

Nuclear, Missile & Space Digest

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A Fortnightly Newsletter from the Indian Pugwash Society

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- Iran's Top Military Body Warns EU of Regional, Global Insecurity in Case of Labeling IRGC as FTO
- EU's Borrell continues to work with Iran, U.S. on JCPOA: spokesman

- Iranian Navy's Flotilla Sets Sail for Americas for First Time
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- Iran mulls quitting NPT as retaliatory move: FM Abdollahian
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- Operational stage of Gen. Soleimani satellite project launched
- Iran, Syria Vow to Broaden Defense Cooperation
- Borrell says JCPOA not 'dead' but no progress in talks
- Iran is fifth-largest producer of radiopharmaceuticals
- Top Commander: Iranian Navy Manufacturing Maritime Combat Helicopters
- Iranian warships sailing in Latin America's western waters
- Iran Air Defense Thwarts Drone Attack on Military Facility
- Nuclear Chief: Iran to Continue Developing Nuclear Power Plants
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J. Israel

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- Successful January for Oshkosh, with int'l transactions worth hundreds of \$millions
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- Elbit to Provide DIRCM Service Center for NATO
- Report: Israel carried out drone attack on Iranian defense facility
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- UAE defense conglomerate invests in Israeli unmanned air traffic management

M. Turkey

- Türkiye says Biden admin's will to determine fate of F-16 jet deal
- Türkiye can supply Hungary with HIMARS alternatives: Minister
- Kyrgyzstan says it purchased 4 different combat drones from Türkiye
- Baykar inks \$370M export deal with Kuwait for Bayraktar TB2s
- Türkiye urges US to expedite F-16 process

- Türkiye, US agree to continue to hold F-35 talks
- Türkiye plans to produce 3 new national warships simultaneously
- Turkish unmanned fighter jet Kızılelma passes another test in 2nd flight
- Turkish defense firm STM aims to develop unmanned submarine
- Project completed, legal framework ready for Ukrainian Bayraktar TB2 plant
- Finland OKs 1st military exports to Türkiye since 2019 amid NATO row
- Türkiye's STM to develop 'critical' NATO intel software in landmark deal
- Türkiye warns of 'price' if US fails to deliver long-sought fighter jets
- Türkiye inks \$200M deal with S.Korean firm for parts of MBT Altay

East Asia

N. Japan

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- Experts: South Korea Seeks Enhanced US Nuclear Assurances Against North Korea
- Why are South Koreans losing faith in America's nuclear umbrella?

P. North Korea

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- North Korea condemns US sending battle tanks to Ukraine

A. India

How India plans to bring back INS Sindhuratna after Russian refitment

Financial Express, January 16, 2023

India is planning to bring back one of its submarines, INS Sindhuratna, from Russia after a major refit. India's diesel-electric submarines are still lying in Severodvinsk in Russia even after a major refit due to Western sanctions on Russia post the Ukraine war. According to the latest reports, the plan now is to sail the submarine to a Norwegian port in February and then ferry it by ship to Mumbai. According to sources, India is planning to bring back two of its submarines that were sent for refitment by navigating through a Norwegian port and then onto commercial transport vessels. INS Sindhuratna had gone for an upgrade in Severodvinsk after a major accident in February 2014 that killed two officers. INS Sindhuratna is a Russian Type 877EKM diesel-electric submarine also popularly called a NATO-defined Kilo-class sub.

<https://www.financialexpress.com/defence/how-india-plans-to-bring-back-ins-sindhuratna-after-russian-refitment/2950146/>

France Sends Nuclear-powered Charles De Gaulle Aircraft Carrier For War Games With India

Republic World, January January 17, 2023

The 21st Edition of the Bilateral Naval Exercise between India and France nicknamed 'Exercise Varuna' commenced on Monday at the Western Seaboard. The exercises will be conducted over five days from January 16 to January 20. The exercises will comprise "advanced air defence exercises, tactical manoeuvres, surface firings, underway replenishment and other maritime operations," according to a statement by the Indian Navy. India will be represented by the indigenous guided missile stealth destroyer INS Chennai, guided missile frigate INS Teg, maritime patrol aircraft P-8I and Dornier, integral helicopters and MiG29K fighter aircraft. Whereas, the French Navy brought its nuclear powered aircraft carrier Charles De

Gaulle, frigates FS Forbin and Provence, support vessel FS Marne and maritime patrol aircraft Atlantique. Outside the United States Navy, the Charles De Gaulle aircraft carrier was the first nuclear-powered navy vessel. She is named after French president and general Charles de Gaulle.

<https://www.republicworld.com/india-news/general-news/france-sends-nuclear-powered-charles-de-gaulle-aircraft-carrier-for-war-games-with-india-articleshow.html>

India's Nuclear Policy Of 'No First Use' Is Outdated & Invalid - 'Have Nukes, Will Use' Is The Way Forward: Opinion

The Eurasian Times, January 21, 2023

Cold War in the 60s resulted in the creation of two critical elements; Exponential rise in a stockpile of nuclear weapons, which could wipe out the human race many times over, and the inclusion of quite a few strategic terms viz, 'No First Use,' 'Flexible Response,' 'Mutually Assured Destruction,' 'Second Strike' etc. Military strategists have used these terms copiously, at times, without really understanding the meaning of the strategic lexicons. In the unholy race for supremacy, the USSR and the USA have spent billions of dollars upgrading their nuclear arsenal. Development of ballistic missile interceptors viz Star Wars program, Patriot, S-400 was an offshoot of nuclear weapons delivery vehicles in the form of ICBMs. And finally, the 'triad' became the final strategic destination.

<https://eurasianimes.com/indias-nuclear-policy-of-no-first-use-have-nukes/>

French envoy Emmanuel Lenain said France was willing to partner on critical projects. It comes at a time when New Delhi is trying to reduce its military dependence on Moscow

The Print, January 22, 2023

Asserting that France is a "great option" for India to diversify its defence supplies

amid a heavy dependence on Russia, French Ambassador to New Delhi Emmanuel Lenain said it's willing to partner with India on critical strategic defence projects. On board the French nuclear-powered aircraft carrier Charles De Gaulle, the French envoy also committed to jointly developing a fighter jet engine together. "We have great cooperation on strategic issues. There is an extreme level of trust for the countries to commit to each other," he said responding to a query by ThePrint. "No other country can commit to delivering the best technology to the Indian forces without any kind of restrictions. We are committed not just to Make in India but also step further and co-develop and co-manufacture with India." He was responding to a question on whether France was willing to help India "diversify" from its dependence on Russia when it comes to defence equipment.

<https://theprint.in/defence/how-france-is-ready-to-help-india-diversify-from-russia-build-fighters-to-nuclear-submarines/1328965/>

India and France sign key deal to muscle the navy's submarine fleet

India Narrative, January 24, 2023

India's effort to modernise its submarine force is set to take a giant leap with the fitment of the home-grown Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) system, developed by the Defence Research Development Organisation (DRDO), in INS Kalvari. Equipped with AIP technology, the Kalvari will be able to stay underwater for a long time, significantly adding to its lethality. Once it is modernised, the Kalvari, a variant of the French Scorpen sub, will no longer have to frequently surface for refuelling—a time when the platforms can be picked and attacked. The development also showcases India-France strategic partnership, as DRDO's Naval Materials Research Laboratory (NMRL) has signed an agreement with the Naval Group France, which will certify AIP design for integration in the submarines.

<https://www.indianarrative.com/india-news/india-and-france-sign-key-deal-to-muscle-the-navys-submarine-fleet-99747.html>

India and Pakistan came close to nuclear war: Pompeo

BBC News, January 25, 2023

India and Pakistan came "close" to a "nuclear conflagration" in February 2019, former US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has said in his new memoir. This happened after Delhi launched strikes against militants in Pakistani territory following an attack on Indian troops in Kashmir. Pakistan had then said it had shot down two Indian military jets and captured a fighter pilot. India and Pakistan claim all of Kashmir, but control only parts of it. India has long accused Pakistan of backing separatist militants in the Kashmir valley - a charge Islamabad denies. The nuclear-armed neighbours have fought three wars since independence from Britain and partition in 1947. All but one were over Kashmir. In *Never Give An Inch: Fighting for the America I Love*, Mr Pompeo says he does "not think the world properly knows just how close the India-Pakistan rivalry came to spilling over into a nuclear conflagration in February 2019".

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-64396138>

With plans to commission 20 plants, India looks to tap nuclear power faster

Business Standard, January 27, 2023

Recent government announcements on accelerating the use of nuclear power in India suggests a significant increase in the pace. Plans are afoot to commission at least 20 nuclear power plants by 2031, according to a December Lok Sabha reply. India has historically taken more than a decade to get plants in action, shows a Business Standard analysis of data from the International Atomic Energy Agency.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/specials/with-plans-to-commission-20-plants-india-looks-to-tap-nuclear-power-faster-123012701314_1.html

India modernising nuke arsenal with eye on China, says American report

The Times of India, January 28, 2023

India continues to modernise its nuclear arsenal and operationalise its nascent triad, and the country's nuke strategy, traditionally focused on Pakistan, now appears to place increased emphasis on China, says a 2022 report of the Federation of American Scientists (FAS).

According to FAS, at least four new weapon systems are under development to complement or replace the country's existing nuclear-capable aircraft, land-based delivery systems and submarine launched missiles - which constitute the triad. "India currently operates eight different nuclear-capable systems: two aircraft, four land-based ballistic missiles, and two sea-based ballistic missiles. At least four more systems are in development, most of which are thought to be nearing completion and to be combat-ready soon. Beijing is now in range of Indian ballistic missiles," says the report, prepared by Hans M Kristensen and Matt Korda of FAS.

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/india-modernising-nuke-arsenal-with-eye-on-china-says-american-report/articleshow/97384651.cms>

India conducts another test in a bid to develop hypersonic weapons

The Times of India, January 28, 2023

India on Friday tested its own hypersonic technology demonstrator vehicle (HSTDV) powered by a scramjet engine, amid the ongoing race among China, Russia and the US to manufacture manoeuvrable hypersonic weapons that fly over five times the speed of sound and can negate missile defence systems. The indigenous HSTDV, which in the future could serve as a critical building block for hypersonic weapons with speeds over Mach 5, was tested from the APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the Odisha coast in the afternoon, sources said. There was, however, no official word from either the defence ministry or DRDO on whether the test was successful or not. A source, in turn,

said, "The initial launch and take-off was successful. But there are question marks on the subsequent performance of the scramjet engine of the HSTDV for which the data has to be analysed in detail."

