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MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

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

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The Guardian – U.K.

Iran's President Admits Rift with Country's Senior Islamic Figures

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad announces he is on 'opposite side' to those who accuse him of revolutionary deviancy

By Saeed Kamali Dehghan

Tuesday, 7 June 2011

Iran's president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has admitted for the first time that a rift has developed between him and some of the most senior figures of the Islamic regime.

In a press conference in Tehran on Tuesday, the first since news emerged of his power struggle with the supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the president said: "It is very clear now that we are 180 degrees away from them – we are actually on opposite sides."

He pointed the finger at ruling conservatives, who have accused the government of "revolutionary deviancy", while playing down suggestions that he has been at odds with Ali Khamenei.

In recent months, conservatives close to the supreme leader have launched an extensive campaign against the president and his allies, who they believe are undermining the supremacy of the leader.

Senior figures in the powerful revolutionary guards and some of the most prominent clerics in the country who have supported Ahmadinejad in the past are now distancing themselves from him.

Those who remain in his camp have faced accusations of "sorcery", "deviancy" and even espionage, and some presidential aides have been arrested.

"They arrested those people. Good for them," Ahmadinejad said.

"Now they should let us continue our job. The government is seeking for nothing rather than serving the people and fulfilling the revolutionary aims."

He refused to answer further questions about the power struggle and said: "Our position at the moment is to stay silent. An inspiring unity silence."

Ali Khamenei's supporters believe Ahmadinejad has not publicly given his full backing to the supreme leader after they clashed over cabinet appointments in April.

Asked about Iran's nuclear programme, the president denied recent allegations made by the chief executive of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Yukiya Amano, that the country may be working on developing nuclear weapons.

"With America's orders, the IAEA has written some things in a report that are against the law and against the agency's regulations. These have no legal value and aside from harming the agency's reputation it will have no other effect," Ahmadinejad told reporters.

He also said no offer from world leaders could stop Iran enriching uranium and accused the US and its allies of meddling in Syria and Bahrain.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jun/07/iran-president-rift-islamic-figures>

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The Daily Star – Lebanon

Defiant Iran Plans Big Rise in Nuclear Enrichment

June 08, 2011

By Robin Pomeroy and Mitra Amiri, Reuters



TEHRAN: Iran will shift its production of higher grade uranium to an underground bunker and triple its production capacity, it said Wednesday in a defiant response to accusations it is trying to produce atomic bombs.

“This year, under the supervision of the [International Atomic Energy] Agency, we will transfer 20 percent enrichment from the Natanz site to the Fordow site and we will increase the production capacity by three times,” the head of Iran’s atomic energy agency, Fereydoun Abbasi-Davani, told reporters after a cabinet meeting, the state broadcaster IRIB reported.

Iran only disclosed the existence of the Fordow site, in a mountain bunker, in September 2009, after Western intelligence had detected it and said it was evidence of covert nuclear work.

The decision to move production there and increase output drew immediate condemnation from the West, which has imposed a series of sanctions on Iran to try to force it to halt enrichment – a process that can make weapons material if done to a much higher level.

“This announcement is a provocation,” the French Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

“It reinforces the international community’s existing concerns over the intransigence of the Iranian authorities and their persistent violation of international law.”

Iran has always denied it is developing nuclear weapons and says it is enriching uranium for electricity production and medical applications.

But its decision last year to raise the level of enrichment from the 3.5 percent purity needed for normal power plant fuel to 20 percent worried countries that saw it as a significant step towards the 90 percent needed for bombs.

The Vienna-based IAEA, whose board was due to discuss Iran’s nuclear program, probably later Wednesday, said it had only learned of the plan from media reports.

“Iran has not yet informed the agency of any such decision,” IAEA spokeswoman Gill Tudor said.

Iranian media portrayed the announcement as a defiant response to tightened sanctions and IAEA chief Yukiya Amano’s assertion Monday that he had received new evidence of possible military dimensions to Iran’s nuclear work.

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad accused Amano of taking orders from Washington.

After Ahmadinejad said Tuesday that no incentive from world powers could persuade Iran to give up enrichment, President Barack Obama said further sanctions were likely.

“Iran certainly is raising the stakes,” said Mark Fitzpatrick, a leading proliferation expert at the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies.

“There is absolutely no justification for producing any more 20 percent enriched uranium at all, since any reactors that would use it are far off into the future,” he said. “Tripling the production rate would be highly provocative.”

Iran says it needs 20 percent uranium to make fuel for a medical research reactor after talks on a nuclear fuel swap – under which other countries would have supplied the higher grade fuel – broke down.

“After we increase the production capacity in Fordow by three times, then we will stop the 20 percent section of the Natanz site and will transfer it completely to Fordow,” Abbasi-Davani said, adding the transfer would start this year.

The shift from Natanz, near Isfahan in central Iran, to the Fordow site near Qom, south of the capital, will shield the enrichment work from air strikes that Israel and the United States have not ruled out as a last-ditch way to stop Iran getting the bomb, Fitzpatrick said.



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In its latest report on Iran, in late May, the agency said Iran had told it in February of plans to begin feeding nuclear material into enrichment cascades at Fordow "by this summer."

But the IAEA added that as of May 21 no centrifuges had been introduced into the facility.

Abbasi-Davani said Iran had completed technical development of a new generation of centrifuges and they would be installed at both sites.

<http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2011/Jun-08/Defiant-Iran-plans-big-rise-in-nuclear-enrichment.ashx#axzz1Oiyq8Ck1>

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Tehran Times
Thursday, June 9, 2011

Iran to Prepare Draft Convention on Fight against Nuclear Weapons

Tehran Times Political Desk

TEHRAN – Iran is making efforts to prepare a draft convention in campaign against the production and proliferation of nuclear weapons, Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Mahdi Akhoundzadeh has said.

"Preparing a draft convention on fight against nuclear weapons at a global level is part of our efforts at an international conference on nuclear disarmament and (their) non-proliferation," Akhoundzadeh said during a press conference on Wednesday.

Iran plans to hold a conference on nuclear disarmament at the end of spring.

Commenting on the Baath regime's chemical bombardments of Iranian cities in the 1980s and Iran's then efforts, which led to the establishment of a comprehensive international convention on fight against chemical weapons, Akhoundzadeh said Iran is now trying to help the world get rid of WMDs including nuclear weapons.

He said that the Non-Proliferation Treaty will be extended next year and from then on media outlets should zero in on NPT's Article 6 in which nuclear weapons states are required to dismantle their nuclear weapons.

http://www.tehrantimes.com/Index_view.asp?code=242144

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FARS News Agency – Iran
June 9, 2011

Iran to Equip Navy with New Submarines

TEHRAN (FNA) - Iran plans to equip its Navy with new types of home-made submarines as part of its naval units renovation plan, a senior Iranian Navy commander announced.

"The new submarines, built by the committed Iranian experts, will join the naval combat fleet," after being tested during upcoming military exercises, Iranian Navy Deputy Commander Rear Admiral Seyed Mahmoud Moussavi said on Wednesday.

The drills will test the capabilities and efficiencies of the new submarines, he further explained.

Rear Admiral Moussavi went on to say that the country's naval force seeks to diversify the maneuvers in order to enhance its defense potential.

To achieve this aim, Iran's Navy is ready to hold joint drills with neighboring countries, he pointed out.

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Tehran launched an arms development program during the 1980-88 Iraqi imposed war on Iran, to compensate for a US weapons embargo. Since 1992, Iran has produced its own tanks, armored personnel carriers, missiles and fighter planes.

Yet, Iranian officials have always stressed that the country's military and arms programs serve defensive purposes and should not be perceived as a threat to any other country.

Last August Iran launched four light and advanced submarines. The Ghadir-class submarines, made by the Defense Ministry's Marine Industries, officially joined Iran's naval fleet in an official ceremony attended by Iranian Defense Minister Brigadier General Ahmad Vahidi and Commander of the Army's Navy Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari.

