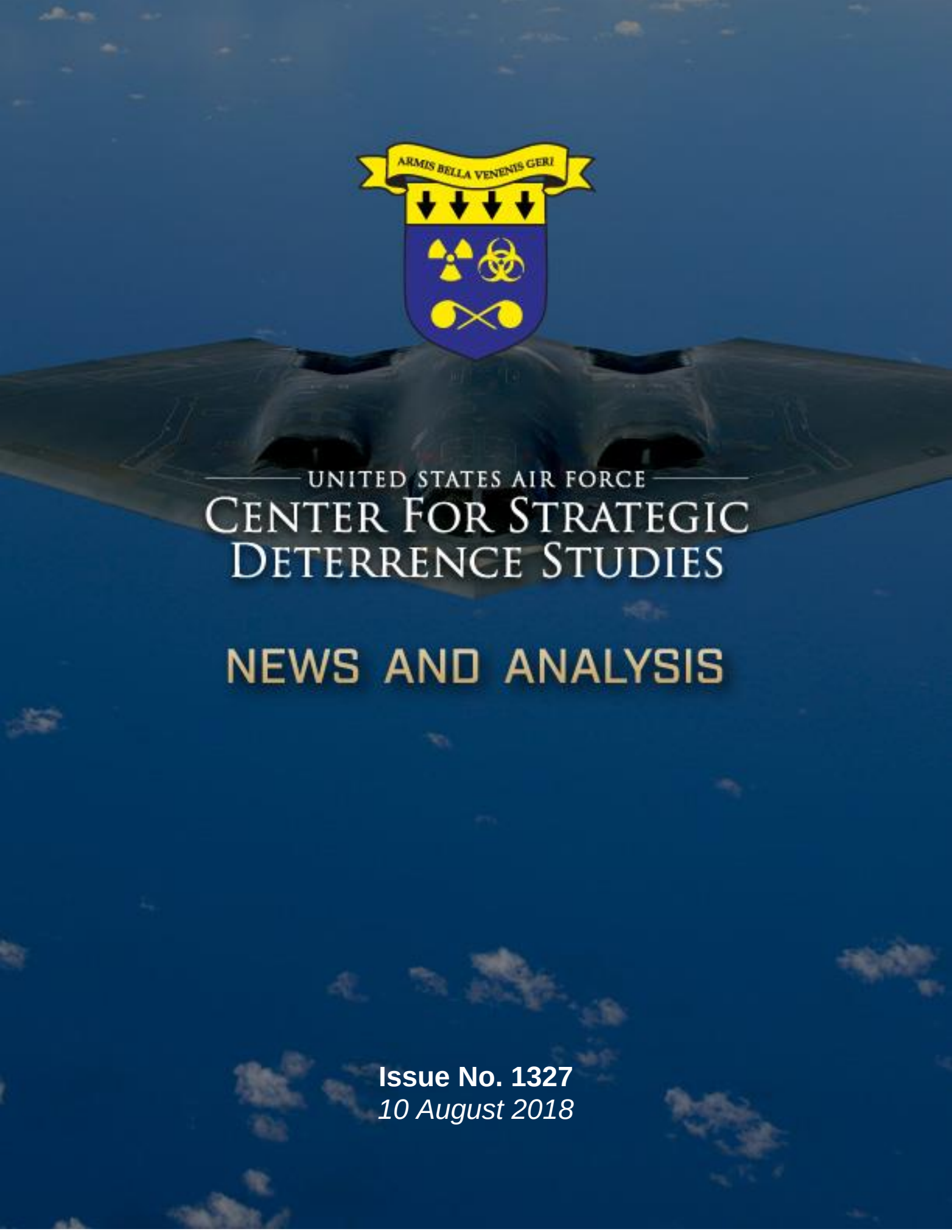

Issue No. 1327
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Feature Report

"*Empowering Congress on National Security: Blueprints for a New Generation*". By Jack Brosnan, Andrew Semmel, Nathan Sermonis, and Kingston Rief. Published by the Arms Control Association and Partnership for a Secure America; July 2018

https://www.armscontrol.org/sites/default/files/reports/ACA-PSA_Report_2018_digital.pdf

The global nuclear security enterprise is at a critical crossroads. While the worldwide use of nuclear and radioactive materials has grown, the issue of nuclear security has all but faded from the U.S. national conversation. As these materials become more widespread, they will be vulnerable to criminal and terrorist organizations without sufficient security efforts.

This report reveals a concerning loss of congressional leadership and interest in critical efforts to prevent nuclear terrorism. While the threat grows more complex, U.S. funding, oversight, and international cooperation to secure nuclear and radiological materials has diminished. By analyzing historic bipartisan initiatives and current congressional staff attitudes on nuclear security, this report offers an important blueprint to revitalize U.S. leadership through Capitol Hill.

Providing recommended action items and effective strategies for engaging Congress, the report is a useful tool for both policymakers and educators.

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NUCLEAR WEAPONS

NPR (Washington, D.C.)

Defense Budget Shifts Military's Focus from Terrorism to China and Russia

By David Welna

Aug. 5, 2018

It may seem counter-intuitive and head-scratchingly odd, but Congress nearly always approves defense spending bills before the armed services committees — which actually oversee the Pentagon — vote on how the money will be spent.

Not this year.

The John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019 was enacted this month well ahead of a still-pending budget bill.

It was also the earliest date on the legislative calendar that the NDAA has been sent to a president for his signature in more than two decades.

The bill sped through Congress as the nation's military continues waging war in Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen, Iraq, Niger, Libya, Somalia and an untold number of other global hot spots. All arise from what's been the Pentagon's main post-Sept. 11 focus: fighting terrorism.

But this new NDAA reflects Defense Secretary Jim Mattis' pivot away from those prolonged and inconclusive battles with insurgencies, to what he says should be the Pentagon's main concern: the United States' growing competition with the world's two other great powers, Russia and China.

Big majorities in the House and Senate approved the NDAA. Among the 10 senators who opposed its final passage were three Democrats — Kamala Harris of California, Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts and Kirsten Gillibrand of New York — who are all considered potential contenders in the 2020 presidential race.

The $716 billion in spending authorized by the bill is $16 billion more than what Congress approved for fiscal year 2018. In real terms, this 2.23 percent increase amounts to a reduction in defense spending, given the 2.46 percent rise in inflation over the past year. (Exceeding that inflation rate was the bill's 2.6 percent raise for the uniformed military, the largest pay hike it's had since 2010.)

Congress matched dollar-for-dollar what the Pentagon asked for. Yet, the NDAA mandates doing more with less. It calls for adding 15,600 troops to the country's 1. 3 million active duty forces, an expansion also sought by the Pentagon. It adds another aircraft carrier and two littoral combat ships that the Pentagon did not request. A total of 13 new ships for the U.S. Navy are authorized — exactly half as many new ships as Russia plans to build this year.

The Republican-controlled armed service committees backtracked and bowed to several significant policy changes the Trump administration sought during the merging of the House and Senate versions of the NDAA.

Turkey

Mattis convinced Congress to strip the Senate's tough talk on Turkey from the final version of the bill.

That version instructed him to draw up plans for suspending delivery of 100 F-35 Joint Strike Fighters ordered by Turkey as well as Turkey's participation in an international consortium producing the radar-evading warplane.

It was retaliation for the Turkish government's arrest and detention, following a failed coup attempt two years ago, of Andrew Brunson, an American Presbyterian minister; as well as this longtime NATO ally's intention to buy the Russian-made S-400 missile defense system.

Mattis wrote Congress in July asking that Turkey's access to the F-35s not be blocked. In its place is language from the House bill, which simply requires that Mattis submit a report "on the status of the United States relationship with the Republic of Turkey" by Oct. 31.

China

The White House prevailed in its quest to exclude from the NDAA language approved by the full Senate blocking the sale of American technology to Chinese telecommunications giant ZTE.

Such a trade restriction had already been imposed by the Trump administration, but it was lifted after Trump spoke with Chinese President Xi Jinping and tweeted that he was looking for a way to get ZTE back in business because "[t]oo many jobs in China [were] lost."

The final NDAA does nothing specific to restrict the sale of American technology to ZTE and Huawei, another Chinese telecommunications and video surveillance giant. But it does tighten overall U.S. national security reviews of American exports of sensitive technology by issuing stricter guidelines for the Committee on Foreign Investment in the U.S., or CFIUS.

The NDAA also bars the purchase or use by the federal government and its contractors of technology sold by ZTE and Huawei. That restriction would not, however, apply for sales to the general public.

There is also a ban in the bill on Pentagon spending for any Chinese language instruction provided by the Confucius Institute, which is operated by an entity associated with China's education ministry.

Russia

Mattis also prevailed in dissuading Congress from requiring enforcement of a 2017 sanctions law for countries that purchase Russian-made weapon systems or parts.

"Some nations who now actively seek a security relationship with the United States still rely on Russia for spare parts and other material," Mattis wrote, citing India and Vietnam as examples.

Otherwise, the new NDAA carries a spate of Cold War-like policy measures likely to irritate Russia. They include:

— $6.3 billion for the European Deterrence Initiative, the largest U.S. infusion yet for this effort — started during the Obama administration — that's aimed at bolstering defenses in European nations near Russia.

— A requirement that Secretary Mattis send Congress by March 2019 a feasibility report on permanently stationing in Poland U.S. Army brigade combat teams that are currently cycling through nine-month rotations there. Russia maintains that the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act prohibits the establishment of permanent NATO bases in former Warsaw Pact nations, including Poland. NATO and the U.S. disagree, but have nonetheless held off establishing new bases in those countries during the 21 years since the act was signed.

— A directive that Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin brief Congress on all assets known to be held by Russian President Vladimir Putin, his "oligarch" associates and other high officials in Russia.

— A strengthening of a ban on funding anything that recognizes the sovereignty of Russia over Crimea.

