed to merely issuing ultimatums and imposing sanctions) is getting in the way of potential deals that could reduce the risk of proliferation, dampen the danger of war, and enable U.S. leaders to turn their attention to other priorities. Being the world's #1 power confers many advantages, but it can also be a potent source of blind and counterproductive arrogance.

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[http://walt.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/03/29/whatever\\_happened\\_to\\_arms\\_control](http://walt.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2012/03/29/whatever_happened_to_arms_control)

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Asia Sentinel – Hong Kong, China

## **Korea's Nuclear Summit a Damp Squib**

*Little of significance despite the presence of the world's most powerful leaders*

By Lee Byong-chul

Friday, 30 March 2012

The Nuclear Security Summit held on March 26-27 in Seoul, has turned out to be a half-baked extravaganza that produced little of significance except for proclaiming the lofty goal of a nuclear-free world vision – while one of the world's nuclear outlaws lurked just 65 km to the north, rattling rockets in the face of the world's most powerful leaders.

Much effort has been spent in the last several months through Sherpa and sous-Sherpa meetings at the highest political level, the 51 heads of state and global organizations including the leaders of the world's most potent nuclear-tipped countries, who gathered in Seoul for the second security summit. They issued a 2200-word Seoul Communiqué that was long on words and short on commitment except for a series of non-binding vows to take observable actions around the end of 2013. They unanimously affirmed that "measures to strengthen nuclear security will not hamper the rights of States to develop and utilize nuclear energy for peaceful purposes."

As well they should. These commitments will be supported by each of the signatories in the hopes of promoting a global recognition that a nuclear explosion anywhere is a serious danger everywhere, reflected by the tragedy of the Fukushima earthquake and tsunami and the subsequent near-meltdown of the Fukushima Dai-Ichi nuclear plants, which continue to cook menacingly today, more than a year after the temblor. Meaningfully, the leaders noted the nexus between nuclear security and nuclear safety, while addressing these 'different chapters of the same book' issues in a coherent manner.

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In truth, the interface between nuclear security and safety will likely represent another step toward expanding the perceptions of nuclear power in a dangerous world. It also marks the opening of broader maneuvering to counter the emerging nuclear threats of the 21st century. The United States currently has 2,100 deployed strategic warheads, and Russia 2,600, according to the Federation of American Scientists and the Natural Resources Defense Council.

In reality, nuclear terrorism has emerged as one of the most challenging threats to global security – a danger that people began to recognize after the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, DC, in which Al-Qaeda, a non-state actor, was able to kill more people than the imperialist Japan killed at Pearl Harbor in 1941. A nuclear 9/11 attack would certainly incinerate hundreds of thousands in a single blow at the heart of New York, for example.

Unfortunately, there is a misbelief among numerous nuclear skeptics that even if non-state actors like terrorists could obtain nuclear material clandestinely and make a crude bomb, it would be the United States' and Russia's problem, not a grave issue for other countries. It is a grave issue for any country faced with a deranged and capable non-state organization.

Meanwhile, the political leaders underlined the importance of securing, accounting for and consolidating highly enriched uranium and separated plutonium, while encouraging each state to take measures to minimize the use of HEU, including efforts to down-blend HEU into low enriched uranium. Given that approximately 25 kg of highly enriched is needed for making one nuclear warhead, it is realistic to point out that the United States and Russia in particular should take a more urgent action to speed up their own rates of down-blending and dismantlement rather than focusing attention on securing fissile materials globally.

That's why the leaders, if not participating in the summit meeting merely for a photo opportunity, should continue to find common ground necessary to make 'binding' efforts toward strengthening nuclear security. Coming up with obligatory actions is, to be sure, a tough nut but it should be, after all, made in one way or another, since another fuzzy communiqué which embraces voluntary arrangements cannot secure the global security, safety and safeguards.

Bland commitments and sterile debates over unpredictable nuclear threats emanating from non-state actors and over dangers beyond men's imagination will do nothing to fend off the opponents of the summit who are in strong favor of eliminating all nuclear weapons and dismantling nuclear reactors on the planet.

Equally alarming, waste and spent fuel which are stored on an interim basis in pools of water or in casks are of the greatest concern about the vulnerability of the materials to disasters like the Fukushima accident or possible terrorist attacks. Given that the effectiveness of concrete to contain nuclear waste is much less than 100 years, it raises rational questions about whether these sensitive materials can be effectively stored for periods that will exceed recorded human history so far, many times over.

Nevertheless, it is worthy to note that the Seoul Summit set a target date of 2014 for bringing the 2005 Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material into force by 2014. Plus, agreement between the U.S., France, Belgium, and the Netherlands was made to produce medical isotopes without the use of HEU by 2015. The move could encourage other countries to act boldly over time.

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