Iran announced in June 2009 that a home-made submarine, named Ghadir 948, had joined the naval brigade of the first naval zone.

In November 2009, Iran announced that its first domestically built Ghadir class submarine launched operation.

The Iranian military said that the submarine can easily evade detection as it is equipped with sonar-evading technology and can fire missiles and torpedoes simultaneously.

<http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=9003194128>

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International Business Times – New York

Six Powers Push Defiant Iran to Address Nuclear Fears

By Sylvia Westall and Fredrik Dahl

Friday, June 10, 2011

VIENNA (Reuters) - Russia and China joined Western powers on Thursday in piling pressure on Iran to address fears about possible military aspects of its nuclear program a day after Tehran said its would ramp up its uranium enrichment.

The United States, Germany, France, Britain, Russia and China issued a statement at a meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) after Iran raised the stakes in the row by announcing it would accelerate sensitive nuclear work.

Washington's envoy said separately that Iran's plan to speed up enrichment with a more advanced model of centrifuge machines in a mountain bunker showed its "brazen" and deepening defiance of international demands to curb the activity.

Enrichment can yield energy for electricity or, if extended to a higher degree, material for nuclear bombs.

Iran's representative hit back at a tense IAEA board meeting, vowing the Islamic state would resist Western pressure over a nuclear program it says has exclusively peaceful aims.

Ambassador Ali Asghar Soltanieh also launched a verbal attack on IAEA Director-General Yukiya Amano and accused him of bias, highlighting increasingly strained relations between Tehran and the U.N. nuclear watchdog.

The Japanese IAEA chief has taken a blunter approach to Iran than his predecessor Mohamed ElBaradei, saying in his first report on the country early last year that he feared it may be working to develop a nuclear-armed missile.

"He is not doing his job. Instead, with his reports, he is paving the way for more confrontation between member states," Soltanieh told reporters.

But the six powers -- including Russia and China who have been less inclined to try to isolate Iran -- united to throw their weight behind Amano, who last month asked Tehran to provide access to sites and officials to help answer the agency's queries. Iran rebuffed the request.

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The six powers said Iran's "consistent failure" to comply with obligations under U.N. resolutions to restrain nuclear activity and allow more effective IAEA inspections had "deepened concerns" about its intentions.

"We call on Iran to cooperate fully with the agency," a joint statement read out at the closed-door session said.

"Outstanding issues need to be resolved in order to exclude the existence of possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear program." It did not mention Iran's plan to expand enrichment.

U.S. SEES NUCLEAR WARHEAD WORK

The statements at a session of the IAEA's 35-nation governing board came a day after Iran announced a plan to triple its capacity to produce higher-grade uranium.

Iran also said on Wednesday it would transfer the production of the material from its Natanz enrichment complex to a nascent, smaller site in a bunker, one seen as better protected from possible U.S. or Israeli air strikes, at Fordow later this year.

Western powers are concerned about the higher-grade enrichment because it takes Iran a step closer to producing potential atomic bomb-grade fuel. Tehran denies such aims and says its nuclear program is for peaceful uses only.

U.S. envoy Glyn Davies said the plan was Iran's "most recent brazen example of its deepening non-compliance."

He added in a board statement: "Iran's efforts to develop a nuclear warhead ... should demand the undivided attention of the international community."

Iran only disclosed the existence of Fordow, near the Shi'ite Muslim holy city of Qom, in September 2009, after Western intelligence agencies had detected it.

The United States and Israel, Iran's arch-adversaries, have not ruled out military action to knock out Iranian nuclear assets if diplomacy fails to resolve the eight-year-old dispute.

Iran's refusal to halt enrichment -- a process that can make material for bombs if done to a much higher level -- has drawn four rounds of U.N. sanctions rounds on the major oil producer.

Iran says it is refining uranium to the 3.5 percent level for electricity production and to 20 percent purity for medical applications.

But its decision last year to raise the level of enrichment beyond that needed for power plant fuel to 20 percent increased disquiet in the West because this would bring Iran significantly closer to the 90 percent threshold suitable for bomb fuel.

Editing by Mark Heinrich

<http://hken.ibtimes.com/articles/160273/20110610/six-powers-push-defiant-iran-to-address-nuclear-fears.htm>

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People's Daily – China

June 10, 2011

IAEA to Refer Syrian Nuclear Issue to Security Council

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) called on Syria Thursday to fully cooperate with the agency over its outstanding nuclear issues and decided to report the issue to the U.N. Security Council.

The 35-nation IAEA board voted on the United States-backed plan, with 17 in favor, six against, 11 abstentions and one absence.

The resolution focuses on a Syrian facility known as Dair Alzour site, which was suspected by the West of being a covert nuclear site for military use and reduced to rubbles by Israeli airplanes in 2007.

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IAEA chief Yukiya Amano said at the opening of the board meeting on Monday that "the agency (IAEA) has come to the conclusion that it is very likely that the building destroyed at the Dair Alzour site was a nuclear reactor which should have been declared to the agency."

Syria has maintained that the Dair Alzour site was a non-nuclear military installation, and, due to this nature of the site, it has no obligation to provide more information to the IAEA under its safeguards agreed with the agency. It has not allowed IAEA to send inspectors to the site since 2008.

The resolution called on Syria to "remedy urgently" its non-compliance with global nuclear non-proliferation rules, allow IAEA inspectors to revisit the suspect site, and provide all related information in order to clarify the nature of its nuclear program.

The referring of the issue to the Security Council may spark debates on possible sanction measures against Syria, analysts say.

In 2006, the United States and its western alliance used a similar procedure to send Iranian nuclear issue to the Security Council, resulting in sanctions against the country.

The proposal for the resolution has met opposition from some IAEA member states on the board, who have argued the destroyed Dair Alzour site would pose no threat to the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Meanwhile, they hold the IAEA should do more before making a definitive conclusion on the nature of Syria's nuclear program.

Source: *Xinhua*

<http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90001/90777/90856/7405833.html>

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Bloomberg

N. Korea Poses 'Growing' U.S. Threat: Panetta

By Tony Capaccio

June 8, 2011

North Korea's 1 million troops, ballistic missile program and nuclear enrichment activities underscore that it's a "growing and direct threat" to the U.S., according to CIA Director Leon Panetta, nominated to succeed Defense Secretary Robert Gates.

"If confirmed, I intend to monitor the security situation closely and maintain the capabilities necessary to protect our interests, defend our allies and deter North Korea," Panetta said in written answers to questions posed by the Senate Armed Services Committee in advance of his testimony tomorrow before the panel.

"The United States must continue to monitor carefully North Korea's weapons of mass destruction and missile development," said Panetta, 72, promising as defense secretary to work closely with allies in that effort.

He also promised to support improvements in the U.S. missile defense program.

"The United States is currently protected against the threat of a limited Intercontinental Ballistic Missile attack from states like North Korea and Iran," Panetta said. "It is important we maintain this advantage by continuing to improve the Ground-based Midcourse Defense system" that's deployed to Alaska and California, he said.

Panetta's comments follow a similarly strong statement issued by Gates in January. Unlike Gates, Panetta is a former Democratic congressman from California and not a career intelligence officer. Panetta's portrayal of the North Korean threat also stronger than the director of national intelligence's annual threat assessment issued in February.

Al-Qaeda Threats

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Still, North Korea was not explicitly listed among the top “broad priorities” Panetta said he’ll face. Those were prevailing in Iraq and Afghanistan against al-Qaeda, keeping weapons of mass destruction from terrorists and “rogue nations,” preparing for future conflicts, preserving the U.S. military’s combat prowess and, finally, continuing the search for efficiencies that Gates has initiated “which will be crucial in this time of budget constraints.”