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/india-conducts-another-test-in-a-bid-to-develop-hypersonic-weapons/articleshow/97389386.cms>

India's nuclear-policy shifts from Pakistan to China

The New Indian Express, January 29, 2023

India is gradually reorienting its nuclear deterrence posture and shifting the focus from Pakistan to China. A research paper published by the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists brings out that India is strengthening its nuclear triad and will increase its production of weapons-grade plutonium required to produce nuclear warheads. The research paper jointly written by Hans M. Kristensen and Matt Korda titled 'Indian nuclear weapons for Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists' says while India's primary deterrence relationship is with Pakistan, its nuclear modernization indicates that it is putting an increased emphasis on its future strategic relationship with China. The paper quotes former CDS late General Bipin Rawat, saying "in November 2021, the then Indian Chief of Defence Staff stated in a press meet that China had become India's biggest security threat." "Additionally, nearly all of India's new Agni missiles have ranges that suggest China is its main target. The posture is likely to have been reinforced after the Doklam standoff.

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/thesundaystandard/2023/jan/29/indias-nuclear-policy-shifts-from-pakistan-to-china-2542221.html>

UK's House of Commons defence panel calls for expansion of AUKUS to include India, Japan

The Print, January 29, 2023

Reflecting the need for increased global security cooperation, the United Kingdom's House of Commons defence

select committee has called for the expansion of the AUKUS trilateral security pact between Australia, the UK, and the United States to include India and Japan. Tobias Ellwood, chair of the Commons defence select committee, suggested including India and Japan in the AUKUS given their significance to the Indo-Pacific region, *Sky News Australia* reported Saturday. The committee oversees the functioning of the UK's Ministry of Defence and its affiliate bodies. Announced in September 2021, the AUKUS was initially supposed to be a programme for developing a new class of nuclear-powered submarines for Australia. However, it has since expanded its scope to focus on security cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region. AUKUS also looks at cooperation on artificial intelligence, undersea technologies, hypersonic and counter-hypersonic weaponry, and electronic and information warfare.

<https://theprint.in/defence/uks-house-of-commons-defence-panel-calls-for-expansion-of-aukus-to-include-india-japan/1341460/>

India plans not to retire coal-fired power plants until 2030

Power Technology, January 30, 2023

The Indian Government has asked power generation companies across the country not to retire coal-fired power plants until 2030 to meet the country's power demand.

News agency Reuters reported the announcement after reviewing a notice from the government's energy ministry. The Central Electricity Authority (CEA), which serves as an advisor to the ministry, said in a statement: "It is advised to all power utilities not to retire any thermal (power generation) units till 2030 and ensure availability of units after carrying out renovation and modernisation activities if required." Reuters noted that although the government has not set a time frame for shutting down coal-fired power plants, it said last year that it would reduce the electricity output of at least 81 coal-fired power plants over the next four years.

<https://www.power-technology.com/news/india-coal-power-plants/>

B. Russia

Missile defense development makes race in offensive arms inevitable – Valdai experts

TASS, January 17, 2023

Further evolution of anti-missile defense systems around the world makes a multilateral arms race inevitable and pushes countries towards the concept of a pre-emptive strike, as follows from a report authored by experts of the Valdai international discussion club, released on Tuesday. The authors of the report, entitled *The Shoot Down/Miss the Target Dilemma: The Evolution of Missile Defense and Its Implications for Arms Control*, set themselves a task "to identify fundamental trends and key problem areas and present proposals for potential solutions to minimize the negative implications of missile defense development for international security." They say that "the logic behind missile defense system development stimulates the offensive and defensive arms race," which puts "tight bounds on the parties' ability to implement arms control measures." Unrestricted improvement of missile defenses makes it necessary to look for ways of overcoming them with 100-percent certainty. The experts stress that "the emerging risks may push the parties to start an offensive arms race and effect doctrinal shifts with an emphasis on pre-emptive actions by strategic forces."

<https://tass.com/defense/1563235>

Russian army near Zaporozhye destroys HIMARS during deployment – politician

TASS, January 17, 2023

Russian forces on the Zaporozhye section of the frontline destroy Ukraine's HIMARS multiple launch rocket systems during their deployment, the leader of the movement We are together with Russia, Vladimir Rogov, said on the Komsomolskaya Pravda radio station on Tuesday. He drew attention to the fact that Ukrainian bombardments of the

Zaporozhye NPP had practically ceased recently. “The shellings [of the ZNPP] have almost died down. This is a result of the good job done by our artillery and our aerospace forces, which not only suppress the enemy’s firing positions when Energodar, the nuclear power plant or the suburbs begin to be shelled, but also give the enemy no chance to deploy heavy weapons and HIMARS MLRS. Everything is “knocked out” at the moment of preparations for opening fire from Nikopol, Marganets, Krasnogrivorovka and other communities on the right bank of the Dnieper,” Rogov said.

<https://tass.com/politics/1563351>

Rosatom starts supplying fuel for Belarusian NPP – company

TASS, January 17, 2023

TVEL, the fuel division of the Russian state nuclear corporation Rosatom, has begun delivering fuel for the Belarusian nuclear power plant (NPP) under a bilateral contract, the division’s press service said on Tuesday. “The Belarusian NPP successfully performed inspection of fresh nuclear fuel supplied from Russia for the next scheduled turnaround in 2023 and fuel recharging at power unit No. 1. TVEL supplied nuclear fuel produced by the Novosibirsk Chemical Concentrates Plant on time according to the schedule,” the press service said. Nuclear fuel supplies for the initial charging and the first recharging for each power unit were included into the master contract for the construction of the power plant. Subsequent deliveries are carried out under a bilateral contract between TVEL and the Belarusian NPP inked at the turn of 2017.

<https://tass.com/economy/1563395>

If nuclear power loses conventional war that could trigger nuclear conflict – Medvedev

TASS, January 19, 2023

Nuclear powers don’t lose major conflicts that are pivotal for their destiny and that should be clear to any Western politician, Russian Security Council Deputy Chairman Dmitry Medvedev said on Thursday. He was responding to the statements at the World

Economic Forum in Davos that said Russia must lose. “It doesn’t occur to [Western politicians] to make <...> an elementary conclusion: If a nuclear power loses a conventional war that could trigger a nuclear war. Nuclear powers haven’t lost major conflicts that were pivotal for their destiny,” Medvedev said on Telegram. “It has to be obvious to any person, even to a Western politician.” Medvedev posted the remarks ahead of a meeting of a Western group that coordinates military assistance to Kiev. The meeting is scheduled to take place at the Ramstein Air Base in Germany on January 20 and will be attended by US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Mark Milley.

<https://tass.com/politics/1564339>

Kremlin comments on whether Medvedev’s remark fits nuclear doctrine

TASS, January 19, 2023

What Deputy Chairman of the Russian Security Council Dmitry Medvedev said about nuclear powers’ involvement in conflicts is fully in line with Russia’s nuclear doctrine, Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov noted. When asked if Medvedev’s statement marked a change in the nuclear doctrine, Peskov said: “No, it absolutely does not mean that, it is fully in line with our nuclear doctrine.” “Read the nuclear doctrine, there is no contradiction there,” Peskov stressed. Earlier on Thursday, Medvedev wrote a post on Telegram, commenting on statements made at the World Economic Forum in Davos that “Russia must lose” in Ukraine.

<https://tass.com/politics/1564451>

No one in Russian government ever threatened to use nuclear arms – diplomat

TASS, January 20, 2023

No one in Russia’s political and military leadership has ever threatened to use nuclear weapons, Russian Ambassador to the United States Anatoly Antonov said

on Friday. When asked to comment on media reports that Russia is using dangerous and reckless rhetoric in the nuclear sphere, the diplomat replied: "No one in the Russian political or military leadership has ever spoken in such a way." "Frankly speaking, we long stopped being surprised by the empty and irresponsible allegations that our country is threatening to use nuclear weapons," Antonov was quoted as saying by the embassy's press service.

<https://tass.com/politics/1564779>

Putin so far isn't planning to communicate with Grossi – Kremlin

TASS, January 20, 2023

Russian President Vladimir Putin so far isn't planning to communicate with IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi, Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters on Friday. "No, the president's schedule doesn't have any such communication so far," he said. The spokesman said "diplomats and Rosatom and the relevant agencies continue to engage with Mr. Grossi." The IAEA said in a statement on Friday that Grossi plans to continue consultations with both Ukraine and Russia in the coming days and weeks to establish a nuclear safety and security protection zone around the Zaporozhye Nuclear Power Plant. He said everybody agrees that the plant needs to be protected, but the talks are very complex. An IAEA mission led by Grossi traveled to the station in September and left several agency employees there as observers. Afterward, the agency published a report calling for the establishment of a safety zone around the ZNPP to prevent accidents arising from hostilities. Grossi has been holding talks with Russian and Ukrainian officials to advance the idea.

<https://tass.com/politics/1564943>

Speaker warns of powerful retaliation for weapons supplies to Kiev for attacks on Russia

TASS, January 22, 2023

Weapons supplies to Ukraine by the United States and NATO for attacks on Russia would lead to retaliatory use of more

powerful armaments, State Duma Speaker Vyacheslav Volodin warned on Sunday. "Supplies of offensive weapons to the Kiev regime would lead to a global disaster. If Washington and NATO countries send arms that will be used for attacks on peaceful cities or attempts at occupying our lands, a threat they have been making, this would provoke retaliatory measures with the use of more powerful weapons," Volodin wrote on his Telegram channel. The senior Russian lawmaker slammed as untenable other countries' arguments that "nuclear powers never used weapons of mass destruction in local conflicts." "Those powers never faced a situation where the security of their citizens or their territorial integrity was at stake," he argued.

<https://tass.com/politics/1565451>

Idea to store munitions at NPPs can only be idea of US, says Russian expert

TASS, January 23, 2023

The idea to store munitions on the territories of Ukrainian nuclear power plants could only have been thought up in the United States, since the Ukrainian side cannot but see the hazards of such actions, Renat Karchaa, an adviser to the head of Russia's Rosenergoatom nuclear power engineering company, said on Monday. He doubted that such an idea could have come from Ukrainian nuclear sector specialists because "such games can lead to a really awful disaster." "Such plans are hatched far from Ukraine. These plans can only originate from the United States because they won't be affected should anything happen. Only those who don't care at all about the consequences can take such monstrous steps," he said in an interview with the Rossiya-24 television channel.

