

US, NATO and Israel Deploy Nukes directed against Iran

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In late August, reported by the Military Times, a US Air Force B-52 bomber flew from Minot Air Force Base in North Dakota to Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana with six AGM advanced cruise missiles, each of which was armed with a W-80-1 nuclear warhead. "... Missiles were mounted on the pylons under its wings. Each of the warheads carried a yield of up to 150 kilotons, more than ten times as powerful as the US bomb that leveled Hiroshima at the close of the Second World War." (See [Bill Van Auken, Global Research September 2007](#))





The Military Times byline was "[B-52 mistakenly flies with nukes aboard](#)". The issue was casually acknowledged by The Washington Post and the New York Times. The reports quoted a US Air force spokesman. The matter was offhandedly brushed aside. The incident represented "an isolated mistake" and that "at no time was there a threat to public safety." (Ibid) :

"As far as is known, the incident marked the first time that a US plane has taken off armed with nuclear weapons in nearly 40 years. ...

... The transport of weapons from one base to another, however, is normally carried out in the holds of C-17 and C-130 cargo planes, not fixed to the wings of combat bombers.

Someone had to give the order to mount the missiles on the plane. The question is whether it was a local Air Force commander—either by mistake or deliberately—or whether the order came from higher up.

B-52s from Barksdale have been used repeatedly to strike targets in Iraq, firing cruise missiles at Iraqi targets in 1996 and 1998, and in the "shock and awe" campaign that preceded the 2003 invasion, carrying out some 150 bombing runs that devastated much of the southern half of the country.

Moreover, the weapon that was fixed to the wings of the B-52 flying from Minot air base was designed for use against hardened targets, such as underground bunkers.

Given the ratcheting up of the threats against Iran and the previous reports of plans for the use of "tactical" nuclear weapons against Iranian nuclear installations, there is a very real possibility that the flight to Barksdale was part of covert preparations for a nuclear strike against Iran.

If this is indeed the case, the claims about a "mistake" by a munitions officer and a few airmen in North Dakota may well be merely a cover story aimed at concealing the fact that the government in Washington is preparing a criminal act of world historic proportions by ordering—without provocation—the first use of nuclear weapons since the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki more than sixty years ago. (Bill van Auken, op. cit).

In recent developments, [Wayne Madsen \(September 27\)](#) has suggested, based on US and foreign intelligence sources, that the B-52 carrying the advanced cruise missiles with bunker buster nuclear warheads was in fact destined for the Middle East.

Is the B-52 Barksdale incident in any way related to US plans to use nuclear weapons against Iran?

Madsen suggests, in this regard, that the operation of shipping the nuclear warheads was aborted “due to internal opposition within the Air Force and U.S. Intelligence Community”, which was opposed to a planned US attack on Iran using nuclear warheads.

Without downplaying the significance of the Barksdale incident, if Washington were to decide to use nuclear weapons against Iran, they could be launched at short notice from a number of military bases in Western Europe and the Middle East, from Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean, from a submarine or from a US Aircraft carrier. Turkey has some 90 B61 nuclear weapons which are fully deployed. (See details below). It should be noted that, with regard to the Barksdale incident, the 150 kt. W-80-1 nuclear warheads mounted on the B-52s are not the type of nuclear weapon contemplated by the US military for use in the Middle East conventional war theater.

To grasp the seriousness of the “Barksdale incident”, it is important to understand the broader context of nuclear weapons deployment respectively by the US, NATO and Israel.

We are not dealing with a single aborted operation of deployment of nuclear weapons to the Middle East.

There are indications that a large number of US made nuclear weapons are currently deployed in Western Europe and the Middle East including Israel.

Coordinated Military Operation

We are dealing with a coordinated military operation in which US Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) plays a central role. The main coalition partners are the US, NATO and Israel.