North Korea’s development of an intercontinental ballistic missile and nuclear weapons, and transfers of such technology, threaten the Pacific Rim and international stability, Gates said in a January speech at Keio University in Tokyo.

The U.S. ground-based system of 30 interceptors is managed by Boeing Co. (BA), and supported by Northrop Grumman Corp. (NOC) and Raytheon Co. (RTN) Raytheon builds the hit-to-kill warhead that sits on top of 30 Orbital Sciences Corp. (ORB) interceptors in Alaska and California.

Missile Defenses

“The U.S. is committed to continuing to develop and deploy missile defenses, including qualitative and quantitative improvements,” Panetta said.

The Senate committee in its pre-hearing questions asked Panetta whether he agreed with a U.S. Missile Defense Agency decision to suspend production of Raytheon’s newest warhead until it demonstrates it has fixed a technical problem that caused a December test failure. The MDA will verify the fixes in two special flight tests to confirm the correction.

“Verifying and correcting the problems with the warhead prior to continuing production is prudent,” Panetta said, supporting the “fly-before-you buy” policy.

Almost 70 percent of North Korea’s ground forces remain staged within 90 kilometers (about 56 miles) of the demilitarized zone that marks the north-south dividing line in place since the Korean War was halted with an armistice in 1953.

The U.S. head of Korean forces, General Walter Sharp, said in April congressional testimony that North Korea has a ballistic missile inventory that currently exceeds 800 weapons capable of reaching “targets from Japan to Guam to the Aleutian Islands” in Alaska.

“The regime continues to invest in research and development of an ICBM capability that could threaten the continental U.S.,” he said.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-06-08/north-korea-s-army-poses-a-growing-direct-threat-to-u-s-panetta-says.html>

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The Guardian – U.K.

China Admits 'Secret' Aircraft Carrier Is Nearly Ready for Launch

Officials suggest refurbished former Soviet vessel will operate in disputed waters including Taiwan Straits

By Jonathan Watts in Beijing

Wednesday, 8 June 2011

China has moved a step closer to launching its first aircraft carrier with senior generals in the People's Liberation Army finally confirming one of the world's worst kept military secrets.

Officers from the general staff acknowledged the existence of a carrier, which one of them described as a "symbol of a great nation", amid reports that it could set sail within weeks.



The vessel in question is a defunct Soviet-era carrier formerly named the Varyag that was bought in 1998 from Ukraine by a Hong Kong company on the pretext that it would be used as a floating casino off the shores of Macau.

Instead it has been upgraded at China's Dalian naval shipyard with combat sensors and defensive weapons and painted in the colours of the People's Liberation Army. For several years foreigners have been kept out of the area of Dalian where the work has taken place. But the existence of a 67,500 tonne vessel is not easily concealed and in recent months photographs have appeared in state-run media.

Chen Bingde, the chief of China's military general staff, has gone a step further in an interview published in the Hong Kong Commercial Daily (translated link), saying the 300m long carrier "is being built but has not been completed".

His assistant chief, Qi Jianguo, suggested the vessel was both a status symbol and a long-overdue strengthening of China's naval defence. "All of the great nations in the world own aircraft carriers – they are symbols of a great nation," Qi was quoted as saying. "It would have been better for us if we acted sooner in understanding the oceans and mapping out our blue-water capabilities earlier."

Referring to areas where territorial waters are disputed, he said that China faced "heavy pressure" in the South China Sea, East China Sea, Yellow Sea and the Taiwan Straits. But the carrier would never sail into the waters of other nations.

No further details have emerged, leaving military experts to speculate whether the revamped hulk will indeed mark a significant projection of Chinese military power as a "blue water" force or the revamped hulk will hold only symbolic value, lacking the technology and operational experience to challenge the US navy.

The commander of US Pacific forces, Admiral Robert Willard, told the Senate in April that he was not concerned about the carrier's military impact but expected it would make a big impression on public opinion. "I think the change in perception by the region will be significant," he said.

In the past year the Chinese military has surprised many foreign observers with the speed of its weapons development – notably the test flight of a J-20 stealth fighter and a "carrier-killer" missile.

China has yet to announce whether the carrier will be renamed. One report suggests it will be called Shi Lang, after a Ming dynasty admiral who conquered Taiwan – further fuelling unease about its impact on regional stability.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/jun/08/china-aircraft-carrier-near-launch>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

Photos of Possible Fifth-Generation Fighter Appear on Chinese Websites

9 June 2011

Photographs of an unknown Chinese fighter jet appeared on Internet forums on Wednesday, sparking speculation that the country has developed the world's second fifth-generation fighter.

The U.S. F-22 Raptor is currently the world's only operational fifth generation fighter plane.

The Chinese photograph depicts parts of an unknown combat plane standing at an aerodrome. The air scoop and part of the pilot's cabin lamp, shown in the picture, resemble the shapes of fifth-generation plane parts and appear to be closely related to the Chinese J-20 prototype.

The Chengdu J-20 is a fifth generation stealth, twin-engine fighter aircraft prototype developed by Chengdu Aircraft Industry Group for the Chinese army's Air Force.



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China has a reputation for releasing photos of new military hardware on unofficial military websites before it announces them publicly. In January, amateur photographs showing preparations for testing China's fifth generation fighter J-20 were released on the Internet. Chinese media later confirmed the information.

Russia is testing its own fifth generation aircraft T-50_PAK FA developed by the Sukhoi design bureau. The aircraft is expected to become operational in 2015.

A U.S.-led international consortium is also working on a new F-35 multi-purpose fighter.

BEIJING, June 9 (RIA Novosti)

<http://en.rian.ru/world/20110609/164525054.html>

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The Hindu – India

HYDERABAD, June 9, 2011

Nuke-Capable Prithvi-II Successfully Test-Fired

By Special Correspondent

Nuclear-capable, surface-to-surface Prithvi-II missile was successfully test-fired for its full range of 350 km on Thursday by the personnel of Strategic Force Command as part of a regular user training exercise.

The nine-metre tall missile, fired from a mobile launcher at the Integrated Test Range, Chandipur, off the Orissa Coast at 9 a.m, achieved a high-degree accuracy, according to Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) sources. After a flight duration of about eight minutes, the indigenously-built missile impacted the target in the Bay of Bengal with a single-digit accuracy of less than 10-metres of CEP (Circular Error Probability), the sources added.

A battery of state-of-art radars, electro-optical telemetry stations and a ship located near the target point tracked the entire event.

The missile was picked up randomly from the production lot and test-fired by the SFC personnel, while the logistics were provided by DRDO scientists.

The single-stage, liquid fuelled Prithvi-II is capable of carrying payloads ranging from 500-1,000 kg and was already inducted by the Armed Forces. It is equipped with a high-accuracy inertial navigation system with sophisticated on-board control and guidance. Prithvi-II's mobile launcher has user-driven features and the road mobile system could be launched from anywhere in the country.

Scientific Advisor to Defence Minister, V.K. Saraswat and top officials from SFC and DRDO witnessed the launch.

In December last, two Prithvi-II missiles were successfully test-fired for different ranges within a span of one hour.

<http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/science/article2090033.ece>

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The Pioneer – India

Pak Pace in Nuke Race Alarms India

June 09, 2011

By Sandhya Sharma, New Delhi

The alarm over Pakistan's ambitious nuclear programme just got shriller. For, amid serious concerns over the safety of Pakistan's nukes, Islamabad has not only continued to have the fastest growing military nuclear programme in the world for the last two years, but has also held on to its edge over India.

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According to the latest data released by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) in 'SIPRI Yearbook 2011', which assesses the current state of international security, armaments and disarmament claims, India's nuclear warheads in 2011 stand in the range of 80-100, whereas arch rival Pakistan's are in the range of 90-110.

In 2010, while India had 60-80 nukes, Pakistan had 70-90 nuclear warheads. In a way, proportionately, India has kept pace with its neighbour. For its part, China has continued to stick to its nuclear pile-up of 240 warheads. It hasn't added to its stockpile between 2010 and 2011.