<https://tass.com/politics/1566007>

Russian expert sees attempt to buy Kiev time behind talks on protection zone around ZNPP

TASS, January 24, 2023

Renat Karchaa, an adviser to the head of Russia's Rosenergoatom nuclear power

engineering company, does not rule out that negotiations on establishing a security zone around the Zaporozhye nuclear power plant will be yet another attempt by the West to buy time to get Ukraine ready for further fighting. Commenting on a remark by Rafael Grossi, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), who said he would continue consultations on a proposal to set up a protection zone around the nuclear facility, the Russian expert said, "We have been through this before, with the Minsk Agreements - they have no responsibility. You remember the revelations by [former German chancellor] Angela Merkel who said openly, 'We had to buy Ukraine time'. <...> Is there any guarantee that the West isn't buying time again?"

<https://tass.com/politics/1566123>

Russia committed to goal of creating nuclear-weapon-free world – Russian envoy

TASS, January 24, 2023

Russia is committed to the goal of creating a world free of nuclear weapons, but, at the same time, Moscow considers attempts to enforce prompt elimination of the arsenals of nuclear countries without taking their security interests into consideration pointless, says Gennady Gatilov, Russian Permanent Representative to the UN Office in Geneva. "Russia remains committed to the goal of creating a world free of nuclear weapons," he said during the annual session of the Disarmament Conference in Geneva. He noted that "the intent to continue acting within the framework of obligations under Article 6 of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) was reaffirmed by the Russian delegation during the 10th NPT Review Conference in August 2022."

<https://tass.com/politics/1566339>

New START keeps door to strategic stability dialogue open, Russian envoy says

TASS, January 24, 2023

The New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) keeps options for the

continuation of strategic stability dialogue open, Russian Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office in Geneva Gennady Gatilov said at the annual session of the Conference on Disarmament on Tuesday. "It is crucial that New START, which was extended at Russia's initiative in February 2021, remains in effect. This means that the parties to the treaty, who own the largest nuclear arsenals, have a shared understanding of the risks that stem from the situation of strategic instability and unpredictability," Gatilov pointed out. He stressed that "New START keeps the door to the continuation of strategic stability dialogue open, with a focus on the development of an agreement that will possibly replace it."

<https://tass.com/politics/1566345>

Potential for arms control dialogue with US still exists – Russian envoy

TASS, January 24, 2023

Russia proceeds from the understanding that it is still possible to resume and develop a dialogue with the United States on future arms control, including with the participation of all key actors, Russia's permanent representative at the UN office in Geneva Gennady Gatilov said at the annual session of the Conference on Disarmament on Tuesday. "We believe that the understanding the Russian and US delegations reached in Geneva in 2021 has left the door open for resuming and developing a comprehensive and substantive dialogue on future arms control, including with the participation of all key actors," Gatilov said.

<https://tass.com/politics/1566391>

Russia, Angola set to speed up agreements on nuclear energy, trade, other areas – Lavrov

TASS, January 25, 2023

Russia and Angola agreed to speed up the coordination of documents related to cooperation in nuclear energy, trade, and

other areas, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said during a press conference on Wednesday following the talks with his Angolan counterpart Tete Antonio. "We agreed to speed up the coordination of several new draft intergovernmental agreements, including the establishment of cultural centers, nuclear energy, humanitarian operations, and commercial shipping," he said.

<https://tass.com/politics/1566901>

Russian diplomat calls on West to prevent 'nuclear provocations' with Leopard tanks

TASS, January 26, 2023

Head of Russia's delegation to the Vienna talks on military security and arms control Konstantin Gavrilov has called on the West to prevent "nuclear provocations" with Leopard 2 tanks. "We warn the Western sponsors of the Kiev military machine against encouraging nuclear provocations and blackmail. We know that Leopard 2 tanks, as well as the Bradley and Marder armored infantry carriers are armed with armor-piercing projectiles with uranium warheads. Their use leads to the contamination of the area, like it was in former Yugoslavia and Iraq. In case such munitions for NATO-made heavy weapons are supplied to Kiev, we will consider that as the use of dirty nuclear bombs against Russia with all the consequences that come with it," he said at an OSCE forum on security cooperation.

<https://tass.com/russia/1567173>

Talks of five nuclear countries no substitute for Russian-US talks – diplomat

TASS, January 27, 2023

The format of talks that brings together all five nuclear-weapons states can't yet substitute arms control talks between Russia and the US because the UK and France oppose any reductions of strategic arms, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov said in an interview with

the Kommersant newspaper published on Thursday. According to the diplomat, the bilateral Russian-US dialogue and the work in the format of the five nuclear-weapons states are very different in terms of their content. "Not all of the five countries would be ready at this stage or in the foreseeable future to engage without any preconditions in the work on multilateral limitation and, let alone, on the reduction of strategic offensive arms. The UK and France, the US allies in the NATO nuclear bloc, take a sharply negative view on this matter," Ryabkov said.

<https://tass.com/russia/1567661>

Moscow doesn't rule out IAEA chief's visit to Russia soon – diplomat

TASS, January 27, 2023

Moscow doesn't rule out that IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi may visit Russia soon to discuss issues of further cooperation, Russian Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said on Friday. "We don't rule out a possible visit by an IAEA delegation led by Mr. Grossi to Russia in the near future to discuss the parameters of our further cooperation," she said. According to Zakharova, Moscow maintains dialogue with the IAEA chief "on all areas of the agency's activities, including on issues of the operation of the Zaporozhye nuclear power plant and the establishment of a nuclear and physical security zone around this plant." "Relations with him are regularly maintained by the Russian mission to Vienna-based international organizations," Zakharova added.

<https://tass.com/politics/1568157>

IAEA report a distraction from SVR reports on weapons stored at Ukrainian NPPs – official

TASS, January 27, 2023

The IAEA's fake report about alleged explosions near the Zaporozhye Nuclear

Power Plant was published in an attempt to draw attention away from the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service's (SVR) report about ammunition being stored at Ukrainian nuclear power plants, says Renat Karchaa, advisor to Rosenergoatom CEO. According to Karchaa, such actions by the IAEA prove that the SVR "has hit the bullseye." "If this is true, then it is necessary to divert the public's attention from nuclear power plants on Ukraine-controlled territory as much as possible, and instead switch the focus to the Zaporozhye NPP. It is quite possible that they used this pretext in this regard and have escalated the situation around the ZNPP this way," Karchaa said on Russian TV, answering a question about the reasons behind the fake IAEA report.

<https://tass.com/defense/1568213>

Russia urges IAEA to examine SVR findings Kiev stores weapons at NPPs – MFA

TASS, January 27, 2023

Russia is calling on the IAEA Secretariat to closely review the information provided by Russian foreign intelligence service SVR declaring that Kiev stores weapons at its nuclear power plants (NPPs), Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova told a news briefing on Friday. "Everyone has taken note of the statement by the director of the foreign intelligence service, Sergey Naryshkin, that Ukraine stores weapons and ammunition on the territory of nuclear power plants. This hardware is received from Western countries," Zakharova said. "We find it necessary for the IAEA Secretariat to pay close attention to this information and avoid relying on hasty reports from its inspectors that they have not noticed any such activity at the nuclear power plants. We are calling on the IAEA Secretariat not to jump to half-baked conclusions and assessments of the current situation and to take a closer look at what is happening at Ukraine's nuclear power plants at the moment."

<https://tass.com/politics/1568221>

IAEA chief understands that Russia's armed presence at ZNPP necessary – diplomat

TASS, January 28, 2023

IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi understands that Russia's presence at the Zaporozhye nuclear power plant is the norm, Russian Permanent Representative to Vienna-based international organizations Mikhail Ulyanov said on Friday. "Demilitarization means that there should not be any military personnel and weapons. Grossi doesn't raise the issue of the withdrawal of Russian National Guard officers or the few armored vehicles that are there at the ZNPP. He understands that this is a normal thing," he said in an interview with the Rossiya-24 television channel. "What matters most to him is to ensure that no one shoots at and from the plant." According to Ulyanov, Russia has no problems with that. "We have never fired from the plant, we have no heavy weapons there. The problem is that Ukrainians regularly shelled the plant and adjacent territories," he noted.

<https://tass.com/politics/1568295>

Progress on creating protection zone around ZNPP may be made by late February – diplomat

TASS, January 28, 2023

Progress on the creation of a nuclear safety and security protection zone around the Zaporozhye Nuclear Power Plant (NPP) may be made by the end of February, but it is impossible to guarantee that, Russia's Permanent Representative to the International Organizations in Vienna Mikhail Ulyanov said on the Rossiya-24 television channel on Friday. "There may be some progress by the end of February, at least there is a chance, but no one can guarantee it," he said. "Perhaps, as long as the former working methods on the creation of the zone are stalling, some other options should be looked for, which would finally allow putting the Zaporozhye NPP under protection," the Russian permanent representative added.

<https://tass.com/politics/1568301>

Russia to take into account emergence of US weapons in South Korea – MFA

TASS, January 30, 2023

Should US nuclear weapons be deployed in South Korea, unpleasant consequences will follow and Russia will be forced to bear this scenario in mind in its defense planning, as follows from the Russian Foreign Ministry's answers to questions, received ahead of the news conference on Russian diplomacy in 2022. The answers were uploaded to the Foreign Ministry's website on Monday. "Particularly unpleasant consequences would follow should US nuclear weapons return to the South of the Korean Peninsula. This possibility has begun to be openly discussed in the Republic of Korea. Such a development would inevitably have to be taken into account in Russia's defense planning. And, I think, China's too," Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said.

<https://tass.com/politics/1568823>

Russia concerned with Iranian developments, West's course under JCPOA deal – Lavrov

TASS, January 31, 2023

Russia is concerned about the recent tensions surrounding Iran and believes that the West's course to derail the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) regarding the controversial Iranian nuclear program is a mistake, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said on Tuesday.

"Yes, we are concerned about this situation," Lavrov said speaking at a news conference following a meeting with his Egyptian counterpart Sameh Shoukry earlier in the day.

<https://tass.com/politics/1569527>

C. Pakistan

'Pakistan has learnt its lesson': PM Shahbaz Sharif offers olive branch to India, calls for peace

Business Standard, January 17, 2023

With terror-related violence on the rise in Pakistan since the Tehreek-e-Taliban

Pakistan (TTP) broke a ceasefire with security forces in late November, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has called for a "critical and honest talk" with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on "burning points like Kashmir," news agency ANI reported. Sharif stated in an interview with the Dubai-based Arabic news television channel Al Arabiya that the three wars with India have "only added to the people's distress, poverty, and unemployment." "My message to the Indian management and PM Modi is that allow us sit down on the desk and have critical and honest talks to resolve our burning points like Kashmir. It's as much as us to stay peacefully and make progress or quarrel with one another, and waste time and assets," the Pakistani prime minister said.