There are four interrelated “building blocks” pertaining to the preemptive use of nuclear weapons in the Middle East war theater:

- 1. CONPLAN 8022 formulated in 2004. CONPLAN integrates the use of conventional and nuclear weapons.**
- 2. [National Security Presidential Directive \(NSPD\) 35, entitled Nuclear Weapons Deployment Authorization](#) issued in May 2004**
- 3. The deployment of Israeli nuclear weapons directed against targets in the Middle East**
- 4. Deployment of Nuclear Weapons by NATO/EU countries, directed against targets in the Middle East**

1. CONPLAN 8022

CONPLAN 8022 under the jurisdiction of USSTRATCOM sets the stage. It envisages **the integration of conventional and nuclear weapons and the use of nukes on a preemptive basis** in the conventional war theater. It is described as “a concept plan for the quick use of nuclear, conventional, or information warfare capabilities to destroy-preemptively, if necessary-“time-urgent targets” anywhere in the world.” CONPLAN became operational in early 2004. “As a result, the Bush administration’s preemption policy is now operational on long-range bombers, strategic submarines on deterrent patrol, and

presumably intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs).” ([Robert S. Norris and Hans M. Kristensen, Bulletin of Atomic Scientists](#))

CONCEPT PLAN (CONPLAN) 8022 now consists of “an actual plan that the Navy and the Air Force translate into strike package for their submarines and bombers,” (Japanese Economic Newswire, 30 December 2005, For further details see Michel Chossudovsky, Nuclear War against Iran, op. cit.).

“CONPLAN 8022 is ‘the overall umbrella plan for sort of the pre-planned strategic scenarios involving nuclear weapons.’”

2. Nuclear Weapons Deployment Authorization: NSPD 35 (2004)

[National Security Presidential Directive \(NSPD\) 35, entitled Nuclear Weapons Deployment Authorization](#) was issued in May 2004.

The contents of this highly sensitive document remains a carefully guarded State secret. There has been no mention of NSPD 35 by the media nor even in Congressional debates. While its contents remains classified, the presumption is that NSPD 35 pertains to the deployment of tactical nuclear weapons in the Middle East war theater in compliance with CONPLAN 8022.

There are unconfirmed reports that B61-11 type tactical nuclear weapons have been deployed to the Middle East following NSPD 35. According to a report published in the Turkish press, the B-61s could be used against Iran, if Iran were to retaliate with conventional weapons to a US or Israeli attack (See Ibrahim Karagul, “The US is Deploying Nuclear Weapons in Iraq Against Iran”, Yeni Safak,. 20 December 2005, quoted in BBC Monitoring Europe).

In this regard, NSPD-17 of December 2002 entitled **National Strategy to Combat Weapons of Mass Destruction**, [quoted in the Washington Times \(January 31, 2003\)](#) points to possible use of nuclear weapons in retaliation, if US or allied forces are attacked:

“The United States will continue to make clear that it reserves the right to respond with overwhelming force — **including potentially nuclear weapons** — to the use of [weapons of mass destruction] against the United States, our forces abroad, and friends and allies.” (emphasis added, this section quoted by the WT pertains to the classified version of NSPD-17)

3. Israeli Nukes

Israel is part of the military alliance and is slated to play a major role in case the planned attacks on Iran were to be carried out. (For details see [Michel Chossudovsky, Nuclear War against Iran, Jan 2006](#)).

Israel possesses 100-200 [strategic nuclear warheads](#) . 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](#)) . Coinciding with the 2005 preparations to wage air strikes against Iran, Israel took delivery of two new German produced submarines “that could launch nuclear-armed cruise missiles for a “second-strike” deterrent.” (Newsweek, 13 February 2006. See also [CDI Data Base](#))

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 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](#))

At the outset of Bush’s second term, Vice President Dick Cheney dropped a bombshell. He 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”.

“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](#))

[Israel is a Rottweiler on a leash: The US wants to “set Israel loose” to attack Iran.](#) Commenting the Vice President’s assertion, former National Security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski in an interview on PBS, confirmed with some apprehension, yes: Cheney wants [former] Prime Ariel Sharon to act on America’s behalf and “do it” for us:

...”And the vice president today in a kind of a strange parallel statement to this declaration of freedom hinted that the Israelis may do it and in fact used language which sounds like a justification or even an encouragement for the Israelis to do it.”