— A labeling of Russia as a violator of the Chemical Weapons Convention, based on Russia's alleged role in chemical attacks in Syria and Kremlin-linked assassination attempts in the United Kingdom.

— A requirement for certification that Trump has imposed sanctions on Russia for violations of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, as he had been directed to do in the 2018 NDAA; the bill also calls for the administration to submit plans to Congress for additional sanctions. A House provision was dropped that had called for considering INF treaty obligations nonbinding if Russia is not in compliance with the treaty.

— A ban on extending the New START nuclear arms limitation treaty (which expires in Feb. 2021) unless Congress receives a report from the administration on Russia's new strategic weapons determining whether Russia is in compliance with the treaty.

— Authorizes $65 million "for developing and producing a low-yield warhead to be mounted on a submarine-launched ballistic missile," according to a summary of the bill. Proponents say this would deter Russia from using tactical, lower-yield weapons; opponents say such weapons increase the likelihood of nuclear war.

Yemen

— Prohibits funds being spent on in-flight refueling of Saudi aircraft or members of the Saudi-led coalition conducting missions over Yemen, until the U.S. secretary of state certifies that Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are seeking a diplomatic resolution of the conflict in Yemen and respecting the humanitarian needs of that country's inhabitants.

— Requires that the Trump administration brief Congress on what the U.S. strategy is in Yemen.

South Korea

— Bars funding for the reduction of U.S. troops stationed in South Korea below 22,000, unless the secretary of defense certifies such a draw-down is in the national security interest of the U.S., and both South Korea and Japan have been "appropriately consulted."

Syria

— Renews the Syria train-and-equip program, but limits any expenditure of funds until Trump submits to Congress the Syria strategy report mandated by the 2018 NDAA.

Afghanistan

— Extends the Afghanistan Security Forces Fund through the end of next year. This continues the effort to stand up the Afghan military and police forces, which has become the main focus of the U.S. in Afghanistan.

— Authorizes $25 million to promote recruitment, training and integration of women in the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces.

— Requires that the secretary of defense designate a senior civilian official focused on civilian casualties associated with U.S. military operations. That official would regularly inform Congress on civilian casualties and work to improve reporting on noncombatant casualties.

Guantanamo

— Renews congressional bans on transferring any of the 40 remaining detainees to U.S. prisons and on building facilities in the U.S. to hold them.

— Denies the $69 million requested by the Trump administration for building a new "high-value detainee complex." That would replace a top-secret structure there known as Camp Seven which currently holds 15 detainees.

Outer Space

— Establishes a U.S. Space Command as part of the U.S. Strategic Command, but does not authorize funds for creating the space force that Trump has directed the Pentagon to create.

https://www.npr.org/2018/08/05/635380840/defense-budget-shifts-militarys-focus-from-terrorism-to-china-and-russia

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South China Morning Post (Hong Kong)

China's Hypersonic Aircraft, Starry Sky-2, Could Be Used to Carry Nuclear Missiles at Six Times the Speed of Sound

By Liu Zhen

Aug. 6, 2018

First test flight of experimental design, which rides its own shock waves, deemed a 'huge success'

China has successfully tested a new hypersonic aircraft that could one day be used to carry missiles at such speeds as to make them unstoppable, according to scientists involved in the project.

The Starry Sky-2, which is an experimental design known as waverider – for its ability to ride on the shock waves it generates – completed its first test flight on Friday at an undisclosed location in northwest China, the China Academy of Aerospace Aerodynamics said in a statement issued on Monday.

The aircraft was carried into space by a multistage rocket before separating and relying on its own power. During independent flight it conducted extreme turning manoeuvres, maintained velocities above Mach 5.5 (five-and-a-half times the speed of sound) for more than 400 seconds, and achieved a top speed of Mach 6, or 7,344km/h (4,563mph) the statement said.

On completion of the flight, which was deemed a "huge success", the aircraft landed in a designated target zone, it said.

The entire flight was controlled and provided effective test data, while the aircraft itself was recovered "whole", the statement said.

"The test … has laid a solid technological foundation for engineering applications of the waverider design," it said.

The aircraft was recovered after completing its test flight, scientists said. Photo: CCTV

Although still at the experimental stage, once fully developed, waveriders could be used to carry warheads capable of penetrating any anti-missile defence system currently available.

Beijing-based military analyst Zhou Chenming said it would most likely be used for carrying conventional warheads rather than nuclear ones, though added that such a capability was still some way away.

"I think there are still three to five years before this technology can be weaponised," he said.

"As well as being fitted to missiles, it may also have other military applications, which are still being explored."

The Starry Sky-2 is not China's first hypersonic aircraft – it has been testing hypersonic glide vehicles since 2014 – but is the only one that makes use of waverider technology.

The new aircraft, which has a flatter, wedge-shaped fuselage to improve its supersonic lift-to-drag ratio, also has much greater manoeuvrability that makes early warning or interception more difficult.

Mike Griffin, a former Nasa administrator and now the Pentagon's defence undersecretary for research and engineering, said earlier this year that China had built "a pretty mature system" for a hypersonic missile to strike from thousands of miles away.

China is not alone in developing hypersonic weapons, the United States and Russia are too.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said in June that the Kinzhal hypersonic missile system had reached speeds of Mach 20, while a new hypersonic glide vehicle, the Avangard, which was "absolutely invulnerable to any missile defence system" would come into operation next year, followed by a nuclear-armed intercontinental ballistic missile in 2020.

The US is working on several designs, including the Hypersonic Technology Vehicle 2 and Advanced Hypersonic Weapon. Earlier this year, the US Air Force allocated US$1 billion for the design and development of a hypersonic missile that could be launched from a warplane.

https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy-defence/article/2158524/chinas-hypersonic-aircraft-starry-sky-2-could-be-used

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Albuquerque Journal (Albuquerque, N.M.)

Budget Bill Gives LANL Pit-Making a Boost, Now Goes to President

By Mark Oswald

Aug. 3, 2018

SANTA FE – As expected, the U.S. Senate has passed a defense funding bill this week that includes money and language that supports ramping up production of the plutonium cores of nuclear weapons at Los Alamos National Laboratory.

The bill tasks the lab with implementing "surge efforts" to make more than 30 of the so-called plutonium pits a year to meet national defense and nuclear weapons policy.

The bill passed the House last week, so it's now headed to President Donald Trump for signing.

In May, the Nuclear Weapons Council certified the National Nuclear Security Administration's plan to repurpose the Savannah River Site in South Carolina to make 50 pits a year coupled with "an enduring mission" to produce at least 30 "pits" per year at Los Alamos, currently the only place in the country set up to make the weapon cores.

Since then, New Mexico's congressional delegation has been fighting to keep all the pit work in Los Alamos, which has faced scrutiny over safety issues involving the handling of radioactive materials in recent years.

The defense bill calls for a new, independent review of an NNSA study that supported moving most of the pit production to South Carolina.

The bill also mandates that NNSA produce plans for LANL to make 30 pits annually by 2026 or to eventually make all of the mandated 80 pits per year, possibly through use of multiple work shifts, in case the South Carolina facility "is not operational and producing pits by 2030." There is a legal fight going on in South Carolina over whether the Savannah River Site should be switched to pit production.

The new pits would be used as part of a massive plan for modernizing the U.S. nuclear stockpile.

According to the offices of New Mexico U.S. Sens. Martin Heinrich and Tom Udall, the defense bill also includes:

• $361 million for plutonium research and pit production at LANL, up $140 million from the previous year.

• $191.6 million for ongoing cleanup of radioactive and other waste at LANL.

• $31.2 million to fund the Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, which provides independent safety oversight of the nation's weapons labs. A recent proposal to get rid of the board was rejected but a plan to limit the board's access to lab information is under consideration.

• $125 million for military construction projects at Holloman Air Force Base and White Sands Missile Range and $7 million for upgrades to the Wyoming Gate at Kirtland Air Force Base.

• $48 million to continue construction of a new NNSA complex in Albuquerque.

https://www.abqjournal.com/1204835/budget-bill-gives-lanl-pit-making-a-boost-now-goes-to-president.html

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National Defense (Arlington, Va.)

Midterm Elections Could Derail Plans for Low-Yield Nukes

By Jon Harper

Aug. 6, 2018

The Trump administration's push to equip Navy submarines with low-yield nuclear weapons is on track, but it could be imperiled if Democrats take control of Congress after the November elections, analysts said.

The 2018 nuclear posture review called for acquiring low-yield, submarine-launched ballistic missile warheads in the "near term" to deter countries like Russia from using their low-yield arsenals against the United States or its allies. The weapons would be obtained by modifying existing warheads rather than building brand new ones.

Democratic lawmakers have made several failed attempts to prevent the project from moving forward in a Republican-controlled Congress.

"We don't need to build any … low-yield weapons that dangerously increase the likelihood that they'll be used," Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., said in a statement after the Senate appropriations committee passed an energy and water bill that would allocate $65 million for the effort in fiscal year 2019.

The House and Senate versions of the fiscal year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act approved $65 million for the project.

The two chambers will have to conference and then pass compromise bills — and President Donald Trump will have to sign them — before the funding is allocated.

Feinstein said the warhead modification would take two years to complete if fully funded.

Kingston Reif, director of disarmament and threat reduction policy at the Arms Control Association, said the effort is "not that technically complicated" compared to a major life-extension program or delivery system recapitalization. "It's something that [the National Nuclear Security Administration] can do relatively easily and quickly."

Reif estimated that creating the new weapon would cost upwards of $100 million, a relatively small amount in the context of the United States' nuclear force investment plans, which have an estimated price tag of about $1.2 trillion over the next 30 years.

"I don't think the cost will be the big impediment," said Bryan Clark, a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments. "The concern I think is mainly a policy one of what's the value of a low-yield warhead on a ballistic missile. … That might be the thing that kills it rather than the money."