The new figures labelled Pakistan's nuclear expansion as the fastest when compared to the countries like US, Russia, UK, France, China and Israel.

While there is an increasing concern globally over Pakistan's nukes falling into the hands of jihadis, India has been voicing its apprehensions to the US that its counter terrorism financial aid to Islamabad was being diverted for augmenting its military might targeted against New Delhi.

"India and Pakistan which are de facto nuclear weapon states outside NPT continue to develop new ballistic and cruise missile systems capable of delivering nuclear weapons. They are also expanding their capacities to produce fissile material for military purposes," according to SIPRI's report.

"Both countries are developing and deploying new types of nuclear-capable delivery vehicles (sea-, land- and aircraft-launched), which in some instances may result in nuclear warheads being deployed on a more launch-ready posture. Together, these developments mean that we are witnessing a nuclear arms competition in South Asia that appears to be intensifying in both scope and scale," Shanon N Kile of Nuclear Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-proliferation with SIPRI told The Pioneer.

"The expansion of Pakistan's military fissile material production facilities increases the opportunity for sympathetic insiders to carry out or assist in a theft of weapon-usable nuclear material," Kile added.

Dr G Balachandran, strategic affairs and nuclear policy expert, however, said, "There is no question of comparison between India and Pakistan. India can produce 10 times more bombs than Pakistan if need be. Pakistan produces 30-35 tonnes of uranium for making bombs, whereas India produces 320-350 metric tones of uranium every year.. India is far ahead of Pakistan," Balachandran told The Pioneer.

SIPRI data points out that UK, France, China and Israel have maintained their number of nuclear warheads in 2011 whereas US and Russia reduced their total number of warheads under a series of bilateral arms control agreements.

By January 2011 eight countries, US, Russia, UK, France, China, India, Pakistan and Israel possessed more than 20,500 nuclear weapons, including 5000 operational weapons. Out of the total figure of over 5000 nuclear weapons which have been deployed and are ready for use, includes nearly 2000 that are kept in a "state of high operational alert".

<http://www.dailypioneer.com/344206/Pak-pace-in-nuke-race-alarms-India.html>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

Russia will counter any NATO Missile Defense - Russian Envoy

7 June 2011

Russia can develop missile systems capable of penetrating any missile defense deployed by NATO, Russia's envoy to the alliance Dmitry Rogozin said on Tuesday.



"Any attempts by those in NATO who dream of neutralizing our strategic potential will be futile," Rogozin said in an interview with the Rossiya-24 TV channel. "We have enough capacity to create both defensive and offensive means to counter any missile threat and to penetrate any missile defense."

Rogozin spoke on the eve of a NATO-Russia Council meeting on Wednesday, which is expected to cover a wide range of issues relating to the partnership between Russia and NATO, including a proposal to build one or two missile shields to protect Europe against attacks.

The diplomat reiterated that nuclear deterrent was the only guarantor of Russia's sovereignty, and Moscow would never allow it to be put under threat.

Rogozin said that Russia's response to any threat would be "comprehensive," without expanding further.

The envoy expressed hope that Russia and NATO could overcome existing controversy on the missile defense issue with enough "goodwill."

However, NATO's current position is not constructive and the alliance has not been willing to compromise so far, Rogozin said.

NATO insists there should be two independent systems that exchange information, while Russia favors a joint system with shared responsibility and involvement.

"They [NATO] stubbornly refuse to link their system with ours, insisting on the principle that only NATO should be responsible for its own security and no one else should interfere with this task," Rogozin said.

He added that Russia was concerned about NATO moves to place elements of their missile shield close to Russian borders and by the absence of guarantees that U.S. warships would not be deployed in the northern seas near the Russian border as part of the U.S. four-phase European missile defense initiative until 2020.

"Their combat and information-support systems [radars and control centers] should be moved away from our borders," he said.

MOSCOW, June 7 (RIA Novosti)

<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20110607/164499336.html>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency

Russia May Develop Nuclear Offensive, Arms Race - Serdyukov

8 June 2011

Russian Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov on Wednesday said that Russia would develop its own offensive nuclear force if NATO fails to come to agreement over the European defense shield.

"We have no other way, otherwise we'll just have to develop an arms race," Serdyukov said after a Russia-NATO meeting in Brussels.

The talks in Brussels, he said, did not result in the solution of conceptual approaches and the Russia-NATO working group on the missile shield issue only managed to agree on the plan of work for 2011.

"We failed to agree on conceptual approaches... Our dialogue must be continued," he said.

Russia and NATO agreed to cooperate on the European missile shield during the NATO-Russia Council summit in Lisbon in November 2010. NATO insists there should be two independent systems that exchange information, while Russia favors a joint system with full-scale interoperability.



USAF COUNTERPROLIFERATION CENTER
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MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

Serdyukov said that the solution to the ongoing talks on the European missile shield depends on the United States, and not on NATO.

"This is a U.S. position. There is a number of [NATO] countries expressing only concern. We could have received their support," he said.

He also said that NATO makes bilateral missile defense agreements with individual countries without taking into account Russia's concerns.

The minister added, however, that Russia is not dramatizing the issue and is offering constructive approaches for cooperation.

"We are not dramatizing the current situation. We are ready to proceed with dialogue both at the Russia-NATO level and bilateral levels," he said adding that the mooted shield must correspond to the real missile threat.

Russia has retained staunch opposition to the planned deployment of U.S. missile defense systems near its borders, claiming they would be a security threat. NATO and the United States insist that the shield would defend NATO members against missiles from North Korea and Iran and would not be directed at Russia.

BRUSSELS, June 8 (RIA Novosti)

<http://en.rian.ru/world/20110608/164518658.html>

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The Hindu – India
MOSCOW, June 9, 2011

NATO Rejects Russia's Missile Defence Proposals

By Vladimir Radyuhin

NATO has rejected Russia's proposals for cooperation on a European missile defence, the Russian defence chief said even as both sides vowed to continue talks.

"We have not received any positive and intelligible response. Our concerns have not been dispelled," Russia's Defence Minister Antony Serdyukov told reporters after a ministerial-level meeting of the Russia-NATO council in Brussels on Wednesday. "NATO is not heeding for the moment Russian proposals on missile defences."

At its summit in November, NATO had agreed to explore the possibility of cooperating with Russia in building a missile shield over Europe, but Mr. Serdyukov said that a joint working group set up for the purpose has achieved hardly any results.

"We have failed to agree either on an ultimate goal of cooperation or on the shape and structure of missile defences," the Russian defence chief said.

Russia has proposed either building a single jointly-operated antimissile system or dividing the European continent into two sectors of military responsibility that would overlap. NATO has rejected both proposals.

"The reason is simple — NATO cannot outsource to non-members collective defense obligations which bind its members," said NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen.

He also dismissed Russian demands for a legal guarantee that the European missile shield was not to target Russia's nuclear missiles.

"NATO's position is unacceptable to Russia," the Russian Defence Minister said. "By 2020, Europe may have a missile shield that could neutralise Russia's strategic potential."

In such a turn of events, Russia "will be forced to look for ways of overcoming this shield, which would trigger off a new arms race," he warned.

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Mr. Serdyukov and Mr. Rasmussen both pledged to continue talks to narrow down differences.

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/article2090715.ece>

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United Press International (UPI).com

GPS Can Spot Clandestine Nuclear Tests

June 7, 2011

VIENNA, June 7 (UPI) -- The Earth's Global Positioning System can be a tool to detect illegal and clandestine nuclear tests, U.S. researchers said at a test-ban meeting in Europe.

At the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization meeting this week in Vienna, researchers explained that even underground nuclear tests leave their mark on the part of the upper atmosphere known as the ionosphere, an effect known as ionospheric electron density that can be detected by GPS stations in nearby countries.