<https://www.businessstandard.com/latest/world/story/pakistan-has-learnt-its-lesson-pm-shahbaz-sharif-offers-olive-branch-to-india-calls-for-peace-360655-2023-01-17>

Pak PM fears 'nuclear war' with India, wants UAE to mediate but gets royal snub on Kashmir

Hindustan Times, January 18, 2023

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif offered to hold talks with India to resolve issues such as Kashmir, saying he has asked the leadership of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to help bring the two countries to the talks table. The Pakistan PM made the statement in an interview with UAE based media outlet- Al Arabiya, last week.

<https://www.hindustantimes.com/videos/news/pak-pm-fears-nuclear-war-with-india-wants-uae-to-mediate-but-gets-royal-snub-on-kashmir-101674032938858.html>

Amid Uranium Scare at Heathrow, Pakistan Confident its Nuclear Material is Secure

The Diplomat, January 18, 2023

Last week, Britain's counterterrorism police opened an investigation into a package containing uranium that was

seized at London's Heathrow Airport on December 29. The package, which reportedly originated in Pakistan, was "destined for an Iranian business with premises in the UK," The Guardian reported. Confusion over the origin of the uranium persists. Pakistani officials claim that the shipment in question didn't come from Pakistan as was being claimed by the British media. Reportedly, the uranium was found in a shipment of scrap metal and was "embedded into metal bars." However, the Oman Airlines flight that allegedly carried the radioactive material left Karachi on December 29 for Muscat and its cargo only contained "frozen meat and garments." "No metal or out-sized cargo was booked on the flight [from Pakistan]," an official who was briefed on the issue emphasized, according to Dawn.

<https://thediplomat.com/2023/01/amid-uranium-scare-at-heathrow-pakistan-confident-its-nuclear-material-is-secure/>

'When Indian PM Says Their Nuclear Assets are not for Diwali, Then What can we do?': Pakistan on Talks With India

Zee News, January 26, 2023

Pakistan said on Thursday that no backchannel talks were being held between Islamabad and New Delhi. "At this moment, there is no such thing under way," Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar told the Senate - the upper house of parliament. She added that backchannel diplomacy was desirable when it was result-oriented. Separately, Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch at the weekly media briefing reiterated Khar's remarks about no secret diplomatic engagements with India. "There is no backchannel diplomacy between India and Pakistan," Baloch said. Speaking in the Senate, Khar went on to say that Pakistan had always taken initiatives to promote peace in the region but 'right now, the cross-border hostility [from India] is of a unique type.'

<https://zeenews.india.com/world/when-indian-pm-says-their-nuclear-assets-are-not-for-diwali-then-what-can-we-do-pakistan-on-talks-with-india-2566107.html>

Pakistan Economic Crisis: The Consequences Of A Hostile Nuclear Neighbour That Is Now Bankrupt

Swarajya, January 27, 2023

By now, everyone has seen the images of Pakistan's total power blackout and the serpentine queues outside fuel stations as the country is surviving on a thin supply of oil. Pakistan has under \$4.4 billion in forex exchange reserves, which can buy less than three weeks of imports. With the Chinese, the Saudis and the Emiratis waiting for a green signal from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) before loosening their purse strings, it is unclear as to whether Pakistan will be able to raise enough funds to meet its basic economic needs. But what is clear is that things are yet to hit rock bottom for India's hostile neighbour. The country currently has an inflation rate of about 25 per cent, and this is set to increase. Early this week, Pakistan announced an unprecedented 1 per cent hike in its benchmark rate, to 17 per cent. This is the highest rate increase by the Central Bank of Pakistan in 25 years.

<https://swarajyamag.com/commentary/pakistan-economic-crisis-the-consequences-of-a-hostile-nuclear-neighbour-that-is-now-bankrupt>

January 31, 1983, Forty Years Ago: Secret US document on nuclear Pakistan

The Indian Express, January 31, 2023

Pakistan may have nuclear weapons capable of blowing up other countries by the end of this century, according to a secret document of the United States Air Force. The document entitled "Air Force 2000", was recently circulated within the US Defence Department in an effort to start senior officials thinking about future weapons planning.

<https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/40-years-ago/january-31-1983-forty-years-ago-nuclear-pakistan-8413828/>

D. European Union

Poland's Respect Energy considers deploying French SMR design

World Nuclear News, January 16, 2023

"This agreement marks Respect Energy's and EDF's firm intention to jointly proceed with the development of SMR projects in Poland and confirms the strong interest towards Nuward technology which has been selected by the energy trader to expand its footprint in the nuclear energy field," the companies said in a joint statement. "Respect Energy and EDF will now jointly start the evaluation process of specific new greenfield sites and continue to work on detailing the business and financing plans for this endeavour." In October 2021, EDF made an offer to the Polish government to build as many as six EPR units. The "non-binding preliminary offer" represented a range of options for Poland. It detailed the engineering, procurement and construction that would be needed for four to six EPR units, at either two or three sites. The EPR units would produce 1650 MWe each if selected - the Polish government announced late last year that it had selected Westinghouse technology for at least the first three of its planned fleet of reactors.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Poland-s-Respect-Energy-considers-deploying-French>

Hungary, Russia find new route for fuel supplies to NPP via Bulgaria, says ministry

TASS, January 16, 2023

Hungary and Russia have found a new route to supply nuclear fuel to the Paks nuclear power plant (NPP) via Bulgaria and Romania, bypassing Ukraine, Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Peter Szijjarto told a press conference in Sofia on Monday as broadcast on his Facebook page (banned in Russia as it is owned by Meta Corporation designated as extremist by the

Russian authorities), following a meeting with his Bulgarian counterpart Nikolay Milkov. The supply of Russian fuel to the Paks station by rail through the Ukrainian territory became impossible in 2022 due to the conflict in Ukraine, Szijjarto noted, adding that several times, fuel was transported there by plane through the airspace of Belarus, Poland and Slovakia with the permission of the EU's leadership, which made an exception to its bans. Eventually, "a new route was found to carry nuclear fuel from Russia to Hungary via Bulgaria and Romania," the minister said.

<https://tass.com/economy/1562941>

Krško extension approved, after environmental impact assessment

World Nuclear News, January 17, 2023

Slovenia's Ministry of the Environment says it has approved Krško's operations for a further 20 years, following the completion of an environmental impact assessment, a process which included input from neighbouring countries Croatia, Austria, Italy and Hungary, plus Germany. The environmental consent issued on Friday is for the extension of the operating life of the nuclear power plant to 2043. The ministry said the assessment, which was prompted by a lawsuit from non-governmental organisations in the country, looked at a wide number of areas including "improvements to ensure safety, reduce the likelihood of environmental accidents, resistance to climate change and external factors, and the impact on water in the light of the warming trend of watercourses in the eastern part of Slovenia were examined. Since the NEK is located in an earthquake zone, an important emphasis was also placed on the topic of earthquake safety".

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Krsko-operation-extended,-after-environmental-imp>

Austrian foreign minister says Russia to play role in future European security

TASS, January 17, 2023

Austrian Foreign Minister Alexander Schallenberg said Russia has a role in the European security architecture and rejected the idea to deny Schengen visas to all Russians, as he spoke at a conference at Sciences Po, or the Paris Institute of Political Studies, on Monday, the Kronen Zeitung newspaper reported. "We must not overshoot the mark, for example by introducing a visa ban for 144 million Russians," Schallenberg said, the newspaper reported. "We also have to think about the day after, the week after, and the months after," he went on to say. "The European security architecture will have to include Russia in one way or another in the future as a permanent member of the UN Security Council and as a nuclear power." The top Austrian diplomat also said the OSCE should be kept as a negotiating platform and criticized Warsaw's refusal to invite Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov to the group's recent meeting in Poland.

<https://tass.com/world/1563067>

Hungary to oppose EU's anti-Russian nuclear sanctions – Foreign Minister

TASS, January 23, 2023

Hungary will not support any EU sanctions that would potentially limit cooperation with Russia in the nuclear field, Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter Szijjarto told reporters during a break at a meeting of EU Foreign Ministers in Brussels Monday. "Hungary will not support any sanctions that in any way limit nuclear cooperation with Russia," Szijjarto said. The Minister noted that "the European Commission has, obviously, commenced the development of the 10th sanctions package." However, Hungary warned that it will not support any proposals "if they include restrictions on cooperation with Russia in the nuclear area," Szijjarto said. "This would cause enormous damage to our country and violate its energy security," he underscored.

<https://tass.com/world/1565927>

Hungary, Russia agree to speed up investment in construction of Paks-2 NPP – MFA

TASS, January 26, 2023

Budapest and Moscow agreed to accelerate investment in the construction of the second stage of the Paks nuclear power plant, Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Peter Szijjarto announced on Thursday, following a telephone conversation with Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak. "We agreed that nuclear energy is the energy of the future, and the good news for us is that the Russian government also attaches great importance to the development of the Paks project. We agreed to speed up investment wherever possible," the Foreign Minister wrote on his Facebook page (banned in Russia as it is owned by Meta Corporation designated as extremist by the Russian authorities).

<https://tass.com/economy/1567445>

Hungarian PM vows to veto any potential EU sanctions on Russian nuclear industry

TASS, January 27, 2023

Hungary will veto any potential European Union sanctions against Russian nuclear entities and enterprises, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban told the Kossuth radio station on Friday. "Brussels is drawing up plans for the new sanctions, with nuclear energy on the agenda," he said when speaking about the tenth sanctions package against Moscow being readied by the European Commission. In this regard he "expects a major fight, though the Hungarian government will impose a veto" if the EU attempts to introduce restrictions on Russia's nuclear energy, the PM noted. In 2022, "Hungary will lose 3,764 bln forints (around 10 bln euro - TASS) as a result of sanctions in the form of failed economic growth," he said, adding that "this almost equals the aggregate personal tax paid by all Hungarian citizens."

<https://tass.com/politics/1568151>

E. Ukraine

No strikes on Zaporozhye nuclear power plant since beginning of 2023 – official

TASS, January 16, 2023

The units of the Ukrainian army have not shelled the Zaporozhye nuclear power plant since the year began and Ukrainian strikes have been registered only in Energodar's industrial zone and along the shoreline, Renat Karchaa, adviser to the chief executive of Russia's Rosenergoatom nuclear power plant operator said on Monday. "Generally, strikes are delivered on the industrial zone, infrastructure facilities, on facilities on the shoreline. There have been no strikes on the nuclear station directly during the entire period after New Year's Day," he told Channel One. Located in Energodar, the Zaporozhye nuclear facility, having roughly 6GW of capacity, is the largest of its kind in Europe. Russia took control of the plant on February 28, 2022, in the first days of its special military operation in Ukraine. The power station has continued its regular operation.