The fate of the project could hinge on the outcome of the 2018 midterm, Reif and Clark said.

"If one or both chambers [of Congress] flip in November we can expect a battle royale whether to continue to fund" the program, Reif said.

Clark said: "If the Democrats take the House or Senate then these efforts will slow or stop because they're not going to have as much impetus under a Democratic regime."

http://www.nationaldefensemagazine.org/articles/2018/8/6/midterm-elections-could-derail-plans-for-low-yield-nukes

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US COUNTER-WMD

Defense News (Washington, D.C.)

With Failures in the Rearview, the US Navy and Missile Defense Agency Push Toward Critical Missile Test

By David B. Larter

Aug. 6, 2018

WASHINGTON — As the U.S. Navy and Missile Defense Agency move into the second half of 2018, the SM-3 Block IIA missile is heading for a crucial test that the Pentagon hopes will dispel nagging doubts after two successive failures.

Lt. Gen. Samuel Greaves, the head of the MDA, told lawmakers in April that the next test of the IIA will come before the end of the calendar year, a test in which the agency will try to put a string of bad luck behind it as it pushes toward the ultimate goal of testing the interceptor against an intercontinental ballistic missile by the end of 2020.

Following a successful intercept in February 2017, a test that same year failed after a sailor error caused a IIA launched from the destroyer John Paul Jones to self-destruct in flight. A second test failed in January 2018 went awry because of an as-yet unnamed component misfired, the significance of which Greaves has downplayed.

"The component that we're concerned about has flown successfully nine out of 10 times," Greaves told a Senate panel in April. "So, as of now, I am not concerned that it is a true design issue. And we're following through to identify the problem and then correct it."

A spokesman for MDA said the failure review board is still ongoing for the most recent test.

Despite the failures, MDA seems to feel good about the trajectory of the program, and SM-3 IIA will likely forge ahead, according to Tom Karako, a missile defense expert with the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

"Even with the failure, the test accomplished the things they were doing the test for," Karako said. It just does not sound as if the future numbers or pace of the program are contingent on the failure review board. Based on what they say thus far, these are separate tracks."

The fact that so many of the main elements of the failed tests went right is a source of immense frustration for the Pentagon and contractors working the problem.

The SM-3 that misfired in January, for example, successfully received targeting data from an AN/TPY-2 radar through an encrypted link track and relayed it to an Aegis Ashore system on which it used the data to launch.

The implications of that technology for ballistic missile defense and for more conventional warfare are enormous. If a forward sensor can get a kill quality track that it can then, through a data link, transfer to another system such as Aegis Ashore, it can conceivably send that data to any number of Aegis-capable units up in the link. That means anyone who is in position to take a shot can do it without having a track on the missile with an organic sensor.

The same principle applies to more conventional engagements, meaning that, ultimately, ships in a network can rely on a sensor — maybe one Aegis ship or an aircraft equipped with a powerful radar or, even more ideally, an unmanned offboard sensor — to radiate while the other ships passively receive the data and launch without giving away their position.

For the SM-3 IIA, the question that people should be asking is what is the next evolution of the missile and what can MDA do to meet evolving threats, Karako said.

"All indicators are that the IIA is going forward. The real question that ought to be asked, given the reorientation of the National Defense Strategy's laserlike focus on hypersonics, is what's increment one and what is increment two for SM-3 IIA."

Make the Navy maneuverable again

While MDA makes progress on IIA development, the Navy is losing patience with its current role in the national missile defense mission.

While the mission has been both a cash cow and a technological revolution for the service, standing patrol requirements have put an enormous strain on the Navy's already overtasked surface combatants.

The Navy's top officer said June 12 that he wants the Navy off the tether of those patrols so those ships can perform other missions and move as much of the standing requirements to shore-based systems.

"Right now, as we speak, I have six multimission, very sophisticated, dynamic cruisers and destroyers — six of them are on ballistic missile defense duty at sea," Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson said June 12 during his address at the U.S. Naval War College's Current Strategy Forum. "And if you know a little bit about this business, you know that geometry is a tyrant.

"You have to be in a tiny little box to have a chance at intercepting that incoming missile. So, we have six ships that could go anywhere in the world, at flank speed, in a tiny little box, defending land."

Richardson went on to say the Navy could be more effectively used for BMD in emergency or high-threat situations rather than as a permanent fixture.

Some relief could be on the horizon. Japan announced in 2017 that it plans to buy the Aegis Ashore system. But analysts and experts warn that the Navy shouldn't be too hasty to ditch BMD patrols. The service has a disproportionately large number of highly capable (and expensive) surface combatants, a fact that has the Navy quickly pushing to develop a smaller surface combatant to complement the force, as threats are on the rise from Russia and China.

But the BMD mission is a big reason why the Navy is so Aegis-heavy.

"The BMD mission is part of what creates the force structure requirement for large surface combatants," said Bryan McGrath, a retired destroyer skipper and defense consultant with The FerryBridge Group. "Absent it, the number of CGs [cruisers] and DDGs [destroyers] would necessarily decline.

"It cannot be forgotten that while the mission is somewhat wasteful of a capable, multimission ship, the fact that we have built the ships that (among other things) do this mission is an incredibly good thing. If there is a penalty to be paid in peacetime suboptimization in order to have wartime capacity, should this not be considered a positive thing?"

From the perspective of layered missile defense, moving standing requirements to shore makes sense. But the Navy isn't going to get away from BMD anytime soon, said Karako.

"Shifting more of the requirements to land, that's all goodness," he said. "But the Navy isn't going to get out of air and missile defense so long as there are air and missile threats."

https://www.defensenews.com/naval/2018/07/27/with-failures-in-the-rearview-the-us-navy-and-missile-defense-agency-push-toward-critical-missile-test/

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Defense News (Washington, D.C.)

Congress Offers Millions in Budget to Cyber-Harden Missile Defense Systems

By Jen Judson

Aug. 6, 2018

WASHINGTON — House and Senate lawmakers have authorized an injection of about $51 million in funding to cyber-harden missile defense systems, according to the fiscal 2019 National Defense Authorization Act conference report, and appropriators are expected to follow suit in the defense spending bill with roughly $100 million in additional funding.

Congressional authorizers noted in a summary of the NDAA conference report, released July 23, that the conferees were supporting an increase in funding to address cyberthreats to U.S. missile defense systems.

The U.S. military and its allies are reliant on missile defense systems both regionally and to defend the homeland. Such a capability will require a more robust level of protection against cyberattacks as adversaries grow in their ability to take down systems through jamming and other electronic warfare capabilities.

The strategy to disarm enemy systems using jamming and electronic attack already plays a major role in war gaming against possible peer adversaries in the future. Using cyber and electronic attack is seen, at times, as the first line of offense to take down enemy air defense systems, so as to allow the injection of friendly forces into denied territory.

And since that's part of the strategy to penetrate enemy systems, it will be and already is a part of the adversaries' strategies, too.

While House authorizers initially planned to provide roughly $100 million to cyber-harden missile defense systems. The final version of the NDAA to come out of conference committee only authorizes about half of that, cutting House plans to fund $45 million to address cyberthreats to the ballistic missile defense terminal defense segment of the BMD framework.

But the lawmakers in charge of the purse strings want to spend twice as much as the NDAA would authorize, according to both the House and Senate FY19 spending bills.

House and Senate appropriators' funding lines for cyber-hardening missile defense systems are essentially identical, so it's likely the funding will withstand conference committee and come out in the final bill.

According to the Senate appropriations bill report, the committee is adding $100 million in funding to "advance the [Missile Defense Agency's] compliance with the Department of Defense Cybersecurity Discipline Implementation Plan to protect MDA systems in highly-contested cybersecurity threat environments."

Within that $100 million, House and Senate appropriators want $40 million in funds to increase cybersecurity for ballistic missile-enabling programs and another $16.2 for a cyber assessment of those programs.

Similar to the FY19 NDAA funding, appropriators plan to provide an additional $10 million for cybersecurity efforts for the ballistic missile defense system's midcourse defense segment, which defends the homeland from possible attacks from North Korea and Iran.

Another $5 million would help cyber-harden missile defense sensors, while $10 million would fund cybersecurity measures within the brains of the entire ballistic missile defense system — the BMD's Command and Control, Battle Management, and Communications system.

An additional $20 million would fund cybersecurity efforts related to BMD testing, and another $5 million would go toward cyber-hardening BMD targets.

Appropriators would also fund $5 million to work cybersecurity elements into ongoing BMD technology maturation initiatives, and another $5 million would attempt to secure BMD elements in space from cyberattack.

https://www.defensenews.com/congress/2018/07/27/congress-offers-millions-in-budget-to-cyber-harden-missile-defense-systems/

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Homeland Preparedness News (Washington, D.C.)

U.S. Senators Outline Federal Efforts to Avert Financial Chaos from Potential Bio Attack

By Kim Riley

Aug. 2, 2018

The global spread of a deadly disease outbreak during a biological attack would impact far more than U.S. government financial resources, former federal lawmakers say, and could crash the coffers of local and state budgets just as severely.

"We know unequivocally that terrorists have the desire to create and use pathogens as weapons," said former U.S. Rep. Jim Greenwood (R-PA), who chaired a special focus meeting of the bipartisan Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in Washington, D.C., on July 31 to discuss the impacts of large-scale biological events on the American economy.

"Globalization has empowered the modern bioterrorist," said Greenwood, pointing out that some business leaders understand the importance of focusing on such biothreats. However, "too few have taken steps to prepare for the spread of diseases that could bring their business operations to a halt and result in significant financial losses," he said.

Members of the Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense, established in 2014 to assess gaps and provide recommendations to improve biodefense, have consistently reported that the United States is underprepared for biothreats and doesn't afford them the same level of attention as it does to other threats.