The phenomenon was discovered by researchers analyzing GPS data recorded the same day as a North Korean nuclear test in 2009.

"It's as if the shock wave from the underground explosion caused the earth to 'punch up' into the atmosphere, creating another shock wave that pushed the air away from ground zero," Ralph von Frese, professor of earth sciences at Ohio State University and senior author on the study, said.

Existing methods for detecting illegal nuclear tests, like seismic and acoustic detectors detecting shock waves in land and water and chemical sensors that can detect airborne radioactive gas and dust, can use GPS detection to confirm what they might otherwise miss, an Ohio State release reported Tuesday.

"GPS is a complement to these other methods, and can help confirm that a nuclear test has taken place -- especially when the test was underground, so that its effect in the air is very subtle, and otherwise nearly impossible to detect," Jihye Park, a doctoral student in geodetic science at Ohio State, said.

While GPS was designed for location purposes, the technology has always been especially sensitive to atmospheric disturbances, researchers say.

"GPS signals must pass from transmitters on satellites high above the planet down to ground-based receivers," Dorota Grejner-Brzezinska, a professor of geodetic science at Ohio State, explained.

"Air molecules -- more specifically, the electrons and other charged particles in the ionosphere -- interfere with the signal, generating position error. Part of our research concerns how to compensate for that vulnerability and make GPS work better.

"Jihye found a way to take that vulnerability and turn it into something useful," she said.

http://www.upi.com/Science_News/2011/06/07/GPS-can-spot-clandestine-nuclear-tests/UPI-81991307491661/?pvn=1

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U.S. Department of Defense

Lynn: U.S. Must Prepare for Future Warfare Trends

June 8, 2011

By Donna Miles, American Forces Press Service

Issue No. 914, 10 June 2011

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WASHINGTON, June 8, 2011 – The Pentagon must factor in major trends likely to shape the national security environment, including many that defy traditional military planning, Deputy Defense Secretary William J. Lynn III said here today.

The Defense Department must play a part in federal deficit-reduction efforts, Lynn told the Center for Strategic and International Studies' 2011 Global Security Forum.

"Since 9/11, we have had the ability to address new defense challenges with increased resources," he said. "We will not have that luxury for the foreseeable future."

The challenge, he added, is to manage the coming budget reductions wisely and responsibly, and apply resources so they can best meet future warfare trends.

Lynn cited the revolutionary changes that occurred during the last half-century alone, exemplified through the life of Frank Buckles, the last surviving U.S. World War I veteran, who died in February. Buckles saw the horrors of trench warfare during World War I, was rescued as a World War II prisoner of war just as the design for an atomic bomb was finalized, and lived to have his own Facebook page before he died at age 110.

The three revolutions that Buckles' life encompassed -- industrial, atomic and information -- "brought an avalanche of military technologies and introduced whole new dimensions to war," Lynn said. "The issue for us as we consider what capabilities and programs to protect in a defense drawdown is what course future technologies will take."

Lynn identified three strategic trends he said are likely to shape the future U.S. national security environment: increasing access to lethality across the threat spectrum, longer-duration warfare, and the growing prevalence of asymmetric threats.

"They are each, in different ways, the result of our entry into a new era of war, one driven primarily by the overlay of the information age atop the industrial and atomic revolutions," he said. "They can and they must inform our defense planning. What we need to do at this juncture, in this fiscal environment, is to take the long view about what strategic trends are important."

Gone, Lynn said, are the days when the most economically developed countries possessed the most-lethal military power, and others had second-rate capabilities or little or no access to highly lethal technologies.

"Today, this linear relationship between economic and military power no longer holds," he said. "Terrorist groups with few resources can mount devastating attacks. Insurgents can defeat our most advanced armor with fertilizer bombs. Rogue states seek nuclear weapons. Some criminal organizations even possess world-class cyber capabilities."

This change has increased the risks the United States faces and broadens the range of threats it must be prepared to confront, he said.

"Defense planning must reflect this development," Lynn said, ensuring the military has the capabilities to confront both high- and low-end threats.

"We have decisions about how to size our forces for these disparate contingencies, but we must equip for both," he said. "In other words, we will need both fifth-generation fighters and counter-[improvised explosive device] technology."

Current reality also challenges the long-held assumption that kinetic engagements would be relatively short, Lynn said. Noting that operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have lasted longer than the U.S. participation in World War I and World War II combined, he said military planners must be prepared to sustain long-term commitments for a range of plausible conflicts. Their planning, he added, must account for enough force structure to provide adequate troop dwell time between deployments.



“This is likely to have important implications for how we size, structure and utilize our reserve force components,” he said. “We need the ability to scale-up force structure for longer conflicts. The long-term costs of extended conflicts must be considered in our strategic calculus.”

Another trend Lynn said must be taken into account in posturing the military for the future is the increasing prevalence of asymmetric threats.

Recognizing that they can’t go up against the United States militarily, adversaries use asymmetric approaches that Lynn said “target our weaknesses and undercut our advantages.”

As a result, “insurgents such as the Taliban and al-Qaida in Iraq avoid engaging our military in direct force-on-force engagements,” he said. “Instead, they use IEDs and assassination as their weapons, and they hope to use the longer duration of war to wait us out.”

Traditional powers also seek asymmetric capabilities, increasingly turning to area-denial and anti-access tactics through the proliferation of precision-strike weapons, he said.

Sophisticated precision-strike technologies, once exclusive to the United States and its allies, will be available to more nations in the next 10 to 20 years, Lynn said. This will have a cumulative effect he said will challenge U.S. power-projection to distant parts of the globe.

“To address these anti-access tactics and defeat area-denial strategies, we need to develop a range of capabilities, particularly missile defense and long-range strike,” Lynn said. He cited major investments being made in a long-range strike system that will enable the United States to penetrate defenses and deliver munitions worldwide.

Lynn also cited the potential use of asymmetric tactics in cyberspace -- a development he said that would threaten the Internet technology that increasingly underpins U.S. military and economic strength.

The cyber threat is maturing, Lynn said. Not only are its effects escalating, but more capabilities are being developed within terrorist groups which are hard to deter because they typically have few assets to strike back against.

“If a terrorist group gains a disruptive and destructive capability, we have to assume they will strike with little hesitation,” he warned. “So in cyber, we have a window of opportunity to act before the most malicious actors acquire the most destructive technologies. We need to continue moving aggressively to protect our military, government and critical infrastructure networks.”

Looking to the future, Lynn said the challenge is to navigate current fiscal circumstances without disrupting the capabilities of the world’s most effective military force.

“We need to make the right judgments about the nature of our future security environment,” he said.

“We need to invest in the right capabilities and force structure that address the trends in warfare, ... and we need to relentlessly adapt our technology and our doctrine as threats evolve and mature,” Lynn said. “If we do these things, we will ensure our forces are ready for the future of war.”

<http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=64242>

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Air Force News Service (AFNS)

Air Force Funds Future ICBM Studies

June 9, 2011

By Vicki Stein, Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs



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MAXWELL AFB, ALABAMA

WASHINGTON (AFNS) -- The first of several studies to determine the best options for maintaining or replacing the nation's 450 Minuteman III Intercontinental Ballistic Missile weapons systems after 2030 is underway, Air Force officials said here recently.

"The Air Force is strongly committed to the ground-based leg of the nation's nuclear triad and we're taking all actions appropriate -- the analysis, the assessment, the planning -- for this capability, in 2030 and beyond," said Maj. Gen. William A. Chambers, the assistant chief of staff for strategic deterrence and nuclear integration.

As part of that commitment, the Air Force is making a \$28 billion investment in nuclear deterrence operations across the Future Years Defense Program, the general said in statements provided to the House and Senate Armed Services Committee's Strategic Forces Subcommittees April 5 and 6.

