

Dangerous Crossroads: U.S. Moves Missiles And Troops To Russian Border

Nuclear and Conventional Arms Pacts Stalled

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Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

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2010 is proceeding in a manner more befitting the third month of the year, named after the Roman god of war, than the first whose name is derived from a pacific deity.

On January 13 the Associated Press reported that the White House will submit its Quadrennial Defense Review to Congress on February 1 and request a record-high \$708 billion for the Pentagon. That figure is the highest in absolute and in inflation-adjusted, constant (for any year) dollars since 1946, the year after the Second World War ended. Adding non-Pentagon defense-related spending, the total may exceed \$1 trillion.

The \$708 billion includes for the first time monies for the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq which in prior years were in part funded by periodic supplemental requests, but excludes what the above-mentioned report adds is the first in the new administration's emergency requests for the same purpose: A purported \$33 billion.

Already this month several NATO nations have pledged more troops, even before the January 28 London conference on Afghanistan when several thousand additional forces may be assigned for the war there, in addition to over 150,000 already serving or soon to serve under U.S. and NATO command.

Washington has increased lethal drone missile attacks in Pakistan, and calls for that model to be replicated in Yemen have been made recently, most notably by Senator Carl Levin, Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, who on January 13 also advocated air strikes and special forces operations in the country. [1]

The Pentagon will begin the deployment of 1,400 personnel to Colombia to man seven new bases under a 10-year military agreement signed last October 30. [2]

This year the U.S. will also complete the \$110 million dollar construction of new military bases in Bulgaria and Romania to house at least 4,000 American troops. [3]

The Pentagon's newest regional command, Africa Command, will expand its activities on and off the coasts of that continent beyond current counterinsurgency operations in Somalia, Mali and Uganda and drone flights from a newly acquired site in Seychelles. [4]

But this month has brought even more dramatic and dangerous news. The Pentagon has authorized the completion of a \$6.5 billion arms deal with Taiwan with an agreement to deliver 200 Patriot Advanced Capability anti-ballistic missiles. The People's Republic of China

is infuriated, as Washington would be if the situation were reversed and Beijing provided a comparable arsenal of weapons to, for example, an independent Puerto Rico. [5]

As though that action was not provocative enough however, on January 20 the Polish Defense Ministry announced that a U.S. Patriot missile battery, and the 100 American soldiers who will operate it, would not be based on the outskirts of the capital of Warsaw as previously announced but in the Baltic Sea city of Morąg, 35 miles [6] from Poland's border with Russia.

The missile battery and troops are scheduled to arrive in March or April. As part of the Obama administration's new missile shield project, one which will be integrated with NATO to take in all of Europe and extend into the Middle East and the Caucasus, the Patriots will be followed by Standard Missile-3 (SM-3) interceptor deployments on warships in the Baltic Sea and, for the first time ever, a land-based version of the same. "The Pentagon will deploy command posts of SM-3 missiles, which can intercept both short- and mid-range missiles..." [7] An SM-3 was used by the Pentagon to shoot a satellite out of orbit in February of 2008 to give an indication of its range.

Further deployments will follow.

The new, post-George W. Bush administration, interceptor missile system will employ "existing missile systems based on land and at sea... Deployment of the revised missile defense would extend through 2020. The first step is to put existing sea-based weapons systems on Aegis-class destroyers and cruisers. [8]

"Subsequently, a mobile radar system would be deployed in a European nation... More advanced, mobile systems would be put in place later elsewhere in Europe. Their centerpiece would be... Lockheed's Terminal High Altitude Defense interceptor missiles and improved Standard Missile-3 IB missiles made by... Raytheon." [9]

Last December Washington signed a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) that formalizes plans for "the United States military to station American troops and military equipment on Polish territory" and "opens the way for the promised Patriot missiles and US troops to be stationed in Poland... as part of an upgrading of NATO air defences in Europe." [10]

In October, shortly after U.S. Vice President Joseph Biden visited Warsaw to finalize the plan, Polish Deputy Defense Minister Stanislaw Komorowski met with his opposite number from the U.S., Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs Alexander Vershbow, and announced that the American missiles "will be combat-ready, not dummy varieties as Washington earlier suggested." The same report added that "Earlier, Ukrainian and American officials stated that Ukrainian territory may be used in some way in the new antimissile shield." [11] Poland borders Russia's Kaliningrad enclave, but Ukraine has a 1,576 kilometer (979 mile) border with Russia.

