

# The New Cuban Missile Crisis: The “Missile Defense” Arms Race.

By [Vladimir Kozin](#)

Global Research, March 19, 2010

[Moscow Times](#) 19 March 2010

Region: [Europe](#), [Russia and FSU](#)

Theme: [Militarization and WMD](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

While history will remember the 20th century for the nuclear arms race, the 21st century might be remembered for the missile defense arms race. About 20 countries now possess missile defense systems, but more than 40 states are expected to have them by midcentury. In fact, by 2050 an entire coordinated system will appear of ground-based, sea-based, air-based and possibly even space-based missile defense elements.

At the same time, the United States and its NATO partners are trying to downplay the negative consequences that missile defense will have on international security, saying it is purely defensive in nature. The standard explanation is that the missile shield will consist of 40 ground-based interceptors positioned on the territory of the continental United States and several dozen more interceptor missiles deployed on the territory of NATO member states and on war-ready battleships.

The spread of U.S. and NATO missile defense systems to many regions of the planet will inevitably lead to an increase in missile defense development-related expenditures. In fact, the current rate of spending will soon outstrip total U.S. outlays for missile defense for the past 25 years combined. Washington spent \$132 billion on missile defense over the past quarter century, but now the Pentagon plans to invest \$50 billion on such programs over the next three years alone. In addition, the U.S. missile defense program will receive \$7.4 billion in budgetary funds in 2010, and the White House is planning to ask Congress for \$9.9 billion in 2011.

Interceptor missiles have steadily become more effective as both their accuracy and range have increased. This enables the United States to convert the existing tactical missile defense system in Europe into a strategic system capable of striking and taking out intercontinental ballistic missiles during all three phases of their flight — boost, midcourse and re-entry.

Washington’s development of a new program to “reconfigure missile defense” will be linked to the strategic and tactical nuclear capabilities of the United States, Britain, France and a range of other NATO member states, as well as to space-based weapons that the countries of the West might deploy in the future.

The result is that the “new missile defense architecture” announced by U.S. President Barack Obama last year might turn out to be a dangerous undertaking that could lead to a breakdown of strategic stability in the world. The United States has yet to convince Moscow that this undertaking will not undermine Russia’s national security. Moscow officials are now wondering if the West isn’t leading the world toward another Cuban missile crisis.

One of the paradoxes of the 21st century is that while there is near parity between U.S. and Russian offensive strategic nuclear weapons, there is a significant imbalance between not only the number of interceptors in the two country's missile defense arsenal but the geographic configuration since Russia has no missile defense elements deployed outside its national borders.

While the number of strategic nuclear weapon are decreasing — and rightfully so — the missile defense elements deployments are increasing along with their effectiveness, and this is a dangerous trend. Understanding that this trend destabilizes global security, many nations are proposing a pact that would limit the deployment of a nation's missile defense system to its home territory only.

If this agreement cannot be achieved, we will be faced with both a missile defense arms race and another offensive arms race as well.

*Vladimir Kozin is head of the analytical section of the Asia-Pacific department at the Foreign Ministry. The views expressed in this comment are his own.*

The original source of this article is [Moscow Times](#)  
Copyright © [Vladimir Kozin](#), [Moscow Times](#), 2010

---

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Vladimir Kozin](#)

**Disclaimer:** The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)

[www.globalresearch.ca](http://www.globalresearch.ca) contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: [publications@globalresearch.ca](mailto:publications@globalresearch.ca)