"There has to be a plan in place and you have to put somebody in charge or the economic consequences are going to be enormous," said former U.S. Sen. Joseph Lieberman (I-CT), who is a panel co-chairman with former GOP Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge, who later served as the nation's first secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

In a July 31 CNBC interview prior to the Blue Ribbon event, Lieberman said he's "become increasingly convinced that we have to fear not just the biological attack from terrorists, but an outbreak naturally of an infectious disease epidemic."

An emerging infectious disease pandemic that threatened the lives of millions of people, he added, "would have a devastating effect on our economy. So it's important to spend a little upfront to prevent and be prepared to respond to these threats."

Businesses are an important part of this strategy, said Blue Ribbon panel member Tom Daschle, former Democratic Senate majority leader who represented South Dakota. "We've got to have a private-public partnership," he said. "The private sector has a huge role to play, but we need to send the right message to the private sector about the importance of multi-year funding, about the importance of being able to count on the federal government being a full-fledged partner.

"And they don't have that assurance today," Daschle said.

Lieberman added that the Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense report recommends that the vice president of the United States be designated as the person in charge of biodefense. With that role filled, the United States "will be better prepared to not only save lives … but a lot of our economy," he said. "A biological terrorist attack would break confidence, hurt commerce, and hurt the economy."

Panel Co-Chair Ridge, in an Aug. 1 telephone interview with a South Dakota Public Broadcasting radio station, said there are "more contagions out there than we probably appreciate."

"We are not as prepared as we need to be for the next pandemic," said Ridge. "We don't have the public policies, nor the leadership to deal with it. And we don't have the budget we need in Congress."

During the first discussion of the day-long Blue Ribbon meeting on Tuesday, Ridge added that "unless and until we bring fundamental changes … we will continue to be under prepared" to identify, respond and mitigate such costly national security threats.

What feds must prioritize

U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson (R-WI), chairman of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, agreed with his former colleagues on the Blue Ribbon panel that putting leadership in charge to address biothreats is important.

"But the bottom line," Sen. Johnson said, "is that we first have to make it a priority to make the public aware of how serious all of these threats are," including biothreats. In turn, that awareness will drive public consciousness and create public pressure on federal lawmakers to reform the appropriations process to include related policies and funding.

The senator commended the panel for the work it has done thus far to raise awareness about America's need for a biodefense strategy, but he said he's not optimistic about the end goal.

"We are not addressing this properly," said Johnson, who also serves as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on European and Regional Security Cooperation and is a member of both the Senate Budget Committee and the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee.

Coming from the private sector prior to serving in Congress, Johnson said there's "not much of a problem-solving skill set in Washington," where politicians exploit divisions. "They don't know how to sell ideas and market problems and solutions."

At the same time, despite efforts in Congress and recommendations from the Blue Ribbon panel, he said there's still no national biodefense strategy. "We've been at this for decades," Sen. Johnson told panel members, likening the situation to the federal government being stuck standing in the path of a slow-moving bus without any plan for how to get out of its way.

And fast action is paramount, he said, pointing to not only military biothreats from U.S. adversaries and nation states, but to advancing technology use by terrorists and other bad actors.

For example, crop dusting drones exist that can be directed using GPS to "very effectively deliver a biothreat" into a jam-packed stadium. "And we have no countermeasure," he said.

Senate biodefense efforts

The federal government and private sector should be equal partners in biodefense, said U.S. Sen. Robert Casey Jr. (D-PA), co-chairman of the Senate Weapons of Mass Destruction Terrorism Caucus and a member of the Senate National Security Working Group.

"Both our government and the private sector bring something to the table," said Casey, who also serves as a subcommittee ranking member for the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee.

The Senate HELP Committee in June sent its final version of the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness and Advancing Innovation Act of 2018, S. 2852, to the full Senate, which will reconcile the measure with the same-named H.R. 6378, which is still being considered by several House committees.

Sen. Casey introduced S. 2852 on May 15 with bill sponsor U.S. Sen. Richard Burr (R-NC), the senior HELP Committee member who introduced both Senate versions of the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act (PAHPA) — the original bill, which became law in 2006, and the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Reauthorization Act of 2013, which became law that same year.

During the Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense meeting, Casey said the S. 2852 reauthorization includes new initiatives to improve the nation's biodefense capabilities, such as those that strengthen public-private partnerships, bolster disease detection, and improve U.S. hospitals and the medical countermeasures enterprise.

For example, the senator said lawmakers learned from the 2009 swine flu outbreak that a pandemic would begin at the doors of hospitals and medical centers, many of which are private. U.S. disease detection networks were caught off-guard, Sen. Casey said, and "the viral strain with a potential to cause a pandemic was circulating for months before we could ramp up production of a vaccine."

Therefore, in drafting S. 2852, the senators included language stipulating that private facilities would need to share information from their health care providers on symptoms and diagnoses with federal agencies.

"In many cases, they hold the information the federal government needs to protect the nation," said Casey. "So we built on the work of the 21st Century Cures Act, which created a process for HHS [Department of Health and Human Services] to collaborate with private stakeholders, like hospitals and health care entities, on developing goals for these disease detection systems and to find standards for data collection and sharing that will allow the systems to function."

S. 2852 also would authorize the HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) to develop regional hospital systems in direct partnership with private-sector partners and would fund demonstration projects to test the capacity of these systems, the senator explained.

"This will ensure that communities and their health care infrastructures are prepared for a range of public health threats," Casey said, adding that input from the Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense on how to create this system was vital to drafting this provision and others in S. 2852.

Additionally, S. 2852 would permit investments in medical response, treatment capabilities and manufacturing infrastructure to begin to reduce the time it takes to produce large quantities of vaccines or therapeutics.

Sen. Casey said the bill "signifies that public-private partnerships are important to the government and incentivizes the private sector to dedicate time and resources to developing the products we need for biodefense."

"They both need to be equal partners and shoulder the responsibility of biodefense," Casey said. "We know we are generally better prepared than we were before, but we still lag behind in biological preparedness. It's in the best interest of our national security for the public and private sector to work together."

https://homelandprepnews.com/countermeasures/29765-u-s-senators-outline-federal-efforts-to-avert-financial-chaos-from-potential-bio-attack/

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US ARMS CONTROL

Arms Control Today (Washington, D.C.)

A Path to Reducing Iran's Missile Threat and Reconfiguring U.S. Missile Defenses

By Jaganath Sankaran and Steve Fetter

July/August 2018

President Donald Trump cast his decision to withdraw from the Iran nuclear deal as part of his administration's "efforts to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon." Along with having "unacceptable" sunset provisions, he said the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) "fails to address the regime's development of ballistic missiles that could deliver nuclear warheads."

If these issues are addressed, Trump indicated that he is "ready, willing, and able" to negotiate a new deal. The U.S. administration, he said, "will be working with our allies to find a real, comprehensive, and lasting solution to the Iranian nuclear threat."

European leaders declared their intent to stay in the deal and placed the onus on the Trump administration to propose "concrete" steps toward an alternative agreement with Iran. Federica Mogherini, the European Union foreign policy chief, said that "as long as Iran continues to implement its nuclear-related commitments, as it is doing so far, the EU will remain committed to the continued, full, and effective implementation of the nuclear deal." European nations are exploring means of avoiding extraterritorial enforcement of U.S. sanctions, but it will be very difficult to sustain the financial benefits promised to Iran absent U.S. participation and support.

Iran, as it girds for renewed U.S. sanctions, has been cool, even hostile, to the idea of a new arrangement that imposes restrictions beyond those of the JCPOA. Such posturing, however, may be for bargaining purposes rather than a definitive refusal to engage in negotiations. In September 2017, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif argued that if the United States "want[s] to have an addendum, there has to be an addendum on everything," indicating the possibility of accepting restrictions beyond the JCPOA if proper economic incentives are provided. One prospective topic for negotiations is ballistic missiles. Iranian leaders have recently pledged to limit the range of their missiles to 2,000 kilometers, asserting that their primary national security threats lie within that range.

A new agreement that formalizes this restraint, along with further restrictions on Iran's nuclear activities, would have many virtues. In addition to forestalling threats to most of Europe and all of the continental United States, an agreement on missile limitations could render unnecessary the planned U.S. deployment of missile defense interceptors in Poland and the existing deployment in Romania. The possibility of reducing or eliminating the European Phased Adaptive Approach for missile defense would reduce Russian motivations to deploy new nuclear weapon systems to penetrate or evade U.S. missile defenses, in turn motivating Russia to help persuade Iran to accept restraints on its missile program.

Missile Limits

As part of a new deal, Iran could agree not to flight-test missiles with ranges exceeding 2,000 kilometers. The limit on Iran's missile capabilities would be in addition to constraints on its nuclear activities. To enforce such a limitation, some combination of restrictions on missile fuel, missile dead-weight, and warhead weight would need to be imposed to ensure that tested missiles could not under any circumstances exceed the 2,000-kilometer limit.

In addition to monitoring flight tests, it may be necessary to monitor experimental test facilities, such as rocket motor development and wind tunnel laboratories, to ensure compliance. For instance, Iran might be experimenting with long-range missile-related technologies at Shahrud. Iran may have to agree to cease such activity and provide access to verify compliance. Monitoring these facilities would help ensure Iran does not develop and test long-range missile motors and warhead re-entry vehicles.

Iran has tested a solid-fueled Sejjil missile that may be capable of delivering a 750-kilogram warhead approximately 2,200 kilometers. Iran also may have tested the Khorramshahr missile, having a range of 2,000 kilometers with a 1,800-kilogram warhead. Each exceeds the 2,000-kilometer limit. Iran must agree to verifiably retire these missiles and variants that might exceed the limit.