That investment and planned studies will ensure that the Air Force retains or procures systems and capabilities that are best for our nation's strategic deterrence, he said. Options for a new GBSD capability, he added, range from upgrading the current ICBM force to the possibility of a new system.

"Although a decision on a follow-on ICBM is not needed for several years, the Nuclear Posture Review recognized the need for studies to inform a decision on ground-based strategic deterrence beyond 2030," he said, explaining that the results of these studies will inform and help clarify the costs and benefits of a follow-on ground-based strategic deterrent capability.

Lt. Gen. James M. Kowalski, the commander of Air Force Global Strike Command, told the Senate Armed Services Committee April 6 that the command is working with headquarters Air Force on the capabilities-based assessment of a ground based strategic deterrent. The \$1 million initial study, internally funded by AFGSC, is expected to be complete by July 2011 and will establish the requirements baseline for the missile's desired speed, range, payload capacity and other requirements.

During FY12, Air Force officials are planning to internally source funds in the amount of \$4.6 million to develop the Analysis of Alternatives study guidance and use the guidance to build the AOA study plan, officials said. This funding will also fund initial pre-AOA concept characterization and technical descriptions.

These efforts will produce a recommendation regarding the best ICBM follow-on options from a broad range of alternatives -- from full replacement to sustainment of the current ICBM beyond 2030.

Approximately \$26 million will be required, in total, during FY12-14 to complete the entire Materiel Solutions Analysis phase, which includes the AOA and other activities leading to the initial acquisition milestone and a Program of Record.

While Air Force officials are conducting these studies, the Minuteman III ICBM, first deployed in the 1960s continues to undergo Life Extension Programs to ensure the weapon system is viable through 2030 as mandated by Congress.

Minuteman III ICBMs are located at missile wings headquartered at F.E. Warren Air Force Base, Wyo., Malmstrom AFB, Mont. and Minot AFB, N.D.

<http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123259123>

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Voice of Russia – Russia

Russia, US Urged to Lead Fight Against Nuke Terror

By Alexei Chernichenko

June 8, 2011

Thwarting all attempts of terrorists to gain possession of nuclear materials is the major goal of an international campaign that is to be spearheaded by Russia and the US. This is a key recommendation of the report "The US-

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Russia Joint Threat Assessment on Nuclear Terrorism”, prepared by researchers at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs and the Russian Institute for US and Canadian Studies. The document was released on June 7th in Boston and in Moscow.

Al-Qaeda and North Caucasus-based extremist groups are seeking ways to seize nuclear weapons and have even tried to purchase them. An analysis of statements made by the terrorists themselves lends itself to such a conclusion, authors of the report argue.

The study reveals that the so-called “level of physical nuclear security” (in other words, the protection of nuclear materials) has increased over the last few years. At the same time, the authors of the report insist on extra emergency measures to guarantee the complete safety of substances usable as weapons. All nuclear arsenals, as well as enriched uranium and plutonium stockpiles should be protected from possible terrorist attacks, with the number of storage facilities to be reduced to a minimum, the two countries’ experts emphasize.

At present, these figures are far from approaching their minimum levels. A report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) released the same day claims that there are 20,500 deployed nuclear weapons on our planet, owned by 8 countries: the US, Russia, Great Britain, France, China, India, Pakistan and Israel. Over 5,000 warheads are ready for use and the rest is kept in storage.

Given such statistics, issues of anti-terrorist nuclear vigilance are becoming increasingly urgent, director of the Center for Social and Political Studies Vladimir Yevseyev believes:

"Recommendations by Russian and American experts will help increase safety standards for handling nuclear warheads and materials, as well as minimize the possibility of their being seized by terrorist organizations. Such a threat does exist, unfortunately. We possess information that attempts to this end were made by Chechen armed gangs and, of course, Al-Qaeda - the latter even sought to gain possession of a ready-made nuclear weapon. From this point of view, the work of that report’s authors conforms fully to the interests of both the Russian Federation and the United States of America," Vladimir Yevseyev said.

Experts stress that not only ready-to-go nuclear warheads should be subjected to the strictest control, but also weapons-grade nuclear substances. The best way to enhance control over these hazardous materials is to cut their numbers to a requisite minimum by disposing of the nuclear surplus.

On June 7th, the Kremlin press service said in a statement that President Dmitry Medvedev ratified the intergovernmental agreement between Russia and the US on the utilization of excess weapons-grade plutonium and associated protocols. Earlier, Washington assented to Moscow’s proposal to use the fast-neutron reactor BN-800 for these purposes. Under the ratified treaty, the parties will have to launch their disposal programs before 2018. The BN-800 reactor is planned to be commissioned in 2013-2014.

<http://english.ruvr.ru/2011/06/08/51444833.html>

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New York Times

OPINION

International Herald Tribune OP-ED Contributor

June 7, 2011

Missile Defense: As Friends or Foes?

By DMITRY ROGOZIN

BRUSSELS — Missile weapons and technologies are becoming ever more available, and a growing number of countries are interested in acquiring them. For some, this is because missile technologies are closely linked with delivering weapons of mass destruction.

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Clearly we should analyze the motives of certain countries that seek these weapons. And we should continue examining what Western countries and Russia can do together to successfully address the proliferation of W.M.D. and means of its delivery. By its nature, this question is more political and diplomatic than military-technical.

Before creating ballistic-missile defense (B.M.D.) systems and investing billions of dollars, it is important to understand the motivation of those who try to develop W.M.D. and missile weapons at all costs. Are these “bad guys” so bad that they entertain ideas of a perfidious attack against Old Europe? Or do they want to raise their international clout and become members of the nuclear club by such perverse means?

Or, perhaps, are these countries trying to thwart foreign aggression? Iraq is a good example. The country was attacked under the pretext that Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction. Washington knew this was not true, and despite that, decided to send its soldiers on a land operation. The problem is that other countries, not willing to share the fate of the Iraqi dictator, might now attempt to get hold of weapons of mass destruction and missiles.

Nonetheless, Russia does recognize the fact that missile challenges are gradually becoming a risk and a reality. This conclusion can be drawn from the Lisbon summit commitments made by Russia and NATO in November 2010. The Russian position is simple: European missile defenses should be based on equal participation and a common indivisible security for all the countries of the continent.

This means that European missile defenses should be a smart system, not overpriced, using pooled resources and protecting all European nations. It should be located in regions potentially at risk from missiles, i.e. the south. Why play “Star Wars” in northern Europe, where there are no threats?

President Dmitri Medvedev has made it clear that Russia is ready to conduct a comprehensive joint analysis of a framework for cooperation in this sphere. He has suggested that this project should be based on equality, transparency, technology and responsibility. He also put forward the idea of creating a “sectoral” ballistic-missile defense, with participants assuming responsibility for specific areas.

Russia views future cooperation with NATO on missile defenses as an intermediate stage of building a strategic partnership with the alliance — the goal defined at the Lisbon summit meeting.

Real cooperation should help us get rid of the nightmares and phobia of the Cold War. It would give us a common task — an important and sophisticated one from both political and technological points of view. Our work would result in solid security and the restoration of European unity.

Russia and NATO should be completely sincere and honest with each other in creating the European B.M.D. There is no place for double standards. So to begin joint work we should give each other legal and political guarantees of mutual security.

Russia does not want U.S. anti-missile defenses to extend to our territory, especially to its North European part, because should a negative scenario develop, this could upset the strategic balance of forces between our country and the United States. The missile-defense system should not be used against each other. For Russia it is a matter of principle to remove any threat to its strategic capabilities, which guarantee our sovereignty and independence.

The United States should ensure that its anti-missile capabilities are not aimed against Russian national interests. We are not yet aware what the architecture and parameters of the future European B.M.D. are. But we do know what they should not be. Proposed as a project capable of alleviating threats for Europe in the future, this anti-missile shield should not create new threats far more serious than the notorious “Iranian missile threat.”