Beneath the rhetoric, what we are dealing with is a joint US-NATO-Israeli military operation directed against Iran and Syria, which has been in the active planning stage since 2004. US advisers in the Pentagon have been working assiduously with their Israeli military and intelligence counterparts, carefully identifying targets inside Iran (Seymour Hersh, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/articles/HER501A.html>)

In recent developments, at the September 2007 meetings of the Vienna based IAEA, a critical resolution, implicitly aimed at Israel, was put forth which would put Israel’s nuclear program “under international purview.” The resolution was adopted with the US and Israel voting against it.

4. NATO Nukes. Nuclear Weapons Deployment by Five Non-nuclear States

Several Western European countries, officially considered as “non-nuclear states”, possess

tactical nuclear weapons, supplied to them by Washington.

The US has supplied some 480 [B61 thermonuclear bombs](#) to five non-nuclear NATO countries including Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Turkey, and one nuclear country, the United Kingdom. These weapons are ready for delivery to “known military targets”.



Country	Base	Weapons (B61)		
		US	Host	Total
Belgium	Kleine Brogel AB	0	20	20
Germany	Büchel AB	0	20	20
	Nörvenich AB	0	0	0
	Ramstein AB	90	40	130
Italy	Aviano AB	50	0	50
	Ghedi Torre AB	0	40	40
Netherlands	Volkel AB	0	20	20
Turkey	Akinci AB	0	0	0
	Balıkesir AB	0	0	0
	Incirlik AB	50	40	90
United Kingdom	RAF Lakenheath	110	0	110
Total		300	180	480

Source: <http://www.nukestrat.com/us/afn/nato.htm>

[See Details and Map of Nuclear Facilities located in 5 European Non-Nuclear States](#)

As part of this European stockpiling, Turkey, which is a partner of the US-led coalition against Iran along with Israel, possesses some 90 thermonuclear B61 bombs at the Incirlik

nuclear air base. ([National Resources Defense Council, Nuclear Weapons in Europe](#) , February 2005).

Consistent with US nuclear policy, the deployment of B61 nuclear weapons in Western Europe, which dates back to the Cold war era, is also intended for targets in the Middle East. Confirmed by “NATO strike plans”, these thermonuclear B61 bunker buster bombs (stockpiled by the “non-nuclear States”) could 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)

Confirmed by (partially) declassified documents (released under the U.S. Freedom of Information Act):

“... The approximately 480 nuclear bombs [now 350] in Europe are intended for use in accordance with NATO nuclear strike plans, the report asserts, against targets in Russia or countries in the Middle East such as Iran and Syria.

The report shows for the first time how many U.S. nuclear bombs are earmarked for delivery by non-nuclear NATO countries. **In times of war, under certain circumstances, up to 180 of the 480 nuclear bombs would be handed over to Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Turkey for delivery by their national air forces.** No other nuclear power or military alliance has nuclear weapons earmarked for delivery by non-nuclear countries.”

(quoted in <http://www.nukestrat.com/us/afn/nato.htm> emphasis added)

In the post-Cold War era, the procedures governing the use of these EU/NATO nuclear weapons were redefined. The U.S. military made arrangements in the mid-1990s for the use of these nukes outside the area of jurisdiction of European Command (EURCOM). For EURCOM, this would mean responsibility for delivery of nukes within CENTCOM’s (Central Command) area of jurisdiction, meaning that nuclear attacks on Iran and Syria could be launched from military bases in these non-nuclear EU/NATO countries:

The report also documents that the U.S. military in 1994 made arrangements for **nuclear targeting and use of nuclear weapons in Europe outside European Command’s (EUCOM) area of responsibility. For EUCOM, this means CENTCOM (Central Command) which incorporates Iran and Syria**

.. It is unclear whether [the] parliaments [of EU/NATO countries] are aware of arrangements to target and potentially strike Middle Eastern countries with nuclear weapons based in Europe.