In addition to Iran's missile program, an agreement would be needed to permit legitimate space launch capabilities while impeding the possibility of a rapid fielding of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs). Iran has successfully launched primitive satellites into orbit using its Safir space launch vehicle. It has also displayed a larger two-stage Simorgh launch vehicle. In order to permit space launch activities while preventing potential ICBM capabilities, Iran would have to accept restraints. For example, Iran may be asked to declare its rocket-fuel facilities and subject those to inspections or to stockpile only a limited amount or only certain types of rocket fuel. Additionally, Iran may be asked to assemble its space launch vehicles on a just-in-time basis to ensure that these vehicles are not available for use as missiles. Alternatively, European countries or Russia might offer guaranteed launch services at a reasonable price in exchange for a suspension of Iranian space launch activities.

U.S. Interests

A prominent concern that has animated U.S. policy toward Iran has been the possibility of it acquiring long-range missiles able to target U.S. allies in Europe and eventually the continental United States, particularly the possibility that such missiles might be armed with nuclear warheads.

A new agreement that limits Iranian nuclear and ballistic missile capabilities could ensure that Iran will not be able to mount a "nuclear blackmail" of U.S. or European cities. This in turn would allow the United States to postpone plans for completion of a European missile defense and save considerable financial resources that the United States currently spends to develop and maintain it.

It also would help address a primary Russian complaint. In his recent address to the Russian Federal Assembly, President Vladimir Putin argued that "the United States is creating a global missile defense system primarily for countering strategic arms…. [T]hese weapons form the backbone of our nuclear forces." The prospect of deferring and eventually canceling the deployment of the phased adaptive approach missile defense interceptors in Poland would provide valuable leverage in future arms control talks with Russia, including in resolving disagreements over Russian violations of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. Finally, it would free up resources to develop and install more robust regional missile defense systems, such as Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system in the Middle East region, thereby reassuring U.S allies, such as Saudi Arabia and Israel, which lie within reach of Iran's short- and medium-range conventional missiles.

For more than a decade, U.S. presidents have invested considerable capital in pursuing missile defenses against Iranian missiles with ranges exceeding 2,000 kilometers. Justifying the development of a European missile defense architecture in 2007, President George W. Bush argued that "the need for missile defense in Europe is real and I believe it's urgent. Iran is pursuing the technology that could produce nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles of increasing range that could

deliver them…. Our intelligence community assesses that, with continued foreign assistance, Iran could develop an [ICBM] capable of reaching the United States and all of Europe before 2015."

In 2009, President Barack Obama modified the missile defense plans developed by the Bush administration. The Obama administration argued that earlier plans had "been developed primarily to provide improved defenses for the U.S. homeland—not Europe—against long-range Iranian missiles launched one or two at a time." Pointing out that ICBM threats from Iran had not matured as feared, the Obama administration initiated the phased adaptive approach. Although reduced in scope, the plan still aimed to defend European allies against Iranian missiles with ranges much greater than 2,000 kilometers.

The phased adaptive approach provides broad defensive coverages for the European theater against Iranian missiles having ranges between 2,000 and 5,000 kilometers, fired from near cities such as Tabriz, Mashhad and Zahedan, but little or no coverage for missiles having ranges less than 2,000 kilometers. Many U.S. military bases in the Middle East, Turkey, Iraq, and Afghanistan fall within a 2,000-kilometer range of those Iranian cities. Even under the best operational circumstances, the phased adaptive approach is unable to defend against Iranian missiles targeting the U.S. bases.

A new agreement to limit the range of Iranian missiles to 2,000 kilometers would make the phased adaptive approach unnecessary. If Iranian missile threats of a range greater than 2,000 kilometers are eliminated, then the phased adaptive approach can be reconfigured to a much smaller hedge status with the goal of eventual removal. An initial hedge status, for instance, could permit the United States and Poland to "complete preparation of the missile defense sites in Poland, acquire the interceptors, but hold them in storage."

U.S. policymakers have consistently stated that European missile defense plans are directed only against Iran and if the threat vanishes so would the need for the defensive system. Former U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates writes in his memoir that, during the George W. Bush administration, he and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice "told Putin that if the Iranian missile program went away, so would the need for U.S. missile defenses in Europe." Similarly, speaking in Moscow in 2009, Obama said, "I've made it clear that this system is directed at preventing a potential attack from Iran…. [I]f the threat from Iran's nuclear and ballistic missile program is eliminated, the driving force for missile defense in Europe will be eliminated."

These statements justify reconfiguring the phased adaptive approach system. One substantial benefit from such a move would be the impact on U.S.-Russian relations and bilateral arms control efforts. The Trump administration has been willing to engage Russia in arms control dialogues. A commitment to defer the deployment of interceptors in Poland would be welcome in Russia. If astutely negotiated, the reconfiguration could also be used to resolve disagreements over INF Treaty violations, extend the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START), and provide a basis to begin negotiations on a New START follow-on agreement.

Putin has singled out the phased adaptive approach as a major point of contention in INF Treaty discussions. He has argued that the plan violates the INF Treaty because "the launch tubes where these [interceptor] missiles are stored…are the same that are used on navy ships to carry Tomahawk missiles. You can replace interceptor missiles with Tomahawks in a matter of hours, and these tubes will no longer be used to intercept missiles…. In my opinion, this is a major threat." By reconfiguring the phased adaptive approach and inviting Russia to inspect the launch tubes, the United States could demonstrate its commitment to the INF Treaty. It also would provide a means to convince Russia to address its own violations of the INF Treaty.

The reconfiguration of the phased adaptive approach would have no impact on the U.S. and allied efforts to mount credible defenses against Iranian missiles with ranges less than 2,000 kilometers. The THAAD AN/TPY-2 radars reportedly deployed at Incirlik Air Base in Turkey, in Camp As Saliyah in Qatar, and in the Negev Desert in Israel have wide tracking coverages over the region. Missile defense of critical U.S. bases and cities can be performed by additional THAAD batteries that can plug into these radar coverages. Also, U.S. allies such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, and Israel have procured independent missile defense systems.

What Is in It for Iran?

The Trump administration's unilateral U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA has diluted many of the incentives Iran might have in pursuing a new deal that imposed reasonable restrictions on its missile program and further limits on its nuclear activities. Yet, U.S. participation and sanctions relief is still required for Iran to obtain the broad and unhindered access to the global economy it wants.

If the P5+1 nations (China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States) initiated discussions for a new deal and the United States offered full and good faith political participation, including the potential approval of the U.S. Senate, it is conceivable Iran might be induced to engage. The French, German, and UK foreign ministers, in concert with Mogherini, appear to have broached a discussion with Iran on its ballistic missile program.

Two factors could motivate Iran's acquiescence to missile restrictions. First, Iran perceives major threats to its security emerging primarily from its neighborhood. Its offensive military programs are designed as a conventional deterrent to counter regional threats. Missiles having ranges longer than 2,000 kilometers might not be useful in a military contingency. Second, the reimposition of U.S. sanctions would prevent Iran from realizing the gains from the JCPOA that many Iranians anticipated as key to boosting the country's troubled economy.

Iran develops and deploys missiles primarily to compensate for material military weakness in comparison to its regional foes. One report stated that "Iran lacks the resources, industrial base, and scale of effort to compete with Arab Gulf states that can generally buy the most advanced weapons available."

Iranians seem to believe that their missile arsenal serves as the only potent weapon available to offset its military inferiority. For instance, in 2012 the commander of the aerospace division of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps pointed out that all major U.S. bases are "good targets" for Iranian missiles with a 2,000-kilometer range. He also suggested Iran has "set up bases and deployed missiles to destroy all these [U.S.] bases in the early minutes after an attack," presumably with conventional warheads. Given that Iran is more interested in responding to military threats in its neighborhood, it may be willing to give up development of missiles with ranges more than 2,000 kilometers if sufficient incentives are provided.

Such incentives can be generated if the United States lifted nuclear and missile-related sanctions and other restrictions on trade with Iran. The economic leverage that the United States wields over Iran might be used to induce it to accept a reasonable set of restraints on its missile program. Although acknowledging that the United States had lifted sanctions as agreed in the JCPOA, Iranians believe that the United States was "finding other ways to keep the negative effects of sanctions" and "prevent countries from normalizing their trade and economic relations with Iran." A new deal would have to convincingly assure Iran that such restrictions would not be used if Iran honored its commitments.

Conclusion

The possibility of a new arrangement with Iran will depend on a face-saving fix for Trump that addresses his concerns about the current deal, including the issue of Iran's missile program. An agreement to restrict Iran's missile program to those having ranges of less than 2,000 kilometers might be part of such a fix.

A U.S. commitment to hedge and reduce the scope of the phased adaptive approach in Europe, along with such a new agreement, would provide many additional advantages. It may induce Russia to use its influence to persuade Iran to accept new terms. It also would demonstrate the willingness of the United States to stand by its articulated policy that U.S. missile defense plans are a response to identified threats and that if the threat ceases to exist, the United States would remove the missile defense system. Such a commitment will buy valuable leverage in arms control negotiations with Russia.

https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2018-07/features/path-reducing-irans-missile-threat-reconfiguring-us-missile-defenses

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The Washington Post (Washington, D.C.)

North Korea Has Not Taken Steps to Denuclearize, John Bolton Says

By Felicia Sonmez

Aug. 7, 2018

National security adviser John Bolton said Tuesday that North Korea has not made progress toward denuclearization in a dismal acknowledgment that comes nearly two months after President Trump held a historic summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in Singapore.

"The United States has lived up to the Singapore declaration. It's just North Korea that has not taken the steps we feel are necessary to denuclearize," Bolton said in an interview on Fox News Channel on Tuesday morning.

He added the United States will continue to apply pressure until Pyongyang produces results.

"The idea that we're going to relax the sanctions just on North Korea's say-so, I think, is something that just isn't under consideration," Bolton said. "We're going to continue to apply maximum pressure to North Korea until they denuclearize, just as we are to Iran."

