

Preparing to Attack Iran with Nuclear Weapons: “No Option can be taken off the Table.”

By [Prof Michel Chossudovsky](#)
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Nuclear War](#)

“When a US sponsored nuclear war becomes an “instrument of peace”, condoned and accepted by the World’s institutions and the highest authority, including the United Nations, there is no turning back: human society has indelibly been precipitated headlong onto the path of self-destruction.” ([Towards a World War III Scenario](#), Global Research, May 2011)

The World is at a Dangerous Crossroads. America’s is on a War Path.

World War III is no longer an abstract concept

The US and its allies are preparing to launch a nuclear war directed against Iran with devastating consequences.

This military adventure in the real sense of the word threatens the future of humanity.

The Pentagon’s global military design is one of world conquest.

The military deployment of US-NATO forces is occurring in several regions of the world simultaneously.

War pretexts and “justifications” abound. Iran is heralded as a threat to Israel and the World.

The war on Iran has been on the drawing board of the Pentagon for more than eight years. In recent developments, a renewed set of threats and accusations directed against Tehran have been launched.

A “war of stealth” has already commenced. Mossad intelligence operatives are on the ground. Covert paramilitary formations are being launched inside Iran, CIA drones are being deployed.

Meanwhile, Washington, London, Brussels and Tel Aviv have launched specific destabilizing initiatives [“to choke Iran diplomatically, financially and economically”](#).

A stepped up economic sanctions regime has been formulated by the US Congress:

“a bipartisan consensus has emerged in Washington in favor of strangling the Iranian economy.” The latter consists in implementing “an amendment to the 2012 defence authorisation bill, designed to “collapse the Iranian economy”... by making it virtually impossible for Tehran to sell its oil.” (Tom Burghardt, [Target Iran: Washington’s Countdown to War](#), Global Research, December 2011). :

This new wave of diplomatic hype coupled with the threat of economic sanctions has also contributed to triggering an aura of uncertainty in the market for crude oil, with potentially devastating consequences on the global economy.

Meanwhile, the corporate media has embarked on a renewed propaganda stint pertaining to Iran’s alleged nuclear program, pointing to “activities related to possible weaponization.”

In recent developments, barely acknowledged by the US media, President Barack Obama met privately (December 16), behind closed doors with Israel’s Defense Minister Ehud Barak. The meeting was held in the outskirts of Washington DC at the Gaylord Hotel, National Harbor, Maryland under the auspices of the [Union for Reform Judaism](#).



Barack meets Barak, Barack Obama and Israel’s Defense Minister Ehud Barak December 16, 2011 at the URJ Biennial Plenary, Gaylord Hotel, National Harbor (White House photo)

The importance of this timely private meeting under URJ auspices cannot be underestimated. Reports suggest that the Barack O / E. Barak meeting centered largely on the issue of a US-Israeli attack on Iran.

Writing in Haaretz, Israeli political analyst Amir Oren described the Barack-Barak meeting as a potential “Green Light” to Israel to launch an all out war on Iran:

“Is it possible that the half-hour meeting last Friday at the Gaylord Hotel in National Harbor, Maryland, between U.S. President Barack Obama and Defense Minister Ehud Barak will be remembered in Israel’s history as the moment at which **Barack O. gave the green light to E. Barak — for better or for worse — to attack Iran?**... Can this be seen as a sort of flashback to the talk between Defense Minister Ariel Sharon and U.S. Secretary of State Alexander Haig in Washington in May 1982, that gave rise to the (mistaken) Israeli impression that there was an understanding with the United States over going to war in Lebanon... ” [No sign U.S. has given Israel green light to strike Iran - Haaretz Daily Newspaper | Israel News](#)

Following this private meeting, Obama addressed the Biennial Plenary of the [Union for Reform Judaism](#), reassuring his audience that “cooperation between our militaries [and intelligence] has never been stronger.”

Obama underscored that Iran is a **“threat to the security of Israel, the United States and the world ... And that’s why our policy has been absolutely clear: We are determined to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons....And that’s why ... we have imposed the most comprehensive, the hardest-hitting sanctions that the Iranian regime has ever faced.... And that’s why, rest assured, we will take no options off the table.”** (Transcript of [President Obama Union for Reform Judaism Speech Video Dec. 16, 2011: Address at URJ Biennial, 71st General Assembly](#), emphasis added).