Moreover, a joint European missile-defense system will inevitably lead to abandoning military planning against each other, which will dramatically enhance mutual trust between Russia and the West. Conversely, a missile-defense system without Russia would return us to bloc politics, mutual suspicion and a new European arms race.



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We suggest creating a common perimeter of missile defense with all ballistic-missile defense capabilities pointed outside the Euro-Atlantic region. It should be geared primarily for areas that could pose threats, and these in reality can only emanate from the south.

Russia counts on European states to show an active interest in this project. It is about the protection of Europe, and the stance of an idle observer that European diplomacy has assumed up to now is not quite clear to me.

We need a broad, expert discussion on a European ballistic-missile defense system, which could include the establishment of a group of "European wise men." The European B.M.D. project should be based on equal cooperation of all countries of the Continent.

Convinced of the historic necessity to preserve peace in Europe, Russia is trying to understand what exactly we were offered in Lisbon: lasting friendship or a redesign of ideas from the former U.S. administration implying the creation of a third positioning area for a global U.S. ballistic-missile defense, which Moscow has vigorously opposed. The security of the entire Euro-Atlantic region depends on the answer to this question.

Dmitry Rogozin is Russia's ambassador to NATO and the special envoy of the president of Russia for interaction with NATO in anti-missile defense.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/08/opinion/08iht-edrogozin08.html>

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The Guardian – U.K.

OPINION/Global Security Blog

'The Day after Iran's First Nuclear Test Is a Normal Day'

A bizarre article on a Revolutionary Guard website breaks a taboo by anticipating the impact of an Iranian bomb

By Julian Borger

Wednesday, 8 June 2011

Any mention of an Iranian nuclear weapon is taboo in the Islamic Republic, which insists that its nuclear programme is entirely for peaceful, civil purposes. So it is remarkable, to say the least, that an article has appeared on the Gerdab website, run by Iran's Revolutionary Guards, anticipating the day after Iran's first test of a nuclear warhead. Here is a translation of the text:

The day after Iran's first nuclear test is a normal day.

The day after Islamic Republic of Iran's first nuclear test will be an ordinary day for us Iranians but in the eyes of some of us there will be a new sparkle.

It's a good day. It's seven in the morning. The sun is not fully up yet but everywhere is bright. In the northern hemisphere many countries are beginning the day...

The day before, probably in central deserts of Iran, where once Americans and some other Western countries wanted to bury their nuclear waste, an underground nuclear explosion has taken place. The strength of the explosion was not so great as to cause severe damage to the region nor so weak that Iranian scientists face any problems in running their tests.

Today is a normal day like any other. Like 90% of the year, there is news about Iran, and these are the headlines which can be seen on foreign news sites:

Reuters: Iran detonated its nuclear bomb

CNN: Iran detonated nuclear bomb

Al-Jazeera: The second Islamic nuclear bomb was tested

Al-Arabia: The Shia nuclear bomb was tested

Yahoo! News: Nuclear explosion in Iran

Jerusalem Post: Mullahs obtained nuclear weapon

Washington Post: Nuclear explosion in Iran, Shock and despair in Tel Aviv

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Meanwhile, the domestic media will offer many congratulations to the Hidden Imam and the Supreme Leader:

Keyhan: Iran's first nuclear bomb was tested

Jomhoori-e-eslami: Iran successfully carried out a nuclear test

Iran: By order of the president, Iran's 100% homemade nuclear bomb was tested

Ettela'at: Iran's much anticipated nuclear bomb exploded

This strange, hypothetical, article, which first appeared on April 24, hammers home again and again the message that an Iranian nuclear test will not lead to disaster. On the contrary, life will go as before except that Iranians will feel better about themselves.

The news commotion will not knock life in Iran off balance. Civil servants will punch in at work on time as always, while some will be late as always. ...The day after the Islamic Republic of Iran's first nuclear test will be an ordinary day for us Iranians but in the eyes of some of us there will be a new sparkle. A sparkle of national pride and strength.

This has the look of a kite being flown, but for whom? It could be intended to get Iranians used to the idea of a nuclear test, and less fearful of international reaction. It could be a gesture of defiance to the world by hardline elements - according to independent experts, Gerdab is run by the Revolutionary Guards' cyber defence command, which is presumably still smarting from the Stuxnet attack. Opposition websites describe it as an enforcement tool for the regime, identifying and threatening independent bloggers inside Iran.

The article comes during a period when Tehran's official stance is particularly defiant and assertive, announcing today that it will triple its production of 20% enriched uranium and shift it to the underground Fordow site, near Qom.

Meir Javedanfar, an Iranian-Israeli expert on the Tehran regime currently lecturing in Colombia, described the Gerdab article as "unbelievable".

I have never seen anything like this report. It's breaking a major taboo. For now we have to treat it as a one off. However if this report is followed by others similar to it, then it would signify a major change in the way Iran refers to its nuclear program. It would mean that Iran has decided to use the idea of a nuclear bomb as a deterrence against further sanctions and the possibility of a military attack by the West. It could also be a tool for the regime to boost its waning popularity at home.

Such a change could prove to be very damaging in the short and long term, as it would be a significant boost for western efforts to isolate Iran and to consolidate the international consensus against the Islamic Republic and its nuclear program. Such isolation and deteriorating economic situation could be more damaging to the regime's top priority, which is its survival, than a military attack by the West.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/julian-borger-global-security-blog/2011/jun/08/iran-blogging>

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RIA Novosti – Russian Information Agency
OPINION/Analysis

Leaving Politics Out of It: Military Implications of Missile-Defense

9 June 2011

By Vladimir Yevseyev for RIA Novosti

Missile-defense is among the most discussed issues on the Russian-U.S. agenda, its prominence primarily explained by Washington's insistence on deploying forward-based missile-defense units, elements of a strategic missile-defense system, not far from Russian borders.

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Military analysts believe this could impair the effective combat use of Russia's strategic nuclear arms. A meeting among the defense ministers of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) that began in Brussels on June 8 plans to devote its energies precisely to this issue.

Yet this sufficiently complicated debate cannot be resolved quickly. The United States continues to assert its commitment to the joint development of missile-defense systems with Russia, but refuses to give legally sealed guarantees that such systems will not be directed against its potential collaborator.

Russia and the United States continue to negotiate in a mood of mutual distrust. Moscow fears that its strategic nuclear forces will be weakened. Washington and its European partners prefer to rely solely on their own armed forces under Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty.

It is possible to escape the current impasse if the following measures are implemented in the near future.

Meeting halfway

First of all, a joint center for the exchange of data from early-warning systems.

should be opened in Moscow under the May 2002 Joint Declaration on a New Relationship Between the United States and Russia.

The online center should function as the first early-warning link between the United States/NATO and Russia. Additional centers could be opened in the United States and Europe.

Second, Russia, the United States, and NATO should continue to hold joint computerized exercises on theater-level missile-defense systems. Substantial positive experience has already been accumulated in this field.

Prominent military analyst Vladimir Dvorkin says that five Russian-U.S. computerized exercises in this sphere were conducted between 1996 and 2006. Four more exercises involving Russia, the United States, and NATO were held between 2003 and 2008 in Colorado, the Netherlands, Moscow, and Munich.

Third, Russia and the United States should consider the possibility of holding a joint exercise to intercept a high-speed ballistic target. The exercise should involve Russia's S-300 PMU-1/SA-20A Gargoyle and S-400 Triumf/SA-21 Growler surface-to-air missiles, as well as the U.S. Army Patriot PAC-2 missiles. The exercise could take place, for instance, at the Ashuluk firing range in Russia's Astrakhan Region.

Although this is not enough to facilitate more partner-like Russian-U.S. relations in the sphere of missile defense, the implementation of such measures would promote mutual trust and also make it possible to discuss the crucial issue of the interoperability of national missile-defense systems.