The State Department issued a press release on the agreement to deploy American troops to Poland, the first foreign forces to be based there since the end of the Warsaw Pact in 1991, which stated "The agreement will facilitate a range of mutually agreed activities including joint training and exercises, deployments of U.S. military personnel, and prospective Ballistic Missile Defense deployments." [12]

A Pentagon spokesperson said "U.S. Army Europe will help the Polish Armed Forces develop

their air and missile defense capabilities. Considering the cooperative training we already do with the Polish Armed Forces, this Patriot training program is just another extension of that effort.” [13]

If earlier plans to deploy ground-based midcourse missiles to Poland evoked, however implausibly, an alleged Iranian missile threat, the Patriots can only be meant for Russia.

Russian Lieutenant-General Aitech Bizhev, former commander of the United Air Defense System of the Commonwealth of Independent States, told one of his nation’s main news agencies:

“It’s completely unclear why the air defense group of the northern flank of NATO needed strengthening – NATO has manifold superiority over Russian conventional armaments as it is.

“It can’t be ruled out that the stationing of the Patriots in Poland may be followed by other actions in building up the American military infrastructure in Eastern Europe...” [14]

The 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms expired on December 5 and has been extended, but no agreement has been reached on a new pact, 48 days later.

At the end of last year Russia’s Prime Minister Vladimir Putin was asked about the delay and identified the main impediment to resolving it: “What is the problem? The problem is that our American partners are building an anti-missile shield and we are not building one.”

He further defined the problem: “If we are not developing an anti-missile shield, then there is a danger that our partners, by creating such ‘an umbrella,’ will feel completely secure and thus can allow themselves to do what they want, disrupting the balance, and aggressiveness will rise immediately.”

In respect to how prospects for the reduction, much less elimination, of nuclear arms in Europe and North America were faring, Putin added, “In order to preserve balance... we need to develop offensive weapons systems,” [15] reiterating a statement by his nation’s president, Dmitry Medvedev, a week before. The timing of the announcement that the Pentagon will soon station Patriot missiles so close to Russian territory will not help matters. Nor was the State Department’s contention that “the START follow-on agreement is not the appropriate vehicle for addressing” the issue of “missile offense and defense.” [16]

A month before, Russian news media revealed that “Russia’s Strategic Missile Forces (SMF), the land-based component of the nuclear triad, will put on combat duty a second regiment equipped with Topol-M mobile missile systems by the end of 2009.

“The Topol-M missile, with a range of about 7,000 miles (11,000 km), is said to be immune to any current and future U.S. ABM [Anti-Ballistic Missile] defense. It is capable of making evasive maneuvers to avoid a kill using terminal phase interceptors [for example Patriot missiles], and carries targeting countermeasures and decoys.” [17]

Just as supplying Taiwan with Patriot Advanced Capability-3 (PAC-3) theater anti-ballistic missiles led China to conduct a ground-based, midcourse missile interception on January 11, so moving U.S. military hardware and troops nearer Russia bodes poorly for a nuclear arms reduction agreement.

On the non-strategic front, the 1990 Treaty On Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) limiting the amount and expansion of major armaments on the continent is also seriously jeopardized by U.S. and NATO missile shield plans. The adapted CFE (Agreement on Adaptation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe) of 1999 has not been ratified by any member of NATO, which has linked it with so-called frozen conflicts in the former Soviet Union. The August 2008 Georgia-Russia war was a consequence of that obstructionist and belligerent policy. The establishment of permanent U.S. and NATO military bases in Kosovo, Bulgaria, Romania, Lithuania and now Poland is a gross violation of and may prove the death knell for the CFE.