Towards a “Coordinated” US-Israeli Attack on Iran?

In recent weeks, the US media tabloids have been literally plastered with “no options off the table” statements by Hillary Clinton and Defense Secretary Leon Panetta. Panetta intimated, however, “that Israel should not consider unilateral action against Iran” while stressing “that **any military operation against Iran by Israel must be coordinated with the United States and have its backing**”. (Panetta’s December 2 statement at the Saban Center quoted in [U.S. Defense Secretary: Iran could get nuclear bomb within a year - Haaretz](#), December 11, 2011, emphasis added)

The Threat of Nuclear War against Iran

The “no options off the table” statement intimates that the US not only envisages an attack on Iran **but that this attack could include the use of tactical bunker buster nuclear weapons with an explosive capacity between one third and six times a Hiroshima bomb**. In a cruel irony, these “humanitarian” “peace-making” nuclear bombs “Made in America” –which according to “scientific opinion” on contract to the Pentagon are “harmless to the surrounding civilian population”- are contemplated to be used against Iran in retaliation for its nonexistent nuclear weapons program.

While Iran has no nuclear weapons, what is rarely acknowledged is that five (officially) “non-nuclear States” including Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy and Turkey have US made tactical nuclear weapons deployed under national command in their respective military bases. This nuclear arsenal is slated to be used against Iran.

The stockpiling and deployment of tactical B61 in these five “non-nuclear states” are intended for targets in the Middle East. In accordance with “NATO strike plans”, these thermonuclear B61 bunker buster bombs would be launched **“against targets in Russia or countries in the Middle East such as Syria and Iran”** (quoted in [National Resources Defense Council, Nuclear Weapons in Europe](#), February 2005, emphasis added)

While these “undeclared nuclear states” casually accuse Tehran of developing nuclear weapons, without documentary evidence, they themselves have capabilities of delivering nuclear warheads, which are targeted at Iran, Syria and Russia. (See Michel Chossudovsky, [Europe’s Five “Undeclared Nuclear Weapons States”](#), Global Research, February 12, 2010)

Israel’s Nukes are Pointed at Iran. Joint US-Israel “Coordination” of Nuclear Weapons Deployment

Israel rather than Iran is a threat to global security.

Israel possesses 100-200 [strategic nuclear warheads](#), which are fully deployed against Iran.

Already in 2003, Washington and Tel Aviv confirmed that they were collaborating in “the deployment of US-supplied Harpoon cruise missiles armed with nuclear warheads in Israel’s fleet of Dolphin-class submarines.” ([The Observer, 12 October 2003](#)).

According to Russian general Leonid Ivashov:

The Israeli military and political circles had been making statements on the possibility of nuclear and missile strikes on Iran openly since October, 2006, when the idea was immediately supported by G. Bush. Currently [2007] **it is touted in the form of a “necessity” of nuclear strikes. The public is taught to believe that there is nothing monstrous about such a possibility** and that, on the contrary, a nuclear strike is quite feasible. Allegedly, there is no other way to “stop” Iran. ([General Leonid Ivashov, Iran Must Get Ready to Repel a Nuclear Attack, Global Research, January 2007](#) emphasis added)

It is worth noting that at the outset of Bush’s second term, Vice President Dick Cheney had hinted, in no uncertain terms, that Iran was “right at the top of the list” of the rogue enemies of America, and that Israel would, so to speak, “be doing the bombing for us”, without US military involvement and without us putting pressure on them “to do it”.