The Trump administration has consistently sought to reassure critics Kim will make good on his pledges to denuclearize. Last month, Trump tweeted he had "confidence that Kim Jong Un will honor the contract we signed &, even more importantly, our handshake" in Singapore.

Yet the most tangible result of the June 12 summit so far has been last week's handover by North Korea of the remains of more than 50 service members killed in the Korean War. The question of denuclearization remains a separate one, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis has said, and U.S. and North Korean diplomats traded jabs on the issue at last weekend's annual conference of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

At that conference, which also took place in Singapore, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo handed to North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong Ho a letter from Trump to Kim.

Bolton revealed Tuesday the letter contained a proposal from Trump for Pompeo to make another visit to North Korea to meet with Kim.

"Secretary of State Pompeo is prepared to go back to North Korea to meet with Kim Jong Un. We've proposed that in our most recent letter from the president to Kim Jong Un," Bolton said.

"The president's prepared to meet at any point," he added. "But what we really need is not more rhetoric. What we need is performance from North Korea on denuclearization."

https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/north-korea-has-not-taken-steps-to-denuclearize-john-bolton-says/2018/08/07/9a560ac0-9a51-11e8-8d5e-c6c594024954_story.html?utm_term=.5e7fdc01f476

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The New York Times (New York, N.Y.)

U.S. to Restore Sanctions on Iran after Withdrawal from Nuclear Deal

By Gardiner Harris and Jack Ewing

Aug. 6, 2018

WASHINGTON — The United States will reimpose sanctions against Iran at midnight on Monday, restoring economic penalties that were lifted under the 2015 nuclear accord and ratcheting up pressure on Tehran while worsening divides with European allies and other world powers.

The sanctions are a consequence of President Trump's decision in May to withdraw from an international deal that sought to limit Iran's nuclear program in exchange for easing pressure on the country's shaky economy. Mr. Trump blasted the deal long before becoming president; his administration is betting that backing out of it will force Iran to shut down its nuclear enrichment efforts, curb its weapons program and end its support of brutal governments or uprisings in the Middle East.

In a statement, Mr. Trump again described the nuclear deal — by which other world powers are still abiding — as "horrible, one sided." He said the Iranian government "faces a choice: Either change its threatening, destabilizing behavior and reintegrate with the global economy, or continue down a path of economic isolation."

European officials have said that the Iran nuclear agreement is crucial to their national security, and international inspectors have concluded that Tehran is complying with the accord. "We are determined to protect European economic operators engaged in legitimate business with Iran," the foreign ministers of Britain, France and Germany said in a joint statement on Monday. Russia and China also signed on to the 2015 deal.

But faced with a choice between the tiny Iranian market, which never lived up to expectations, and the huge American market, major European companies overwhelmingly indicated they would observe the sanctions.

"We have suspended our activities in Iran, which were anyway very limited, until further notice according to applicable sanctions," Daimler, the German maker of Mercedes-Benz cars and trucks, said in a statement.

The new sanctions bar any transactions with Iran involving dollar bank notes, gold, precious metals, aluminum, steel, commercial passenger aircraft and coal, and they end imports into the United States of Iranian carpets and foodstuffs.

In a tweet on Monday, Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif of Iran said the sanctions would endanger ordinary Iranians — particularly those who would feel the effects of the penalties on passenger jets.

The Trump administration "wants the world to believe it's concerned about the Iranian people," Mr. Zarif wrote. "US hypocrisy knows no bounds."

In a speech in May, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo demanded that Iran end all nuclear enrichment and development of nuclear-capable missiles; release all American citizens; end its support for Hezbollah, Hamas, Islamic Jihad and Houthi militias; and withdraw its forces from Syria.

He said such changes would be consistent with "global norms," although the enrichment of nuclear material for civilian purposes and the development of rockets is, in most states, allowed under international law. Additionally, Russia, Turkey, Iraq and the United States also have forces fighting in Syria's seven-year civil war.

In a conference call with reporters on Monday, senior administration officials said they wanted a change in behavior from Tehran, and were not demanding a change in government. They noted that the threat of new sanctions had already had an effect on the Iranian economy — including a plunge in the value of the rial, growing unemployment and increasing protests.

Some analysts worry that the Trump administration's decision to go ahead with sanctions would encourage Europe, Russia and China to find ways around the American-led financial system and undermine the success of economic penalties in other areas.

The European Union on Monday updated a blocking statute that seeks to protect European companies from any penalties imposed by the United States for doing business with, or in, Iran. The measure threatens companies with penalties if they comply with American sanctions, putting some in a bind.

The law was originally passed in 1996 to protect companies against penalties imposed for doing business in Cuba, Libya and Iran. For years, the United States largely ignored European investments in Cuba to avoid friction.

But while top American officials said on Monday that they would continue talking to foreign counterparts to cooperate on sanctions, they vowed to undertake vigorous enforcement of the restored penalties against Iran — regardless of European concerns. They also said more than 100 major businesses had already announced an intent to leave Iran, ahead of the sanctions.

In practice, the blocking statute is likely to be difficult to enforce.

"The idea that the European Commission would come after Siemens or Total for not doing business in Iran is legally dubious and politically very tricky," said Jacob Funk Kirkegaard, a senior fellow at the Peterson Institute for International Economics in Washington. "I can't imagine that happening."

While European leaders insisted they would resist the sanctions, some have quietly taken actions to comply.

The Bundesbank, Germany's central bank, introduced a change to its rules last month that could block the transfer of hundreds of millions of euros from an Iranian bank in Hamburg back to Iran. The Bundesbank is the conduit for major international transfers of money.

Europe could undertake the provocative step of instructing state-owned banks and energy companies — which are largely insulated from American penalties — to do business with Iran.

"But I don't see Europeans ready to pull the trigger on those types of measures, so most companies are making the unhappy decision to side with the U.S.," said Peter Harrell, who was a sanctions official in the Obama administration.

"The Trump administration's approach to Iran is to build a coalition of the unwilling that has to pull out," Mr. Harrell said.

European leaders' powerlessness to counter American sanctions has only added to their fury. It widens a divide over a host of issues including NATO, immigration and relations with Russia that could undercut current efforts to defuse tensions over trade.

Sanctions could also serve as further irritants to ties with China and India, both of which have significant economic relations with Iran.

For Beijing, the threat of American sanctions arising from transactions with Iran is just one in a growing portfolio of disputes, including a worsening trade war, restrictions related to North Korea and military tensions in the South China Sea.

Many large Chinese firms are state-owned and have limited exposure to the American market, leaving them able to continue dealings with Iran. Beijing is unlikely to seriously curb economic ties with Tehran unless it receives significant concessions on other issues — something the Trump administration is unlikely to grant.

India is one of the largest buyers of Iran's oil, and has pledged to invest millions in Iran's Chabahar Port. Recent demands by top American officials that India reduce its oil imports from Iran to zero by November led to hard feelings in New Delhi. Those demands were later softened, but the damage was done.

An even tougher round of sanctions is scheduled to go into effect in November, including sanctions on Iran's sale of crude oil and transactions with its Central Bank.

Gardiner Harris reported from Washington, and Jack Ewing from Frankfurt. Milan Schreuer contributed reporting from Brussels.

https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/06/us/politics/iran-sanctions-trump.html

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COMMENTARY

Defense One (Washington, D.C.)

Risks Rise as US Reimposes Sanctions on Iran

By Ryan Costello

Aug. 7, 2018

Several undesirable consequences are becoming more likely.

This week, a set of Iran sanctions previously lifted under the Iran nuclear deal will snap back into effect as part of President Trump's complete violation of the accord. Thus far, Iran has avoided rash action, instead seeking to secure concessions from Europe, Russia, and China that could reduce the sanctions' impact. The cautious response may have lulled the Trump administration into thinking its approach is working, but several potential consequences loom on the horizon.

Renewed proliferation: Before the nuclear deal was signed in 2015, Iran's heavy-water reactor at Arak was close to going online; it could have produced weapons-grade plutonium for several nuclear weapons per year. Moreover, the deeply buried Fordow facility was already being used to enrich uranium. However, under the nuclear accord Iran destroyed the core of the Arak reactor and agreed to redesign it with international partners so that it would not produce significant amounts of weapons-grade plutonium. Similarly, international partners in collaboration with the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, or AEOI, are working to turn Fordow into a research-and-development facility, ensuring that Iran experiments with zinc or other benign materials instead of uranium at the site.

Unfortunately, by November, when all the nuclear sanctions snap back, AEOI will likely become a "designated entity." That means any countries or entities working to repurpose Iran's nuclear infrastructure to eliminate the risk of weaponization will be subject to U.S. sanctions. If the administration continues with its plans to re-sanction AEOI, it may force Iran to scrap its plans for nuclear accommodations at the key facilities, dramatically increasing the risk of Iranian proliferation.

Reformists undermined: The best hope for sustained moderation in Iran is neither the country's leaders nor outsiders seeking to manipulate events to their own end, but rather the 80 million Iranians with decades of experience in pushing boundaries and forcing political change. However, the Iranian people can't succeed if their political space is choked off by U.S. sanctions. As Iranian civil society and human rights defenders have long warned, sanctions and the threat of war inhibit prospects for reform by securitizing Iran's political environment. While the relief of sanctions and reduction of tensions under the nuclear accord could have reversed these constraints, the snapback of sanctions is all but certain to empower hardline forces that have long stood in the way of progress.

Hardliners in Iran do not fear sanctions and a ratcheting up of tensions, which will harm and divide the Iranian people and enable the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps to expand its political and economic power. Rather, hardliners fear an Iran connected to the outside world, an empowered middle class and an organized civil society pushing for a government that truly reflects its wishes—all of which are undercut by U.S. sanctions.