Russia suspended the observance of its treaty obligations under the CFE on July 14, 2007 because of “extraordinary circumstances... which affect the security of the Russian Federation and require immediate measures.” [18]

The circumstances alluded to were the U.S. project of establishing missile interception facilities in Eastern Europe and the general movement of NATO bases and forces to the Baltic and Black Sea regions.

On November 29 of last year Russia “released a draft of a proposal for a new European security agreement the Kremlin says should replace outdated institutions such as NATO and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).” [19]

Chinese analysts Yu Maofeng and Lu Jingli contend that Moscow was motivated by its concerns over U.S. and NATO missile plans, NATO’s eastward expansion to its borders, the 1999 war against Yugoslavia, Western-sponsored “color revolutions” in other former Soviet states and NATO members’ non-ratification of the Treaty On Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. [20]

For the past thirty years each successive American president has unveiled an ostensible plan to eliminate nuclear weapons, if none before now has received the Nobel Peace Prize while in office [21]. Each in turn then escalated reckless arms buildups and armed aggression abroad in an effort to achieve global military dominance. The current U.S. commander-in-chief with his foreign policy entourage of Robert Gates, James Jones and Hillary Clinton is no exception. [22]

Notes

1) Yemen: Pentagon’s War On The Arabian Peninsula

Stop NATO, December 15, 2009

<http://rickrozoff.wordpress.com/2009/12/15/yemen-pentagons-war-on-the-arabian-peninsula>

2) Rumors Of Coups And War: U.S., NATO Target Latin America

Stop NATO, November 18, 2009

<http://rickrozoff.wordpress.com/2009/11/18/rumors-of-coups-and-war-u-s-nato-target-latin-america>

3) Bulgaria, Romania: U.S., NATO Bases For War In The East

Stop NATO, October 24, 2009

<http://rickrozoff.wordpress.com/2009/10/25/bulgaria-romania-u-s-nato-bases-for-war-in-the-east>

4) AFRICOM Year Two: Seizing The Helm Of The Entire World

Stop NATO, October 22, 2009

<http://rickrozoff.wordpress.com/2009/10/22/africom-year-two-taking-the-helm-of-the-entire-world>

5) U.S.-China Military Tensions Grow

Stop NATO, January 19, 2010

<http://rickrozoff.wordpress.com/2010/01/20/u-s-china-military-tensions-grow>

6) New York Times, January 21, 2010

7) Voice of Russia, December 14, 2009

8) U.S. Missile Shield System Deployments: Larger, Sooner, Broader

Stop NATO, September 27, 2009

Black Sea, Caucasus: U.S. Moves Missile Shield South And East

Stop NATO, September 19, 2009

<http://rickrozoff.wordpress.com/2009/09/19/283>

U.S. Expands Global Missile Shield Into Middle East, Balkans

Stop NATO, September 11, 2009

<http://rickrozoff.wordpress.com/2009/09/11/u-s-expands-global-missile-shield-into-middle-east-balkans>

9) Bloomberg News, January 14, 2010

10) Polish Radio, December 11, 2009

11) Russia Today, October 16, 2009

12) Stars and Stripes, December 21, 2009

13) Ibid

14) Interfax Ukraine, January 20, 2010

15) Reuters, December 29, 2009

16) Ibid

17) Russian Information Agency Novosti, November 18, 2009

18) Time, July 14, 2007

19) Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, November 30, 2009

20) Strategic considerations behind Russian proposal for new European security treaty

Xinhua News Agency, December 1, 2009

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-12/02/content_12571639.htm

21) Obama Doctrine: Eternal War For Imperfect Mankind

Stop NATO, December 10, 2009

<http://rickrozoff.wordpress.com/2009/12/11/obama-doctrine-eternal-war-for-imperfect-mankind>

22) White House And Pentagon: Change, Continuity And Escalation

Stop NATO, March 19, 2009

<http://rickrozoff.wordpress.com/2009/08/27/white-house-and-pentagon-change-continuity-and-escalation>

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