In the above context, political analyst and historian Michael Carmichael has pointed to the integration and coordination of military decision-making between the US and Israel pertaining to the deployment of nuclear weapons:

“Rather than a direct American nuclear strike against Iran’s hard targets, Israel has been given the assignment of launching a coordinated cluster of nuclear strikes aimed at targets that are the nuclear installations in the Iranian cities: Natanz, Isfahan and Arak. ([Michael Carmichael, Global Research, January 2007](#))

“No Options off the Table”: What Does it Mean in the Context of Military Planning? Integration of Conventional and Nuclear Weapons Systems

The rules and guidelines of the US Military governing the use of nuclear weapons have been “liberalized” (i.e. “deregulated” in relation to those prevailing during the Cold War era). The decision to use tactical nuclear weapons against Iran no longer depends on the Commander in Chief, namely president Barack Obama. It is strictly a military decision. The new doctrine states that Command, Control, and Coordination (CCC) regarding the use of nuclear weapons should be “flexible”, allowing geographic combat commanders to decide if and when to use of nuclear weapons:

Known in official Washington, as “Joint Publication 3-12”, the new nuclear doctrine (Doctrine for Joint Nuclear Operations , (DJNO) (March 2005)) calls for “integrating conventional and nuclear attacks” under a unified and “integrated” Command and Control (C2).

It largely describes war planning as a management decision-making process, where military

and strategic objectives are to be achieved, through a mix of instruments, with little concern for the resulting loss of human life.

What this means is that if an attack on Iran is launched, tactical nuclear weapons will be an integral part of the weapons arsenal.

From a military decision-making standpoint, “no options off the table” means that the Military will apply “the most efficient use of force”. In this context, nuclear and conventional weapons are part of what the Pentagon calls “the tool box”, from which military commanders can pick and choose the instruments that they require in accordance with “evolving circumstances” in the “war theater”. (See Michel Chossudovsky, [Is the Bush Administration Planning a Nuclear Holocaust?](#) Global Research, February 22, 2006

“Once a decision to launch a military operation is taken (e.g. aerial strikes on Iran), theater commanders have a degree of latitude. What this signifies in practice is once the presidential decision is taken, USSTRATCOM in liaison with theater commanders can decide on the targeting and type of weaponry to be used. Stockpiled tactical nuclear weapons are now considered to be an integral part of the battlefield arsenal. In other words, **nukes have become “part of the tool box”, used in conventional war theaters.** Michel Chossudovsky, [Targeting Iran, Is the US Administration Planning a Nuclear Holocaust](#), Global Research, February 2006, emphasis added)

The Integration of Conventional and Nuclear Warfare. CONPLAN 8022

Of utmost relevance to the planned attack on Iran, US military documents point towards **the integration of conventional and nuclear weapons and the use of nukes on a pre-emptive basis** in the conventional war theater.

This proposed “integration” of conventional and nuclear weapons systems was first formulated in 2003 under CONPLAN 8022. The latter is described as “a concept plan **for the quick use of nuclear, conventional, or information warfare capabilities to destroy-pre-emptively, if necessary-“time-urgent targets” anywhere in the world** [including Iran].” (See Michel Chossudovsky, [US, NATO and Israel Deploy Nukes directed against Iran](#), Global Research, September 27, 2007). Coordinated by US Strategic Command, CONPLAN became operational in early 2004. ([Robert S. Norris and Hans M. Kristensen, Bulletin of Atomic Scientists](#)).



CONPLAN opens up a military Pandora’s box. It blurs the dividing line between conventional and nuclear weapons. **It opens the door for the preemptive use of nukes “anywhere in the World”**

The Absence of Public Awareness

The “international community” has endorsed an attack on Iran in the name of World Peace.

“Making the World safer” is the justification for launching a military operation which could potentially result in a nuclear holocaust.

While one can conceptualize the loss of life and destruction resulting from present-day wars

including Iraq and Afghanistan, it is impossible to fully comprehend the devastation which might result from a Third World War, using “new technologies” and advanced weapons, including nukes, until it occurs and becomes a reality.

The corporate media is involved in deliberately blocking news coverage concerning these war preparations. The war on Iran and the dangers of escalation are not considered “front page news.” The mainstream media has excluded in-depth analysis and debate on the implications of these war plans.

Iran does not constitute a nuclear threat.

The threat to global security emanates from the US-NATO-Israel military alliance which contemplates -under the CONPLAN framework- the use of thermonuclear weapons against a non nuclear state.

In the words of General Ivashov, “The public is taught to believe that there is nothing monstrous about such a possibility”. Nuclear weapons are “part of tool box”.

An attack on Iran would have devastating consequences, It would unleash an all out regional war from the Eastern Mediterranean to Central Asia, potentially leading humanity into a World War III Scenario.

The Obama Administration constitutes a nuclear threat.