<https://tass.com/world/1562585>

Official doubts IAEA presence at Ukrainian NPPs would thwart nuclear disaster

TASS, January 17, 2023

The presence of inspectors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) at Ukrainian nuclear power plants would not prevent a nuclear disaster, Renat Karchaa, adviser to the chief executive of Russia's Rosenergoatom nuclear power plant operator, told TASS on Tuesday. Commenting on the IAEA's intentions to have a presence there, he said, "The IAEA does not have either the legal power or technological or any other capability to thwart a nuclear disaster in the event of artillery or MLRS attacks or airstrikes on nuclear power plants." "So, from this point of view, any IAEA presence at every nuclear power plant would not be very effective but rather politically motivated," he argued. According to Karchaa, it would currently

be much more important to monitor and audit the amount of fissile materials at nuclear power facilities. Russia has repeatedly warned the international community of the threat of using the so-called dirty nuclear bombs, he said.

<https://tass.com/politics/1563111>

IAEA chief hopeful nuclear weapons will not be used in Ukraine conflict

TASS, January 20, 2023

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Rafael Grossi is hopeful that nuclear weapons will not be used in the conflict in Ukraine, as he himself said in an interview with Fox News.

When asked to comment on Deputy Chairman of the Russian Security Council Dmitry Medvedev's remark about nuclear countries' involvement in conflicts, Grossi noted that "a nuclear war can never be won and must never be fought." "I'm not passing judgment on comments of high officials of any country. <...> Certainly, I hope that there will be no nuclear use during this conflict, absolutely," Grossi pointed out. Medvedev earlier wrote a post on Telegram, commenting on statements made at the World Economic Forum in Davos that "Russia must lose" in Ukraine.

<https://tass.com/world/1564827>

IAEA chief looking forward to prolonged expert presence in Ukraine

TASS, January 20, 2023

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Rafael Grossi is looking forward to the agency's prolonged expert presence at Ukrainian nuclear power plants, as he himself said in an interview with Fox News. "This week, what I've been doing is I've been touring the country and setting up these permanent missions, which have very specific technical tasks to perform. These

places, although, are not in the active combat zone," he noted. "I'm looking at a protracted presence because, of course, we are all hoping for peace as soon as possible," Grossi added. According to the IAEA chief, as for the Zaporozhye Nuclear Power Plant, "we will have to see what kind of an institutional solution is found." On Monday, Grossi announced the establishment of an IAEA mission to the South Ukraine Nuclear Power Plant, and later, similar missions to the Rovno and Chernobyl facilities were announced.

<https://tass.com/world/1564835>

Grossi to continue discussions on protection zone around Zaporozhye nuke plant, IAEA says

TASS, January 20, 2023

The International Atomic Energy Agency's Director General Rafael Grossi said he would continue discussions on a proposal to set up a nuclear safety and security protection zone around the Zaporozhye nuclear power plant with Russia and Ukraine. "I will continue my intensive consultations with both Ukraine and the Russian Federation in the coming days and weeks," the IAEA quoted Grossi as saying in a press release on Friday. According to Grossi, everybody agrees that the Zaporozhye NPP needs to be protected, but the negotiations are very complex. "This major nuclear power plant continues to face daily dangers. Our team there continues to hear explosions close to the site, including two on Thursday," he added.

<https://tass.com/world/1564867>

Implementation mechanism needed for safety zone around Zaporozhye nuke plant – official

TASS, January 22, 2023

Attempts by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to discuss establishing a security zone around the Zaporozhye nuclear power plant have been a simulation of taking action, while specific mechanisms, rather than declarations, are needed to implement the initiative, Renat Karchaa, adviser to the chief executive of

Russia's Rosenergoatom nuclear power plant operator, told TASS. Commenting on a remark by IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi who said there was a consensus to establish a security zone around the nuclear facility, Karchaa said, "The parties being unanimous in their opinion to establish a security zone is not a solution. Implementation mechanisms, rather than declarations, are needed to establish such a zone. And it's quite a way to go from having a shared understanding to reaching an agreement. There have been a plenty of simulations [of taking action], but this is not how it works." According to Karchaa, reaching this agreement would require quite a few participants, with military and political leaders playing a key role.

<https://tass.com/world/1565459>

IAEA inspectors found no military equipment on Ukrainian NPPs, Director General says

TASS, January 24, 2023

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors have found no military equipment on Ukrainian nuclear power plants during their inspection, IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi said, speaking before the European Parliament in Brussels Tuesday. "[IAEA teams] in collaboration and cooperation with the Ukrainian management of these facilities ascertained if there is, in fact, any military equipment. [...] And, of course, the result of those inspections was negative, and we are going to be reporting about it," he said. Grossi noted that a protection zone must be established around the Zaporozhye Nuclear Power Plant. He also believes that IAEA inspectors must be present at all nuclear power plants in Ukraine.

<https://tass.com/world/1566551>

Storing munitions at NPPs in Ukraine seen as new form of nuclear terrorism

TASS, January 25, 2023

The use of Ukrainian nuclear power plants as storage facilities for munitions is a new

form of nuclear terrorism, Vladimir Rogov, leader of the We Are Together with Russia movement, said on Tuesday. "Why do they use them as storage facilities? They understand perfectly well that we will not shoot there. Unlike them, we are not engaged in nuclear terrorism, since the storage of weapons, especially offensive weapons, not simply firearms used by security guards, at a nuclear plant is nuclear terrorism, a new form of nuclear terrorism the [Ukrainian President Vladimir] Zelensky regime is making use of," he said in an interview with the Solovyov Live television channel. According to Rogov, the IAEA has not yet commented on these reports.

<https://tass.com/politics/1566563>

F. France

Application lodged for construction of French repository

World Nuclear News, January 18, 2023

Andra plans to construct the Cigéo repository - an underground system of disposal tunnels - in a natural layer of clay near Bure, to the east of Paris in the Meuse/Haute Marne area. The facility is to be financed by radioactive waste generators - EDF, Framatome and the French Alternative Energies and Atomic Energy Commission - and managed by Andra. It will hold 83,000 cubic metres of long-lived high-level waste (HLW) and intermediate-level waste (ILW). Framed by three laws passed in 1991, 2006 and 2016, and debated in the context of two public debates in 2005 and 2013, Cigéo draws on the years of research carried out by Andra, in particular through its underground laboratory at Bure. Andra said the submission of the application with the French regulator, *Autorité de Sûreté Nucléaire* (ASN), is "a crucial step marking both a culmination and a new start for the project".

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Application-lodged-for-construction-of-French-repo>

France's Macron to hike military funds amid Russia-Ukraine war, new threats

Business Standard, January 20, 2023

French President Emmanuel Macron on Friday proposed to boost defence spending by more than a third through 2030 and to transform "France's nuclear-armed military, to better face evolving threats and take into account the impact of Russia's war in Ukraine. Macron announced a proposal for 413 billion euros (nearly USD 450 billion) in military spending for the period of 2024-2030, to ensure our freedom, our security, our prosperity, our place in the world. That compares with spending of about 295 billion euros in a similar military plan for 2019-2025. The money would notably go to modernising France's nuclear arsenal, boosting intelligence spending by 60 per cent, doubling the number of military reservists, reinforcing cyberdefence and developing more remote-controlled weapons.

https://www.business-standard.com/article/international/france-s-macron-to-hike-military-funds-amid-russia-ukraine-war-new-threats-123012001199_1.html

French nuclear safety needs review ahead of reactor lifespan extensions, newbuilds - ASN

Reuters, January 23, 2023

France's nuclear safety needs a global and systemic review as President Emmanuel Macron's government prepares to extend the lifespan of the existing fleet while planning to build new reactors, nuclear agency ASN said on Monday. Bernard Doroszczuk, head of the French nuclear safety watchdog, also told a news conference that utility EDF (EDF.PA) must explain by end-2024 how it plans to extend the life of its nuclear plants up to or beyond 60 years, in order to formulate a first position on the issue within a further two years. Doroszczuk said a nuclear safety review needs to anticipate the effects

of ageing on nuclear installations as well as new challenges posed by climate change.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/french-nuclear-safety-needs-review-ahead-reactor-lifespan-extensions-newbuilds-2023-01-23/>

French Senate adopts bill on accelerating nuclear new build

World Nuclear News, January 25, 2023

The French Senate has overwhelmingly approved a draft bill aimed at accelerating procedures related to the construction of new nuclear facilities near existing nuclear sites and to the operation of existing facilities. The bill was adopted in its first reading in the Senate, with 239 votes in favour and 16 against. The Senate began its deliberation of the bill on 17 January and voted on its text on 24 January. The approved text includes the removal of the objective of reducing the nuclear share of France's electricity production to 50% by 2035. Nuclear's share will now be maintained at "more than 50%" of electricity production by 2050. In addition, the text includes small modular reactors (SMRs) in possible reactor types to be constructed. "For electricity of nuclear origin, the decarbonisation objective relates to the construction of European Pressurised Reactors (EPRs) and small modular reactors by 2050," it says.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/French-Senate-adopts-bill-on-accelerating-nuclear>

Strikes expected to reduce French nuclear, hydro output

Reuters, January 25, 2023

Strikes against the French government's planned pension reform are scheduled for Thursday and Friday at power utility EDF (EDF.PA) and are expected to affect nuclear and hydropower output, the FNME-CGT union told Reuters on Wednesday.

EDF had earlier posted a warning about a strike starting on Wednesday evening to the end of the day on Thursday on its message board. "We call for a 48-hour strike ... there will certainly be production cuts, perhaps from tonight but probably more tomorrow,

in nuclear and hydro in particular, without going so far as to impact users," FNME-CGT National Secretary Fabrice Coudour said. Coudour added that strikes disrupting maintenance work at nuclear reactors were being considered and that targeted cuts to power supplies could not be ruled out.

<https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/strikes-expected-reduce-french-nuclear-hydro-output-2023-01-25/>

France, Australia announce artillery deal for Ukraine

France 24, January 30, 2023

The artillery deal is a small but symbolic step by the two nations after a bitter row two years ago when former Australian prime minister Scott Morrison tore up a contract to buy submarines from France. "Several thousand 155 mm shells will be manufactured jointly," French Defence Minister Sebastien Lecornu said at a joint press conference with his Australian counterpart Richard Marles, as well as the countries' foreign ministers. "There are some unique capabilities that exist in Australia and some synergies that can be achieved by Australia and France working together in relation to the supply of this ammunition," Marles said. The deal will see both countries share the cost of the deliveries of the ammunition from French manufacturer Nexter, with Australia to provide the explosive powder, Lecornu added.