(<http://www.nukestrat.com/us/afn/nato.htm>)

It is worth noting, based on recent information published by [the National Resources Defense Council \(August 2007\)](#), that the number of B61 nuclear bombs in Europe has been reduced from 480 to 350, following the removal of 130 bombs from the Ramstein airbase in Germany.

Subject: NSNF Working Group Meeting Minutes

29 Mar 94

(U) JSCP Annex C guidance governing the theater CINC's requirements when requesting preplanned targeting outside their own AOR is necessary. Action: Provide draft guidance for inclusion into Change 4 to JSCP Annex C. OPR: JS13, CDF [redacted] Due: 4 Apr 94.

10 May 94

(7) (U) It was agreed that centralized PAL management discussed in the Theater Nuclear support model could be implemented in the short-term with the exchange of PAL materials between STRATCOM and EUCCOM (for missions not executed from CINCEUR's AOR using CINCEUR delivery platforms/weapons).

Source: <http://www.nukestrat.com/us/afn/nato.htm>

Nuclear Weapons' Double Standards. Where is the Nuclear Threat?

While these "non-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 and Syria. To say that this is a clear case of "double standards" in the process of identifying the threat of nuclear weapons is a gross understatement.

France's President Nicolas Sarkozy Endorses Bush's Pre-emptive Nuclear War Doctrine

France accuses Tehran of developing nuclear weapons against mountains of evidence that Iran does not have a nuclear weapons program.

The Sarkozy government favors a military operation directed against Iran. Ironically, these threats by President Sarkozy and his Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner were formulated immediately following the release of the IAEA Report. The latter confirms unequivocally the civilian nature of Iran's nuclear program.

According to President Sarkozy in his September 26, 2007 address to the UN General Assembly:

"There will be no peace in the world if the international community falters in the face of nuclear arms proliferation ... Weakness and renunciation do not lead to peace. They lead to war,"

France has also confirmed that it could use its own nuclear warheads estimated at between 200 and 300, on a preemptive basis. In January 2006, (former) President Jacques Chirac announced a major shift in France's nuclear weapons policy.

Without mentioning Iran, Chirac intimated that France's nukes should be used in the form of "more focused attacks" against countries, which were "considering" the deployment of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD).

He also hinted to the possibility that tactical nuclear weapons could be used in conventional war theaters, very much in line with both US and NATO nuclear doctrine (See [Chirac shifts French doctrine for use of nuclear weapons](#) , Nucleonics Week January 26, 2006).

Chirac's successor, Nicolas Sarkozy has embraced the US sponsored "War on Terrorism".

France supports the preemptive use of nuclear weapons in the conventional war theater, broadly following the principles formulated in the Bush Administration's nuclear doctrine, which allows the use of nukes (against Iran or Syria) for purposes of "self-defense".

A Note of Caution

The existence of war plans, which are currently in an advanced state of readiness, does not imply that war will occur.

But at the same time, these war plans and their consequences must be forcefully addressed. An all out war, which would engulf the entire Middle East Central Asian region, cannot be excluded.

Moreover, a political consensus in favor of a war directed against Iran is building up in the US. This war agenda is now supported by several of America's European allies including Britain, France and Germany.

Public opinion is not informed due to a media blackout. The war on Iran using nuclear weapons is not front page news.

The legitimacy of the war criminals in high office remains intact. There is visibly no mass movement against this war as occurred in the months leading up to the Iraq invasion. Moreover, concurrent with the development of the war agenda, the Western countries are developing their "Homeland Security" apparatus with a view to curbing public protest against the war.

In the months ahead, we can expect the media propaganda war against Iran to go into high gear with a view to galvanising public opinion in support of a military intervention.

It is absolutely essential that people in America and around the World take a firm position against a war, which in a very real sense threatens the future of humanity.

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