NATO constitutes a nuclear threat

Five European “non-nuclear states” (Germany, Italy, Belgium, Netherlands, Turkey) with tactical nuclear weapons deployed under national command, to be used against Iran constitute a nuclear threat.

The Israeli government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu not only constitutes a nuclear threat, but also a threat to the security of people of Israel, who are misled regarding the implications of an US-Israeli attack on Iran.

The complacency of Western public opinion -including segments of the US anti-war movement- is disturbing. No concern has been expressed at the political level as to the likely consequences of a US-NATO-Israel attack on Iran, using nuclear weapons against a non-nuclear state.

Such an action would result in “the unthinkable”: a nuclear holocaust over a large part of the Middle East.

It should be noted that a nuclear nightmare would occur even if nuclear weapons were not used. The bombing of Iran’s nuclear facilities using conventional weapons would contribute to unleashing a Chernobyl-Fukushima type disaster with extensive radioactive fallout.

Related article



[Israel Cannot Wage a War against Iran without a “Green Light” from the US](#)

Preparing for a Confrontation with Iran: Beefing Up Israel’s Missile Defense

- by Michel Chossudovsky - 2011-12-23

Barack Obama's speech to the Union of Reform Judaism, December 16, 2011

Transcript (Excerpts)

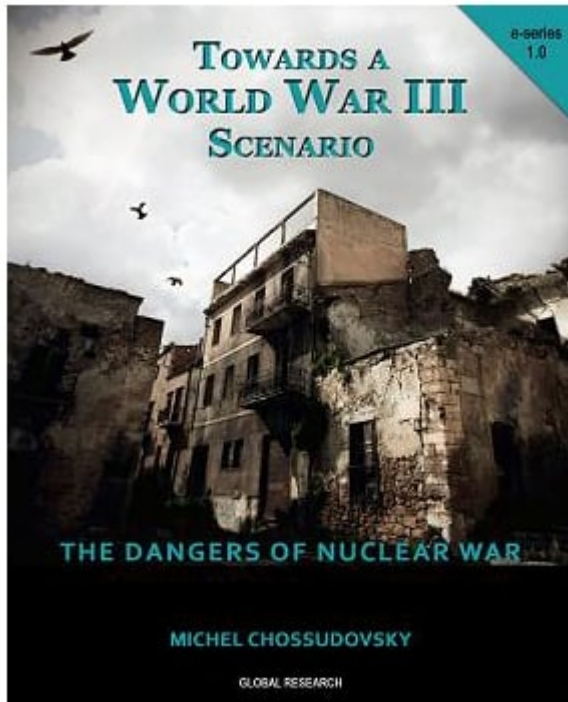
"I want to welcome Israel's Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Ehud Barak. (Applause.) The cooperation between our militaries has never been stronger, and I want to thank Ehud for his leadership and his lifelong commitment to Israel's security and the quest for a just and lasting peace. (Applause.) Another grave concern -- and a threat to the security of Israel, the United States and the world -- is Iran's nuclear program. And that's why our policy has been absolutely clear: We are determined to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. (Applause.) And that's why we've worked painstakingly from the moment I took office with allies and partners, and we have imposed the most comprehensive, the hardest-hitting sanctions that the Iranian regime has ever faced. We haven't just talked about it, we have done it. And we're going to keep up the pressure. (Applause.) And that's why, rest assured, we will take no options off the table. We have been clear.

We're going to keep standing with our Israeli friends and allies, just as we've been doing when they've needed us most. In September, when a mob threatened the Israeli embassy in Cairo, we worked to ensure that the men and women working there were able to get out safely. (Applause.) Last year, when raging fires threatened Haifa, we dispatched fire-fighting planes to help put out the blaze. (Applause.)

On my watch, the United States of America has led the way, from Durban to the United Nations, against attempts to use international forums to delegitimize Israel. And we will continue to do so. (Applause.) That's what friends and allies do for each other. So don't let anybody else tell a different story. We have been there, and we will continue to be there. Those are the facts." (Applause.)

Transcript at [President Obama Union for Reform Judaism Speech Video Dec. 16. 2011: Address at URJ Biennial, 71st General Assembly](#)

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by Michel Chossudovsky

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