

The Nuclear Race Accelerates

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Region: [Europe](#), [USA](#)

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At the Redzikowo base in Poland, work has begun on the installation of the Aegis Ashore system, at a cost of more than \$180 million. It will be the second U.S. missile base in Europe, after that of Deveselu in Romania became operational in 2015. The official function of these bases is to protect, with the “shield” of SM-3 interceptor missiles, the U.S. forces in Europe and those of European NATO allies from “current and emerging ballistic missile threats from outside the Euro-Atlantic area”.

In addition to the two land installations, four ships equipped with the same Aegis system, deployed by the U.S. Navy at the Spanish base of Rota, cross the Mediterranean, Black Sea and Baltic Sea. The U.S. Navy has about 120 destroyers and cruisers armed with this missile system.

Both ships and Aegis land installations are equipped with Lockheed Martin’s Mk 41 vertical launchers: vertical tubes (in the body of the ship or in an underground bunker) from which the missiles are launched. Lockheed Martin itself, illustrating the technical characteristics, documents that it can launch missiles for all missions: anti-missile, anti-aircraft, anti-ship, anti-submarine and attack against land targets. Each launch tube is adaptable to any missile, including “those for long-range attack,” including the Tomahawk cruise missile. It can also be armed with a nuclear warhead.

It is therefore impossible to know which missiles are actually in the vertical launchers of the Aegis Ashore base in Romania and which will be installed in the one in Poland. Nor which missiles are on board the ships that cross the limits of Russian territorial waters. Not being able to check, Moscow takes for granted that there are also nuclear attack missiles. Same scenario in East Asia, where Seventh Fleet Aegis warships cross in the South China Sea. The main US allies in the region – Japan, South Korea, Australia – also have ships equipped with the US Aegis system.

This is not the only missile system the US is deploying in Europe and Asia. In his speech at the George Washington School of Media and Public Affairs, General McConville, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, stated last March that the U.S. Army is preparing a “task force” with “long-range precision fire capability that can go anywhere, consisting of hypersonic missiles,

medium-range missiles, precision strike missiles” and that “these systems are capable of penetrating anti-aircraft barrage space. The general pointed out that “we plan to deploy one of these task forces in Europe and probably two in the Pacific.”

In such a situation, it is not surprising that Russia is accelerating the deployment of new intercontinental missiles, with nuclear warheads that, after ballistic trajectory, glide for thousands of kilometers at hypersonic speed. Nor is it surprising to hear the news, published by the Washington Post, that China is building over one hundred new silos for intercontinental ballistic missiles with nuclear warheads. The arms race takes place not so much on the quantitative level (number and power of nuclear warheads) as on the qualitative one (speed, penetrating capacity and geographical location of nuclear carriers). The response, in case of attack or presumed attack, is increasingly entrusted to artificial intelligence, which must decide the launch of nuclear missiles in a few seconds. It increases the possibility of a nuclear war by mistake, risked several times during the Cold War.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, adopted by the United Nations in 2017 and entered into force in 2021, has so far been signed by 86 states and ratified by 54. None of the 30 NATO and 27 EU countries (except Austria) have ratified or even signed it. In Europe, only Austria, Ireland, Malta, San Marino and the Holy See have signed and ratified it. None of the nine nuclear countries – the United States, Russia, France, Great Britain, Israel, China, Pakistan, India and North Korea – has ratified or even signed it.

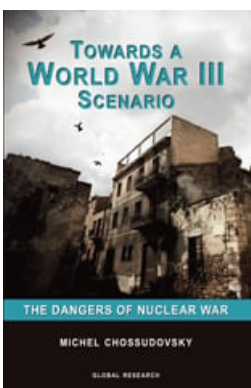
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[Michel Chossudovsky](#) is Professor of Economics at the University of Ottawa and Director of the Centre for Research on Globalization (CRG), which hosts the critically acclaimed website www.globalresearch.ca. He is a contributor to the Encyclopedia Britannica. His writings have been translated into more than 20 languages.

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Michel Chossudovsky exposes the insanity of our privatized war machine. Iran is being targeted with nuclear weapons as part of a war agenda built on distortions and lies for the purpose of private profit. The real aims are oil, financial hegemony and global control. The price could be nuclear holocaust. When weapons become the hottest export of the world’s only superpower, and diplomats work as salesmen for the defense industry, the whole world is recklessly endangered. If we must have a military, it belongs entirely in the public sector. No one should profit from mass death and destruction.

–Ellen Brown, author of ‘Web of Debt’ and president of the Public Banking Institute



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