Oil disruptions: Trump has been walking a fine line in seeking to take millions of barrels of Iranian oil shipments per day off the market while avoiding a spike in the price of oil that could severely damage the U.S. and global economy. For now, his strategy has hinged on Saudi Arabia and Russia pumping more oil to keep prices from skyrocketing. Yet, this approach contains substantial risks.

For starters, using spare capacity to cover Iran's lost oil production creates serious vulnerabilities in the event of an emergency. Recent events have highlighted that such an emergency could be difficult to avoid. Saudi Arabia "temporarily halted" oil shipments through the Bab al-Mandeb strait, at the southern end of the Red Sea, after an alleged attack by Iran-supported Houthi rebels in Yemen. Moreover, this past weekend saw IRGC naval forces conducting major exercises in the Persian Gulf, potentially simulating maneuvers to disrupt the flow of oil through the vital Strait of Hormuz if tensions with the U.S. continue to escalate. Even if there is no emergency event that constricts the flow of oil, the risk of such a scenario will impact market psychology—and very likely the price of oil.

Aside from the increasing risk of economic blowback from rising oil prices, begging Saudi Arabia and Russia to make up for lost Iranian oil ultimately makes the U.S. dependent and reduces its leverage to press those key players on other issues, like Yemen or Ukraine.

Helping Putin: In the wake of the Trump-Putin Summit in Helsinki, it is worth considering just how much Trump's Iran approach accrues to Vladimir Putin's benefit. Europe has been forced to choose between sustaining a successful nonproliferation agreement endorsed by the UN Security Council that it helped negotiate and suffering economic pain at the whims of an American President who appears to have hated the accord for no reason other than that his predecessor struck it. America, with no real business relationships with Iran after decades of sanctions, may not feel the pain of sanctions – but Europe will. Not only have major European businesses pulled out of the Iranian economy, but Europe will also be forced to reduce its oil purchases from Iran in order to comply with extraterritorial U.S. sanctions.

This is expediting European planning to find work-arounds and reduce their exposure to U.S. sanctions. And who benefits more from strife in the Transatlantic alliance and diminishing American leadership and sanctions power? None other than Vladimir Putin.

https://www.defenseone.com/ideas/2018/08/risks-rise-us-reimposes-sanctions-iran/150325/?oref=d-river

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War on the Rocks (Washington, D.C.)

The Good Old Days of the Cold War: U.S.-Soviet Cooperation on Nonproliferation

By William Potter and Sarah Bidgood

Aug. 7, 2018

The chill in the air was palpable at the 2018 meeting on the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in Geneva. As the heads of the US and Russian delegations engaged in vitriolic exchanges, it was easy to forget that Moscow and Washington had joined forces 50 years ago to draft the fundamental nonproliferation accord. If it weren't for the soft glow of iPhone screens illuminating the General Assembly hall at the Palais des Nations, one could have been forgiven for thinking the year was 1961.

As delegates to the April-May meeting of the NPT review process, we witnessed first-hand the furious volley of rights-of-reply in which the Russian and American delegations engaged. The two nuclear powers traded jabs over a host of issues ranging from chemical weapons attacks in Salisbury and Syria, violations of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty), and NATO nuclear sharing arrangements. The Russian representative even suggested that the United States violated the NPT before it existed by using nuclear weapons on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Even the one issue on which the two sides recently appeared to be in agreement — a visceral dislike of the Nuclear Ban Treaty — seemed to have little in the way of unifying power. Adding to the disarray, the Palais itself was undergoing a huge renovation during the two-week long meeting, leading us to wonder whether the din of jackhammers in the background was in fact the distant sound of the nonproliferation regime crumbling.

Notwithstanding the Potemkin-like harmony at the Putin-Trump summit in Helsinki, discord in U.S.-Russian relations is the norm, and it has been for quite some time, even before Russia's seizure of Crimea. Nonproliferation has historically united the largest nuclear weapons states. Indeed, U.S.-Soviet cooperation on nuclear nonproliferation was largely immune to the political storms swirling around it. But no longer.

The right mixture of individuals, institutional advocates, and the emphasis given to nonproliferation in both countries enabled cooperation in this nuclear sphere to flourish even during some of the most frigid moments of the Cold War. Surprisingly, relatively little has been written about this cooperation or its relevance for today. Our new Adelphi book, Once and Future Partners: The United States, Russia, and Nuclear Non-Proliferation, is intended to redress that situation.

What is perhaps most remarkable about U.S.-Soviet cooperation for nonproliferation was its variety. It included sharing of sensitive intelligence information, negotiating novel arms control and disarmament measures, formulating new approaches for regulating nuclear exports, and meeting regularly to review all issues of nonproliferation concern to either party. Declassified cable traffic, memoranda of conversations, and other primary source documents reveal that senior American and Soviet officials saw one another as genuine partners in these efforts. Their similar outlook on many key matters meant that the two sides often turned to one another for backup on nonproliferation issues. This happened so often that they generated complaints from non-nuclear weapons states about "superpower collusion." When Henry Kissinger worried that the United States would look like "everyone's maiden aunt" in pushing for stricter multilateral export controls after India's self-described peaceful nuclear explosion in 1974, for example, his staff suggested getting the Soviets on board as an important first step. They were right to think that Soviet leaders would be "prepared to go quite a long way" with Washington in establishing what would become the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the now 48 states that coordinate to prevent their civil nuclear exports from being used to make nuclear weapons. This was at least in part because, as Deputy Secretary of State Robert Ingersoll observed, there were "no export areas in which the Soviets [had] a less restrictive policy" than the United States at the time.

While similar viewpoints on nonproliferation policy were important, it also took clear-eyed leadership and high-level buy-in to translate agreement in principle into policy in practice. It was Nikita Khrushchev himself, for example, who met with Averell Harriman to talk about U.S.-Soviet cooperation on regulating peaceful nuclear explosions in the waning days of the Partial Test Ban Treaty negotiations. Peaceful nuclear explosions were designed for non-military purposes like excavating for canals, gas and oil extraction, and reservoir building. Both the United States and Soviet Union were enamored of them in the 1960s and 1970s. The United States carried out 27 tests to study the utility of peaceful nuclear explosions, but it never put them into practice. Conversely, a number of the Soviet Union's 122 peaceful nuclear explosions were actually used for extinguishing gas well fires and other civil applications. Because these explosions were identical to nuclear tests in every way except their stated purpose, however, the two sides had to work together to agree on rules governing their use from 1963 through the conclusion of the 1976 Peaceful Nuclear Explosions Treaty.

Khrushchev and Harriman met on the sidelines of a U.S.-Soviet track event to discuss how their domestic peaceful nuclear explosion plans fit into their ongoing efforts to limit nuclear testing. It's hard not to be struck by the symbolism of their surroundings. As athletes from both countries tried to outrun one another in the background, Khrushchev and Harriman considered peaceful nuclear explosions in the context of limiting nuclear testing — a measure designed to slow down the nuclear arms race. If future cooperation on these issues is going to succeed, it is necessary that such routine, nonproliferation meetings resume between U.S. and Russian officials.

One of the most unusual examples of U.S.-Soviet nonproliferation cooperation during the Cold War involved joint efforts to prevent South Africa from testing a nuclear weapon in August 1977. As best we can reconstruct, the Soviet Union discovered — most probably thanks to a spy — that Pretoria was building a nuclear test site in the Kalahari Desert, information also depicted in photographs taken by a Soviet satellite. Moscow shared the data with Washington and implored the U.S. government to intervene. After verifying Moscow's claims with its own national technical means,

the United States, along with other Western allies, exerted significant diplomatic pressure on South Africa to confirm the peaceful nature of its nuclear program. While this promise proved to be specious, since South Africa developed six nuclear bombs in the 1970s and 1980s, the intervention prompted by Soviet intelligence halted South African test preparations. This successful joint effort reinforced the inclination of the two ideological and military adversaries to cooperate further on nonproliferation.

The negotiation of a joint draft radiological weapons convention is another largely forgotten example of U.S.-Soviet cooperation for nonproliferation. This initiative was proposed by the United States in response to a Soviet resolution on banning all new weapons of mass destruction, which U.S. officials feared would capture "virtually anything (including the jaw-bone of an ass)" as a weapon of mass destruction. The negotiations soon took on a life of their own, becoming an important forum for extended contact between Soviet and American officials. Over two years, technical and political experts from both countries worked through significant challenges — including revelations about the planned U.S. deployment of a neutron bomb — to craft an agreement they could both support. After the draft convention was introduced to the U.N. Conference on Disarmament, the two countries often found themselves allied against critics who sought to expand its scope or question its contribution to the disarmament architecture. While the draft convention disappeared from the Conference on Disarmament agenda in the 1990s, its negotiation facilitated closer cooperation on other concurrent negotiations like the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and the Chemical Weapons Convention. The draft agreement itself, which has not been seriously revisited in decades, serves as a reminder that both the United States and Soviet Union had pursued state-level radiological weapons programs in their past. It also represents an area that might prove fertile for reconsideration today at a time when nuclear weapons states find it difficult to endorse any new approaches to disarmament.

The flexibility both sides displayed in addressing problems of mutual, if asymmetrical, interest is a common element of U.S.-Soviet nonproliferation cooperation. This dynamic is evident in the case of U.S.-Soviet efforts to avert South Africa's planned nuclear test. The United States jeopardized its diplomatic relationship with South Africa by confronting Pretoria about its nuclear ambitions at a time when the new Carter administration was still siding with South African forces in Angola's civil war against socialist Cuban and Soviet troops. For its part, the Soviet Union was willing to risk revealing a sensitive intelligence source by sharing its secret satellite imagery with the United States. Moscow likely knew where to look for South Africa's test site thanks to a tip-off from a Soviet spy embedded in the South African Navy, and their counterparts in Washington would have been justified in asking how the Soviet Union came by this information. Because both sides viewed a nuclear South Africa as a shared threat, however, they were prepared to look beyond narrow national priorities in pursuing a cooperative strategy. We can attribute this tendency at least in part to the presence of strong institutional advocates for nonproliferation, such as the no longer extant U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.