<https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20230130-france-australia-to-hasten-comeback-from-submarines-row-in-paris>

G. United Kingdom

After years of false dawns, can Britain realise its nuclear ambitions?

Financial Times, January 19, 2023

As the invasion of Ukraine dragged into its second month, Boris Johnson pitched his solution to a problem plaguing western governments: how to produce enough energy for their countries now Russian gas

was off the table. Johnson's plan was to offer an unexpected lifeline to a divisive industry by promising to build 24 gigawatts of nuclear power capacity over the next three decades, up from just 5.88GW at present. "Our aim is to lead the world once again in a technology we pioneered so that by 2050, up to a quarter of our power consumed in Great Britain is from nuclear," the then prime minister declared. Britain is not alone. After years of falling in and out of public and political favour given international disasters, including Chernobyl in 1986 and Fukushima in 2011, there is talk of a "new dawn" for nuclear power.

<https://www.ft.com/content/c4c481d3-99e0-4c2f-8d4e-96b4c9a3bd59>

Call for prompt launch of Great British Nuclear

World Nuclear News, January 30, 2023

The UK government should urgently launch a fully-funded Great British Nuclear (GBN) programme to tackle the country's energy crisis, according to an open letter to Prime Minister Rishi Sunak from a trade union, nuclear industry representatives and a group of politicians. In its *Energy Security Strategy*, released in April last year, the government set out its ambitions for eight new reactors, plus small modular reactors (SMRs), helping to produce 24 GWe capacity by 2050, representing about 25% of the UK's projected electricity demand. Nuclear's share of energy in the UK is currently about 15%, however almost half of the country's current capacity is due to be retired by 2025 and all but one of its reactors will retire by 2030.

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Call-for-prompt-launch-of-Great-British-Nuclear>

H. United States of America

Iran rejects chance to revive nuclear deal with US: Blinken

Alarabiya News, January 18, 2023

Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Iran had rejected the chance to return to a nuclear deal with the US months ago and he reiterated that a new agreement was no longer a Biden administration priority.

Blinken said the US had the consent of Russia, China and the other original signatories to the 2015 agreement, which President Donald Trump abandoned in 2018. Iran balked, Blinken added. "The Iranians killed the opportunity to come back to that agreement swiftly many months ago, Blinken said at a press conference in Washington alongside UK Foreign Secretary James Cleverly on Tuesday. "There was an opportunity on the table that they rejected, an opportunity that was approved by all who were involved.

<https://english.alarabiya.net/News/middle-east/2023/01/18/Iran-rejects-chance-to-revive-nuclear-deal-with-US-Blinken->

As U.S. and allies arm Ukraine, Russia warns that losing a conventional war "can trigger a nuclear war"

CBS News, January 19, 2023

As the United States prepares to announce a new shipment of military hardware for Ukraine and Kyiv pushes its Western partners for modern battle tanks and other heavy weapons, Moscow responded Thursday with a familiar battery of threats. Once again, Russia alluded to its nuclear arsenal in a bid to dissuade the U.S. and its NATO allies from helping Ukraine resist the full-scale invasion President Vladimir Putin launched almost 11 months ago. "It never occurs to any of the lowlifes to draw an elementary conclusion from this: The defeat of a nuclear power in a conventional war can trigger a nuclear war," former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, a top Putin ally who now serves as deputy chairman of the Security Council, said in a post on Telegram.

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/ukraine-russia-nuclear-war-threat-us-nato-weapons-tanks/>

The U.S. imports uranium from Russia. What if sanctions end that?

Washington Post, January 21, 2023

Russia's state-owned nuclear power conglomerate, Rosatom, is suspected of supplying the Russian arms industry with

components, technology and raw materials for missile fuel, The Washington Post reported Friday. The military goods were sent to more than half a dozen major weapons makers, aiding Moscow's continuing assault on Ukraine. That has elevated prospects that the United States, and possibly the European Union, might place sanctions on Rosatom, which exports uranium for use in nuclear reactors. U.S. reliance on Russian nuclear fuel is substantial, but American companies have some options if Rosatom is hit with sanctions.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2023/01/21/uranium-imports-russia-nuclear/>

1st small modular nuclear reactor certified for use in US

AP News, January 21, 2023

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission has certified the design for what will be the United States' first small modular nuclear reactor. The rule that certifies the design was published Thursday in the Federal Register. It means that companies seeking to build and operate a nuclear power plant can pick the design for a 50-megawatt, advanced light-water small modular nuclear reactor by Oregon-based NuScale Power and apply to the NRC for a license. It's the final determination that the design is acceptable for use, so it can't be legally challenged during the licensing process when someone applies to build and operate a nuclear power plant, NRC spokesperson Scott Burnell said Friday. The rule becomes effective in late February.

<https://apnews.com/article/us-nuclear-regulatory-commission-oregon-climate-and-environment-business-design-e5c54435f973ca32759afe5904bf96ac>

NASA, Pentagon developing nuclear-powered rocket for Mars voyage

France 24, 2023

NASA Administrator Bill Nelson said Tuesday that the US space agency will team up with the Defense Advanced Research

Projects Agency (DARPA) to "develop and demonstrate advanced nuclear thermal propulsion technology as soon as 2027." "With the help of this new technology, astronauts could journey to and from deep space faster than ever -- a major capability to prepare for crewed missions to Mars," Nelson said in a statement. DARPA is the Pentagon's research and development arm and has played a role in many of the notable innovations of the 20th century including the internet. NASA said nuclear thermal rockets can be three or more times more efficient than conventional chemical propulsion and would reduce transit time, essential for an eventual mission to Mars.

<https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20230124-nasa-pentagon-developing-nuclear-powered-rocket-for-mars-voyage>

Republicans in Congress urge Biden to assess Russia's compliance with New Start – FT

TASS, January 25, 2023

Senior Republicans in the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Armed Services of the US Congress' House of Representatives Michael McCaul and Mike Rogers and head of the Special Committee on Intelligence Mike Turner have urged the Biden administration to give an assessment of Russia's observance of the provisions of the Strategic Arms Reduction (New START) Treaty. The Financial Times reported on this on its website on Wednesday, citing a letter sent to US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin and Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines on January 23.

<https://tass.com/world/1567047>

Tank supplies to Ukraine may trigger nuclear conflict, Trump warns

TASS, January 26, 2023

Former US President Donald Trump is concerned that Western countries' move to send tanks to Kiev may trigger a nuclear conflict. "First come the tanks, then come

the nukes. Get this crazy war ended, now. So easy to do!" Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform on Thursday. The German government confirmed on Wednesday that it would send 14 Leopard 2 tanks to Ukraine and would also give re-export permission to other countries. US President Joe Biden later announced Washington's plans to provide 31 Abrams tanks to Kiev. Biden claimed that the decision was not about fighting against Russia but about "freedom." In addition, the US president alleged that tank supplies did not mean "an offensive threat to Russia." Russian Presidential Spokesman Dmitry Peskov, in turn, told reporters on Thursday that the Kremlin could see the US and other countries of the collective West becoming more and more involved in the conflict in Ukraine.

<https://tass.com/world/1567491>

US sweetens pot to study siting for spent nuke fuel storage

AP News, January 27, 2023

The U.S. government has long struggled to find a permanent solution for storing or disposing of spent nuclear fuel from commercial nuclear power plants, and opposition to such a site is flaring up again as New Mexico lawmakers debate banning a facility without state consent. The state's prospective ban cleared its first legislative hurdle Tuesday with approval from a key committee. Supporters acknowledge that the bill has a long road ahead, but it does have the backing of Democratic Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham. State Sen. Jeff Steinborn, the bill's sponsor, said momentum against New Mexico becoming a permanent dumping ground for the nation's nuclear waste – including spent fuel from commercial power plants – is growing and he's cautiously optimistic this is the year that the state takes a legislative stand.

<https://apnews.com/article/politics-new-mexico-state-government-texas-united-states-5850006929f541cc5aaac613191417d9>

Blinken: All options available to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon

Alarabiya News, January 29, 2023

US Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken, said on Sunday that Iran has rejected the current proposal to return to the nuclear agreement, adding that Washington still believes that diplomacy is the most effective way to deal with the Iranian nuclear file. Blinken said in an exclusive interview with Al-Arabiya that Iranian youth are defending their basic rights in the face of Tehran's regime, adding that US focus now is on the Iranian regime's suppression of its people in the streets. Blinken highlighted US support to Iranian people, stressing that the decision of "regime change" remains ultimately up to the people. He added: "The Iranian regime is convincing its people of the idea that the US wants regime change."

<https://english.alarabiya.net/News/saudi-arabia/2023/01/29/Blinken-All-options-available-to-prevent-Iran-from-acquiring-a-nuclear-weapon>

China nuclear-weapons lab extensively used US chips for years despite curbs: Report

WION, January 30, 2023

A Wall Street Journal report says that China's top nuclear-weapons research institute managed to buy sophisticated US computer chips at least a dozen times in the past two and half years. The revelation means that the institute ignored decades-old American export restrictions that were supposed to curb such sales and found a way around them. These chips are widely used in data centres and personal computers, and the report suggests that they were acquired from resellers in China. The publication reviewed the procurement documents and found that the state-run China Academy of Engineering Physics was able to obtain the

semiconductors made by companies such as Intel Corp and Nvidia since 2020 despite being put on a US export blacklist in 1997.

<https://www.wionews.com/business-economy/china-nuclear-weapons-lab-extensively-used-us-chips-for-years-despite-curbs-report-557241>

West Asia

I. Iran

American experts admit sanctions fail to prevent Iran to becoming 'prominent' drone power

Tehran Times, January 16, 2023

Eric Lob, an associate professor of politics and international relations at Florida International University, and Edward Riehle, a retired American colonel who works on advanced technologies, sensors, and sensor processing in Northern California, have admitted that Western sanctions on Iran have failed to prevent Iran from becoming a 'prominent player' in drone production. "Western sanctions have been unable to prevent Iran from becoming a prominent player in the military drone market and sharing drone technology with partners inside and outside of the Middle East," Lob and Riehle wrote in the National Interest on Sunday. The writers were referring to decade-old sanctions on Iranian drone manufacturers like the Quds Aviation and Aerospace Industries Organization (IAIO) and the Iran Aircraft Manufacturing Industries Corporation (HESA).