It is clear that the United States will be unable to delay the creation of a European missile-defense system due to domestic policy considerations and its previous obligations to NATO.

This is intensified by the fact that Iran rapidly continues to increase its missile potential and has voiced an ominously vague stance on the true objectives of its national nuclear program. Iranian specialists are currently developing the two-stage solid-propellant Sajil missile with a maximum range of 2,200 kilometers. The missile carries a warhead weighing one metric ton and can also be fitted with a 500-kg warhead, increasing its range to 3,000 km.

Missiles of this type may present a threat to southern Russia, including the Volgograd Region and some European states. Iran may be capable of using such missiles as early as two to three years from now. Consequently, the creation of a joint missile-defense system in the foreseeable future reflects common Russian-NATO interests. The interoperability of the system's elements is just the first step in this direction.

Adding to the incentives for such cooperation are the convenient locations of Russian radar systems in Gabala, Azerbaijan, and near Armavir in the North Caucasus.



In 2009, the administration of U.S. President Barack Obama renounced the creation of a space-based missile-defense system and limited ground-based missile-defense systems to 30 ground-based interceptors in California and Alaska. The system also has eight reserve GBIs.

The United States plans to deploy ten SM-3 Block 2B ground-based missile interceptors in Poland by 2018 in order to intercept intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs).

Moreover, the United States has launched the serial production of SM-1 interceptors and plans to deploy six ground batteries of the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missile system, as well as the 24 SM-3 Block 2A missiles of the ground-based Aegis Ashore system, in Romania. All these missiles are designed to intercept short-range and medium-range ballistic missiles.

Russia wields the A-135 ballistic missile-defense system around Moscow. This system makes it possible to neutralize a limited nuclear strike during its final approach, yet it is virtually impossible to include in a joint missile-defense system.

The operational S-400 missiles with a maximum intercept altitude of not more than 30 km and the more advanced S-500 missiles, whose specifications will hardly exceed those of the THAAD system, are unable to hit high targets. All this seriously limits Russia's potential for joining the European missile-defense system.

The southern front

Russia's dilemma could be solved by placing missile-defense units in the Southern Federal District. It would thus become possible to create a regional European missile-defense system, as proposed by President Dmitry Medvedev at the November 2010 Russia-NATO summit in Lisbon.

Considering possible launch trajectories from an Iranian missile base near Isfahan, it would be most appropriate to deploy Russian missile interceptors near Rostov-on-Don and guide them to their targets with the help of cutting-edge radar near Armavir, thus shielding Russia from medium-range Iranian missiles.

Russia's scientific and production potential makes it possible to promptly design and deploy missile interceptors with a 200-300 km intercept altitude and conventional warheads for dealing kinetic strikes in the case of direct hits or fragmentary strikes in order to destroy ballistic targets.

Such missile interceptors should obviously be deployed on mobile launchers, and their initial number should be limited to 16 - the size of a standard air-defense missile brigade.

In this sense, however, it is possible to establish a joint Russian-European missile-defense system only in an as yet indefinite future.

In order to do so, Russia, the United States, and Washington's European allies first have to improve their mutual trust. This can be accomplished through data exchanges and joint exercises. If Moscow deploys missile-defense units in southern Russia, then it will become necessary to facilitate the interoperability of the new Russian system and a similar system in Romania, to say the least. In effect, this will become the first step on the road to creating a joint European missile-defense system.

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

<http://en.rian.ru/analysis/20110609/164520222.html>

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M.D. Harmon: Are Mushroom Clouds Looming Larger in the Middle East?

A variety of sources testify that those who think Iran is not interested in nuclear arms are in error.

By M.D. Harmon

Amid all the major stories of the past couple weeks, which certainly included the many accounts of Rep. Anthony Weiner's expansive social life and former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin's bus trip, a smaller story blipped up for a news cycle and then vanished.

You could be hearing about it again, however.

It cited a report by Gregory S. Jones, an adjunct senior policy analyst at the RAND Corp., a major think tank that analyzes scientific and public policy trends and makes recommendations on them for both governmental and private clients.

What got Jones' name in the news was a study he conducted that said Iran's current production of enriched uranium was sufficient to let it acquire 90 percent of the material it would need to build a nuclear bomb within the next two or three months -- "certainly by the end of the summer."

RAND quickly disassociated itself from Jones' report, pointing out that he had written it not for them but for a tiny nuclear-weapons study group called the Nonproliferation Policy Education Center.

A number of other sources and agencies, including the U.N.'s International Atomic Energy Agency, said they doubted Jones was right.

But the IAEA did note "seven areas of concern" about Iran's nuclear program, which the Iranians say is strictly for peaceful power generation.

One of the "areas" is that the Iranians are acquiring instrumentation and electrical devices "for explosive testing over long distances and possibly underground."

And another is that they are indeed enriching uranium to a higher level than is needed for electrical generation and closer to that used in weaponry -- and, as The Associated Press reported earlier this week, plan to "triple the output of the higher-grade material."

That, despite the fact that the U.N. Security Council has four times imposed increasingly strict levels of economic sanctions on the country.

Other sources considered it curious that an article posted April 24 to "Gerdab," a website run by Iran's Revolutionary Guards -- the armed security force of the Islamist regime, responsible for much of the use of force to put down anti-regime demonstrations over the past couple of years -- had an interesting take on the question of Iranian nukes.

The article took it for granted that the regime was building nuclear weapons, and speculated about what "The Day After" the first successful test of an Iranian bomb would be like.

According to the piece, translated by the invaluable Middle East Media Research Institute, which provides English versions of print and broadcast material that most Westerners don't see, normal daily life would continue with little change for the average Iranian. But for other nations, the impact would be substantial.

The article predicted, "The day after Iran's first nuclear test will be an ordinary day for us Iranians, but many of us will have a new gleam in our eyes -- a gleam of national pride and might." It cited imaginary headlines from other nations reacting with shock, and then quoted this verse from the Koran: "And prepare against them what force you can and horses tied at the frontier, to frighten thereby the enemy of Allah and your enemy."



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You can read what you wish into that, but note that a major military arm of the Iranian regime says it is looking forward with great glee to the acquisition of atomic warheads.

The major media, reacting to events in the Middle East, have been full of reports about an "Arab Spring" in which reactions against strongman rule have engulfed nations from Libya to Egypt to Yemen in ferment that has overturned some rulers and left others besieged.

Yet Iran went through its own such uprising after the last national election allegedly was stolen by the ruling clique, and that protest was put down violently and effectively by the Revolutionary Guards and other security forces.

The same thing has happened so far in Syria, an Iranian ally, and Moammar Gadhafi holds on to power in Tripoli despite NATO air attacks in support of disorganized rebel forces.

The initial hopes of the disparate revolts have given way to substantial fears that organized groups of Islamists, such as the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, may emerge victorious over groups seeking more freedom.

And yet, all of that ferment could be rendered essentially insignificant if (more likely, when) Iran announces proof it has nuclear weapons.

The face of the region will change quickly and irrevocably. Dissident voices inside Iran will be weakened, while nations that considered themselves immediately threatened could respond either with appeasement and requests for alliance (potentially Iraq and Kuwait) or efforts to create their own deterrent (Saudi Arabia).

Syria and Iranian-allied movements like Hezbollah in Lebanon would be strengthened, Turkey could move even further toward Iran and away from NATO, and Israel could face an immediate threat to its very existence -- with who knows what consequences.

In the meantime, the United States is appointing as its new defense secretary Leon Panetta, who told Congress at his confirmation hearing Thursday that he planned to respond to the increasing threats America faces by taking strong action.

Strong action, that is, to impose "fiscal discipline" on our defenders in the U.S. military.

That this could be a long, hot summer may have nothing at all to do with the weather.

M.D. Harmon is an editorial writer.

http://www.pressherald.com/opinion/are-mushroom-clouds-looming-larger-in-the-middle-east_2011-06-10.html

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