Personal relationships between Soviet and American actors are another common thread across the cases we examined. These relationships, developed over decades of working together on nonproliferation and disarmament issues in different fora, helped to build trust, collegiality, and friendship that persisted even during the toughest of times. Illustrative of the important role of personal relationships in nurturing and sustaining nonproliferation cooperation are two key Soviet and U.S. negotiators — Roland Timerbaev and George Bunn. Timerbaev worked closely with U.S. officials on the negotiation of the NPT in the 1960s, the development of nuclear export controls in the mid-1970s, and the NPT Review Conference in 1985 — cases examined in detail in our book. Timerbaev's remembrance of his longtime American counterpart, George Bunn, explicitly notes how close personal connections were critical to sustaining U.S.-Soviet nonproliferation cooperation.

Specifically, he recalls how he shared with Bunn a deep belief in "the vital need to stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons," and how their "deep mutual trust" was the key to resolving challenges that emerged during the NPT negotiations. The two men spent time together outside of work and were even able to come to an agreement on the scope of IAEA inspections during a hike around Geneva's Lac Leman. It's difficult to imagine Russian or American negotiators today developing similar bonds.

There is no shortage of nonproliferation threats today that would benefit from U.S.-Russian collaboration. These include addressing the continuing development of North Korea's nuclear weapons program, preventing nuclear terrorism, and — yes — making sure the 2020 NPT Review Conference is not an unmitigated disaster. The ingredients of successful U.S.-Soviet nonproliferation cooperation highlighted here point to some ways for Washington and Moscow to get back to a place where they can address these and other challenges effectively.

First, it would be useful for the two countries to conduct a joint nuclear proliferation threat assessment to see where their interests correspond today. Second, it would also be worthwhile for Washington and Moscow to renew collaboration on a variety of technical issues like disarmament and nonproliferation verification, which have historically been more insulated from high politics than other nuclear matters. Third, in these and other pursuits, creating more fora for Russian and American practitioners to interact will be critical to rebuilding personal relationships between officials from the two countries. Whether this is done by reviving the U.S.-Russia Bilateral Presidential Commission working groups or in a Track 1.5 format, greater contact between practitioners on both sides will help rebuild trust, confidence, and an institutionalized understanding of how to do nonproliferation cooperation. Whatever the approach, it is clear that Russia and the United States are, in the words of Siegfried Hecker, doomed to cooperate on nuclear proliferation issues and will be for the foreseeable future. We can't afford to put off our shared responsibilities in this space indefinitely while we wait for the crisis in our bilateral relationship to improve.

https://warontherocks.com/2018/08/the-good-old-days-of-the-cold-war-u-s-soviet-cooperation-on-nonproliferation/

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Foreign Policy (Washington, D.C.)

How to Strike a Missile Deal with Iran

By Michael Elleman and Mark Fitzpatrick

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The United States' confrontational posture toward Iran is not likely to enlist any international partners apart from those already in the anti-Iran camp. But as European leaders try to salvage the nuclear deal with Iran, they should seek to find common cause with Washington to address their shared concerns.

A key issue is the potential threat inherent in Iran's ballistic missile program: If Iran ever decides to go for broke in building nuclear weapons, some of its missiles, which today are fitted with conventional warheads, could be repurposed to deliver nuclear warheads.

The lack of limits on Iran's missiles is one of the three reasons U.S. President Donald Trump cited for withdrawing the United States from the nuclear deal. But he offered no solutions to the missile challenge other than the unrealistic demand that Iran give up all of its missiles. Given the central

role that missiles play in Iran's sense of defense and deterrence, total abandonment of the missile program is not remotely possible.

Given the central role that missiles play in Iran's sense of defense and deterrence, total abandonment of the missile program is not remotely possible.

There is a better way: Concerned governments should prevent Iran from developing an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) by locking in the 2,000-km (1,200-mile) range limit that Iran has already said is its maximum requirement.

While Iran is generally staying within this self-imposed limit, there are troubling signs of a hedging strategy to develop longer-range systems. A missile agreement is therefore needed, with verification and enforcement provisions. Concerned countries should swiftly codify a range limit before Iran manages to advance its missile program.

Iran would never put such a limit in writing or accept the verification and penalty measures needed to police it unless it received something in return. As a trade-off, Iran could be allowed to continue a space launch program, but with technology limits and transparency rules to minimize the risk that satellite launches would be used for military purposes. It's true that satellite programs rely on dual-use technology, but there are eight technical and transparency measures that would make the risk manageable.

What precisely Pyongyang means by its commitment to denuclearization, as promised to Trump in Singapore two months ago, remains unclear. That definition has been a key stumbling block in the negotiations before and after the summit.

North Korea's nuclear-capable missiles, both short- and long-range, should be included in any denuclearization agreement. Washington's default position in previous negotiations has been to include rockets used to launch satellites into orbit, like the one that quickly scuttled the last deal with North Korea in 2012.

North Korean civilian satellite rockets could be exempted this time, with the right limits and transparency requirements. After all, Pyongyang has already demonstrated that it did not use its space launchers for the ICBMs it tested last year. Rather, it used entirely different hardware and technology.

While the technologies and components employed in satellite launches and military-use missiles are similar, key features and operational demands differentiate civilian space launchers from military ballistic missiles. Iran's satellite launchers are vulnerable to preemption, lack re-entry protection, employ lower-thrust propulsion systems, and have less demanding all-weather reliability standards. This is why the risks of allowing either country to continue civilian satellite launch programs in exchange for a long-range missile flight-test ban are manageable, and doing so advances U.S. security interests.

Limiting the range of Iran's missiles to 1,200 miles would not eliminate the potential threat posed to Israel, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, and other neighbors. It would be ideal if Iran were to abandon all missiles that can deliver a 1,100-pound payload at least 180 miles—the threshold set by the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) for missiles deemed inherently capable of carrying a nuclear weapon. Eight of Iran's 13 current ballistic-missile systems exceed that standard.

But let's be realistic. Iran will not roll back its capabilities to that extent, especially while its regional adversaries improve their air forces and retain their own missile capabilities that are not subject to any limitations. Ideally, a range limit agreement should cover all countries in the region. Absent this, Iran's leaders would need other incentives, such as the space program exception that we

propose, to encourage them to make a deal. Recognizing the reality that Iran would never agree to give up all of its missiles, it is important to focus on its most dangerous missile systems: those that clearly were designed to deliver nuclear weapons.

Contrary to the argument made in Foreign Policy earlier in the year by Avner Golov and Emily Landau, length and size matter. First, longer-range systems typically can carry a larger warhead, depending on the geometry of the nose cone, and the rudimentary nuclear weapons that Iran would most likely develop if it went down that path would be large. Second, longer-range systems fly faster and are thus harder to shoot down. The missile defense batteries fielded by Israel, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates are battle-tested and can reduce the danger posed by Iran's conventionally armed, shorter-range systems.

Rather than an impossible absolutist standard for defanging Iran's missiles, Western nations should seize the potential for precluding the most dangerous long-range systems. This would not give Iran a free pass on shorter-range systems, because the MTCR's export control guidelines would remain in place, blocking technology transfers for such missiles.

It is regrettable that creative and technically sound trade-offs were not offered earlier to restrain ballistic missile development by Iran and North Korea. It is not too late, however. And it is increasingly imperative.

https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/08/06/how-to-strike-a-missile-deal-with-iran-trump-ballistic-nuclear-warheads/

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ABOUT THE USAF CSDS

The USAF Counterproliferation Center (CPC) was established in 1998 at the direction of the Chief of Staff of the Air Force. Located at Maxwell AFB, this Center capitalizes on the resident expertise of Air University — while extending its reach far beyond — and influences a wide audience of leaders and policy makers. A memorandum of agreement between the Air Staff's Director for Nuclear and Counterproliferation (then AF/XON) and Air War College commandant established the initial personnel and responsibilities of the Center. This included integrating counterproliferation awareness into the curriculum and ongoing research at the Air University; establishing an information repository to promote research on counterproliferation and nonproliferation issues; and directing research on the various topics associated with counterproliferation and nonproliferation.

In 2008, the Secretary of Defense's Task Force on Nuclear Weapons Management recommended "Air Force personnel connected to the nuclear mission be required to take a professional military education (PME) course on national, defense, and Air Force concepts for deterrence and defense." This led to the addition of three teaching positions to the CPC in 2011 to enhance nuclear PME efforts. At the same time, the Air Force Nuclear Weapons Center, in coordination with the AF/A10 and Air Force Global Strike Command, established a series of courses at Kirtland AFB to provide professional continuing education (PCE) through the careers of those Air Force personnel working in or supporting the nuclear enterprise. This mission was transferred to the CPC in 2012, broadening its mandate to providing education and research on not just countering WMD but also nuclear operations issues. In April 2016, the nuclear PCE courses were transferred from the Air War College to the U.S. Air Force Institute for Technology.

In February 2014, the Center's name was changed to the Center for Unconventional Weapons Studies (CUWS) to reflect its broad coverage of unconventional weapons issues, both offensive and defensive, across the six joint operating concepts (deterrence operations, cooperative security, major combat operations, irregular warfare, stability operations, and homeland security). The term "unconventional weapons," currently defined as nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons, also includes the improvised use of chemical, biological, and radiological hazards. In May 2018, the name changed again to the Center for Strategic Deterrence Studies (CSDS) in recognition of senior Air Force interest in focusing on this vital national security topic.

The Center's military insignia displays the symbols of nuclear, biological, and chemical hazards. The arrows above the hazards represent the four aspects of counterproliferation — counterforce, active defense, passive defense, and consequence management. The Latin inscription "Armis Bella Venenis Geri" stands for "weapons of war involving poisons."