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/480925/American-experts-admit-sanctions-fail-to-prevent-Iran-to-becoming>

Hezbollah: Encircling Israel with Missiles Gen. Soleimani's Idea

Fars News Agency, January 16, 2023

Iran's martyred anti-terror commander Lieutenant General Qassem Soleimani was behind the idea of surrounding the Israeli regime with missiles and he succeeded in finalizing and implementing his plan, Senior member of the Lebanese resistance movement Hezbollah Mahmoud Qamati said. Qamati, a member of the Political

Council of Hezbollah, stated if the Lebanese resistance movement is ready to go to war with Israel and relies on its own missiles and drones, it is because of the great efforts made by Lieut. Gen. Soleimani, presstv reported. "Martyr Soleimani's idea was to encircle Israel, and he managed to do so in practice. It was Martyr Soleimani who made plans for the missiles of Lebanon and Gaza, as well as Iraq and even Yemen," he added.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14011026000214/Hezbollah-Encircling-Israel-wih-Missiles-Gen-Sleimani's-Idea>

IRGC Navy conducts military drill in Persian Gulf

Tehran Times, January 17, 2023

With the launch of several missiles, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy conducted on Tuesday a military drill in the Persian Gulf. Rear Admiral Ali Reza Tangsiri, commander of the IRGC Navy, said that a wide variety of weaponry and gadgets, including helicopter-launched rockets, drones that dropped bombs with pinpoint accuracy, and unmanned smart submarine systems were used in the war game. In the exercise, which was named after martyr General Nasrollah Shafiee, IRGC Navy commandoes had engaged in heliborne operations, he stated. The commander noted that the war game's noteworthy elements included assault vessel combat operations, the launch of naval cruise missiles and rockets, the planting of naval mines in the exercise zone, and the destruction of a single target by cruise missiles fired from two distinct sites.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/480963/IRGC-Navy-conducts-military-drill-in-Persian-Gulf>

No undeclared nuclear sites in Iran: Eslami

Tehran Times, January 18, 2023

Mohammad Eslami, the head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), said Wednesday that there are no

undeclared nuclear sites in Iran. Speaking on the sidelines of a cabinet session on Wednesday, Eslami said Iran is focused on clarification and answering questions regarding its nuclear activity. "The issue that has been on our agenda has been to resolve the ambiguities and respond to them. The accusations that the anti-revolutionary elements have made over the years have been investigated by the Agency and all its steps have been taken," Eslami said, according to Iran's official news agency IRNA. He was referring to a safeguards probe by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) over nuclear materials allegedly found in Iran. "As a result of all the negotiations that took place within twenty years, the JCPOA document has been concluded. They abandoned the JCPOA document and intend to return to it, and again put the accusations next to the JCPOA document, while these are not two issues but one issue," he said.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/481004/No-undeclared-nuclear-sites-in-Iran-Eslami>

Iranian Navy Flotilla Berths at Pakistan's Karachi Port

Fars News Agency, January 18, 2023

Iran's Navy Flotilla comprising two frigates and a submarine berthed at the Southern Pakistani port of Karachi on Wednesday in line with the two countries' defense diplomacy. The tour of the Iranian Navy's Flotilla to the Pakistani port will last four days and will follow policy on deepening bilateral military relations. Iran-Pakistan defense cooperation pursues provision of security for international waters. Concurrent with the friendly visit of an Iranian flotilla to Pakistan, a group of vessels from the neighboring country, will tour the Southern Iranian port of Bandar Abbas today.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14011028000491/Iranian-Navy-Flilla-Berhs-a-Pakistan's-Karachi-Pr>

Iran implements BINA radar system

Tehran Times, January 18, 2023

Iran has sought to implement the state-of-the-art radar system called "BINA". In a ceremony on Wednesday, Air Force commander Alireza Sabahifard attended the Bam radar site to evaluate the operational performance of the radar system. Sabahifard stressed that the radar system is completely indigenous. He also said it is apt for the geographical and environmental conditions of the country. "This system has been utilized by the air force in a bid to expand the radar coverage in the southeast of the country and will also step up the combat power of the air defense force." The air force commander described the air defense force as one of the most important and fundamental elements of national security.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/481016/Iran-implements-BINA-radar-system>

Iran Rejects West's Allegations on Secret Nuclear Program

Fars News Agency, January 18, 2023

Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami once again denied all accusations levelled by the West over the existence of undeclared nuclear activities or material in Iran, describing the move by the US and its allies as a propaganda campaign against Tehran's peaceful nuclear program. Speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a cabinet meeting on Wednesday in Tehran, Iran's nuclear chief once again dismisses claims about the existence of "undeclared" nuclear sites or activities in Iran. "All this claims are part of a propaganda campaign against Tehran," he added. Eslami noted the accusations leveled against the Iranian nuclear program are rooted in the claims by "counter-revolutionary elements" abroad. In spite of that, the official added, Iran has

been cooperating with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in addressing the claims.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14011028000694/Iran-Rejecs-Wes's-Allegains-n-Secre-Nclear-Prgram>

MP: Iranian Parliament Seeking to Declare EU's Armed Forces as Terrorist Organization in Tit-for-Tat Step

Fars News Agency, January 19, 2023

Iranian lawmakers have introduced a double-urgency bill to brand the armed forces of the European states as terrorist groups after the European Parliament called for the EU to list the Islamic Revolution Guards Corp (IRGC) as a foreign terrorist entity, a legislator said. Iranian lawmaker Mohammad Khodabakhshi stated on Thursday the parliament is going to put a double-urgent bill to vote as part of a response to the EU's potential move to blacklist the IRGC as a terrorist organization. He added the legislation would call for blacklisting the armed forces of the EU as terrorist. The bill describes the IRGC as a pillar of the Iranian ruling establishment and says if it is blacklisted by the bloc, Iran will blacklist the EU armed forces in West Asia, in which case any cooperation with them will be treated as complicity in act of terrorism.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14011029000248/MP-Iranian-Parliamen-Seeking-Declare-EU's-Armed-Frces-as-Terrris>

Iran's Top Military Body Warns EU of Regional, Global Insecurity in Case of Labeling IRGC as FTO

Fars News Agency, January 19, 2023

The General Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces strongly condemned the European Parliament's move to blacklist the Islamic Revolution Guard Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist organization, warning the EU of the dire consequences of the hostile action for regional and global stability. In a statement

on Thursday, the General Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces has sharply condemned the European Parliament's "desperate" call for the EU and its member states to place the IRGC on the bloc's "terror" list, warning about the consequences of such a move for regional and global peace. The General Staff said the unwise call by the European Parliament is in contravention with all international regulations.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14011029000521/Iran's-Tp-Miliary-Bdy-Warns-EU-f-Reginal-Glbal-Insecrity-in-Case-f>

EU's Borrell continues to work with Iran, U.S. on JCPOA: spokesman

Tehran Times, January 21, 2023

A senior spokesman for the European Union has said that Josep Borrell, the foreign policy chief of the bloc, continues to work with the partners at the talks in Vienna over reviving the 2015 Iran nuclear deal. In remarks to Iran's official news agency IRNA, Peter Stano, the lead spokesperson for the external affairs of the European Union, underlined that the Vienna talks are separate from efforts to impose sanctions on Iran. He was responding to a question on whether the imposition of sanctions on Iran by the EU amounted to a change in the EU's approach toward the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). "JCPOA is a separate process in which the High Representative of the European Union acts as a coordinator and coordinates between the participants," he said, adding, "The JCPOA process is determined by the parties and participants, not by the coordinator who has the role of coordination and facilitation." He continued, "In this regard, the high representative continues to interact with each of the participants, including Iran and the United States."

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/481098/EU-s-Borrell-continues-to-work-with-Iran-U-S-on-JCPOA-spokesman>

Iranian Navy's Flotilla Sets Sail for Americas for First Time

Fars News Agency, January 21, 2023

A flotilla of Iranian warships, comprised of Dena and Makran ships, will dock in the Brazilian Port of Rio de Janeiro in the coming days, marking the first ever presence of the Iranian Navy in the Americas' waters. The Iranian Navy's 86th flotilla of warships, comprised of Dena and Makran warships, is going to berth at Brazil's Southeastern port city of Rio de Janeiro within the next few days. The trip to Brazil appears to be part of a mission to the Panama Canal. Dena is a Mowj-class warship that joined the Iranian Navy in June 2021. The military vessel is equipped with anti-ship cruise missiles, torpedoes and naval cannons. The other vessel of the flotilla is Makran, a forward base ship weighing 121,000 tons.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14011101000762/Iranian-Navy's-Flilla-Ses-Sail-fr-Americas-fr-Firs-Time>

Iranian warships to arrive at Brazilian port

Tehran Times, January 21, 2023

A flotilla of Iranian warships is expected to arrive at Brazil's southeastern port city of Rio de Janeiro in the next few days. The Iranian flotilla, comprised of Dena and Makran warships, set sail from the south of Iran in early autumn with the purpose of circumnavigating the world, according to a Tasnim report. The trip to Brazil appears to be part of a mission to the Panama Canal. Navy Commander Rear Admiral Shahram Irani said nearly two weeks ago that Iran is planning to extend its area of operation to the Panama Canal that divides South and North America. "So far, we have been present in all the strategic straits of the world and we have not been present in only two straits, in one of which we will be present this year and we are planning to be present in the Panama Canal," Irani said, according to Fars News. The top military official also said Iran has established command centers for the Indian, Pacific and Atlantic oceans.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/481097/Iranian-warships-to-arrive-at-Brazilian-port>

Vote against IRGC in EU Parliament breaches UN Charter, says Abdollahian

Tehran Times, January 21, 2023

Hossein Amir Abdollahian, the Foreign Minister of Iran, late on Friday highly denounced the European Parliament's irresponsible resolution in designating the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist group, asserting it is in violation of the UN Charter. In a phone conversation with his Swedish counterpart Tobias Billstrom, whose country now holds the rotating presidency of the European Union, Amir Abdollahian stated that the IRGC had prevented strikes on European capitals by Daesh terrorists. "It played a key role in destroying Daesh terrorist group in Iraq, Syria and the West Asia region. Therefore, the IRGC's efforts in the war against terrorism should be appreciated by Europeans." The European Parliament on Thursday approved a bill urging the EU and its member states to add the IRGC to their list of terrorist organizations for alleged abuse of human rights during recent uprisings.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/481089/Vote-against-IRGC-in-EU-Parliament-breaches-UN-Charter-says>

Iran mulls quitting NPT as retaliatory move: FM Abdollahian

Tehran Times, January 22, 2023

Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian on Sunday did not rule out Iran's withdrawal from the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in case the European Union designates the IRGC as a terrorist organization. "Every possibility is probable," Amir Abdollahian told ICANA after attending a closed session of the Majlis (parliament) to discuss the European Parliament's resolution in putting the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps on the list of terrorist organizations and asked the EU and its members states to do so. Amir Abdollahian was responding to a question on whether Iran will quit the NPT if the EU puts the IRGC on its terrorist list. Iran's chief diplomat

also said a few number of European political leaders have “no experience in diplomacy.” Amir Abdollahian classified German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock among these groups of European politicians. “...if they don’t move on the path of wisdom and don’t rectify their views every possibility is probable,” Amir Abdollahian remarked.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/481123/Iran-mulls-quitting-NPT-as-retaliatory-move-FM-Abdollahian>

NPT withdrawal; Iran’s new option

Tehran Times, January 22, 2023

With the European Union making deliberations on whether to designate the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) as a terrorist group, Iran appears to be mulling its response options, including a withdrawal from the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Iranian Parliament had a busy day on Sunday, with a lineup of high-level Iranian officials taking part in closed sessions to discuss the European Parliament’s resolution on the IRGC, which called on the European Council to list the IRGC and its affiliates as a terrorist group. IRGC chief commander General Hossein Salami and Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian jointly attended a closed session dedicated to discussing the European move. Also, the Iranian parliament’s National Security and Foreign Policy also held specialized sessions on Saturday and Sunday to review the matter.

After the Sunday closed session, Amir Abdollahian made it clear that Iran is mulling a range of options, including the strategically important possibility of withdrawing from the NPT.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/481147/NPT-withdrawal-Iran-s-new-option>

Operational stage of Gen. Soleimani satellite project launched

Tehran Times, January 22, 2023

The Iranian Space Agency has kick-started the operational phase of the country’s first satellite system project, named after anti-terror commander General Qassem

Soleimani, the Agency’s director Hassan Salarieh announced on Sunday. Salarieh broke the story on the Agency’s official website while detailing about the most recent implementation status of the General Soleimani project, which is a part of Iran’s continuing 10-year space program. “Based on the 10-year space program and in order to provide services to people, government institutions, and organizations as well as to provide services to private sector companies, the Iranian Space Agency has been tasked with placing a telecommunication satellite system in the Earth’s orbit,” Salarieh stated. “Implementation of the Martyr Soleimani Project is of tremendous importance because of the successes in the manufacture of satellite series and their network development,” he underlined.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/481145/Operational-stage-of-Gen-Soleimani-satellite-project-launched>

Iran, Syria Vow to Broaden Defense Cooperation

Fars News Agency, January 23, 2023

Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Hossein Baqeri and Syrian Defense Minister Ali Mahmoud Abbas in a meeting in Tehran on Monday underlined the need to expand bilateral relations in defense and military fields. During the meeting in the Iranian capital, General Baqeri and the Syrian defense minister explored avenues for bolstering and reinvigorating mutual cooperation in defense fields. During the meeting, General Baqeri said that cooperation between the the armed forces of Iran and Syria can be a complete role model for the comprehensive cooperation between the two countries. “For this reason, many arrogant powers oppose this cooperation and do not accept it,” he continued. Mahmoud Abbas, for his part, stated that the Syrian army is willing to utilize the experience of Iran’s armed forces in different fields.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14011103000759/Iran-Syria-Vw-Braden-Defense-Cperain>

Borrell says JCPOA not 'dead' but no progress in talks

Tehran Times, January 24, 2023

Josep Borrell, the head of foreign policy for the EU, stated on Monday that although there has been no progress in negotiations to resurrect the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the deal is not "dead."

Borrell made the comments while speaking with media in Brussels on the heels of a gathering of EU foreign ministers. He asserted that the latest unrest in Iran has complicated efforts to revive the JCPOA.

Iranian officials have repeatedly declared that their country is prepared for a solution that would revive the JCPOA, emphasizing that the U.S., which withdrew from the agreement in 2018 and reinstated penalties, should give up making unreasonable demands. Iran has also stated that it has fulfilled its obligations pursuant to the deal and ball is now in the U.S. court to take a political decision.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/481234/Borrell-says-JCPOA-not-dead-but-no-progress-in-talks>

Iran is fifth-largest producer of radiopharmaceuticals

Tehran Times, January 25, 2023

Mohammad Eslami, vice president and head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI), announced on Wednesday that Iran is presently one of the top five producers of radiopharmaceuticals in the world. Regarding Iran's export of radiopharmaceuticals, Eslami remarked that experts in the AEOI have worked hard to make Iran one of the leading manufacturers and distributors of radiopharmaceuticals in the world. After the COVID-19 epidemic subsided last year, Iran restarted shipments of radiopharmaceuticals, which are mostly used to treat cancer, to nine nations across the globe, he told reporters after a cabinet meeting. The official continued by stating that Iranian-produced radiopharmaceuticals are more effective than those made by other multinational brands, and that researchers

in the country will keep working to increase the treatments' effectiveness.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/481284/Iran-is-fifth-largest-producer-of-radiopharmaceuticals>

Top Commander: Iranian Navy Manufacturing Maritime Combat Helicopters

Fars News Agency, January 28, 2023

Commander of the Iranian Navy Rear Admiral Shahram Irani lauded the Iranian Army Navy for its strategic role in maintaining stability and security in the country's waters, and declared that his forces have produced a number of maritime combat helicopters to be unveiled future. Referring to the significant importance of the country's maritime capacities, Rear Admiral Irani told MNA that the sea can be the centrepiece of the country's development. "Using the sea capacities is a geopolitical advantage for Iran," he stated. "The countries that do not have this capacity are experiencing geopolitical suffocation," the senior commander added.

The military official declared that the Iranian Navy has built maritime combat helicopters which will be showcased at the appropriate time.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14011108000308/Top-Commander-Iranian-Navy-Manufacturing-Maritime-Combat-Helicopters>

Iranian warships sailing in Latin America's western waters

Tehran Times, January 28, 2023

Iran's 86th flotilla of warships is now sailing along the western shores of Latin America, the Navy second-in-command said on Saturday. Rear Admiral Hamzeh Ali Kaviani said the flotilla is going to berth at Brazil's southeastern port city of Rio de Janeiro within the next few days, Press TV reported. Addressing a ceremony in the northern city of Chalous, Kaviani stressed that Iran's military might is increasing day by day despite all the pressures against the

Islamic Republic over the past 43 years. He added that most of the military hardware required by the country's Armed Forces is now manufactured at home. The admiral stated that the Navy's 86th flotilla, comprised of Dena and Makran warships, has raised the Iranian flag in the western waters of Latin America. Navy's flotillas also have a strong presence in the northern tip of the Indian Ocean, he said.

<https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/481369/Iranian-warships-sailing-in-Latin-America-s-western-waters>

Iran Air Defense Thwarts Drone Attack on Military Facility

Fars News Agency, January 29, 2023

Iran's Defense Ministry announced that the country's air defense units have foiled a drone attack on a defense industrial complex in the Central province of Isfahan.

The defense ministry made the announcement in an early Sunday statement, after an explosion was reported at one of Isfahan's defense military workshop late Saturday. The ministry said one of its workshop complexes had come under attack from a number of Micro Aerial Vehicles (MAVs), but the complex's air defenses successfully repelled the attack. "One of the MAVs was downed by the complex's air defense fire, while the other two were caught in its defensive traps and exploded," the statement added. The ministry noted that the unsuccessful attack did not cause any loss of life and only led to minor damage to the roof of a workshop. The complex, it stated, continues its ordinary operations following the attack.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14011109000161/Iran-Air-Defense-Thwarts-Drone-Attack-on-Military-Facility>

Nuclear Chief: Iran to Continue Developing Nuclear Power Plants

Fars News Agency, January 29, 2023

Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Mohammad Eslami said that Tehran will pursue the development of more nuclear power plants in line with its clean air law and as part of efforts to develop

technologies for the field. "All Iran's nuclear plants must be built along coastal areas in the South and in the Makran region and Hormuzgan Province, and in the North of the country as well," Eslami said. "Locations have been designated for this purpose and the goal is to generate electricity, which is a clean and sustainable source of energy," he added. Eslami also said it is the nation's adversaries that have reached an impasse, not the talks to revive the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the JCPOA. "Iran has always been sincere in the talks and have followed through on its promises," he pointed out.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14011109000405/Nuclear-Chief-Iran-Continue-Developing-Nuclear-Power-Plans>

Senior Commander: Iran's Air Defense Units Fully Capable of Confronting Enemies' Threats

Fars News Agency, January 31, 2023

Commander of the Iranian Army Air Defense Force Brigadier General Alireza Sabahifard underlined the high capabilities of the country's radar systems to intercept all enemy airborne objects, and said that his forces are fully ready to counter any threat against the country's skies. Brig. Gen. Sabahi-Fard said Iran enjoys a strong deterrence thanks to the strategic goals established by Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei and the expertise of Iranian youths. "The powerful Air Defense Force is ready to confront any threat in the safe skies of our beloved country using its new domestically-build systems," the top commander added.

<https://www.farsnews.ir/en/news/14011111000594/Senior-Commander-Iran's-Air-Defense-Units-Fully-Capable-of-Confronting>

J. Israel

Plasan to armor three Hunter class frigates for the Australian Navy

Israel Defense, January 16, 2023

Plasan Sasa, an Israeli manufacturer of survivability solutions for land, air and

naval platforms for the defense and military market, announced this week they have signed a contract with BAE Systems Australia to armour the first three Hunter class frigates for the Royal Australian Navy (RAN). Plasan will deliver the armour in partnership with Australian steel manufacturer Bisalloy Steel Australia who will be responsible for the production of the ballistic steel under the contract. Plasan is currently providing composite armour for the UK Type 26 frigates. According the company, the unique installation approach that was demonstrated as part of the Type 26 delivery will allow for simple and cost-effective integration into the Hunter class frigates

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/56923>

Elbit signs \$95 million advanced electro-optical systems contract with Israeli MoD

Israel Defense, January 17, 2023

The Israel Ministry of Defense Signed a \$95 Million contract with Elbit Systems to purchase advanced electro-optical systems for the IDF ground forces. Under this \$95 million contract, Elbit will supply and maintain the systems over a 10-year period.

The various systems include long-range deployable observation systems, thermal weapon sights, and night vision equipment. These systems will provide the IDF with observation capabilities, target acquisition, and enemy exposure in various combat scenarios during day and nighttime.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/56933>

XTEND awarded \$20m contract to develop and supply multi-drone operating system

Israel Defense, January 19, 2023

XTEND, an Israeli developer of XOS, a human-guided autonomous operating system that is revolutionizing 'human to machine' interaction, has been awarded a \$20M contract by Israel Ministry of Defense, for the development and supply of a multi-drone operating system. According to the

company, the new joint project with MAFAT and the Israeli Ministry of Directorate of Defense Research & Development, will see XOS enable the remote, safe, and intuitive operation of dozens of human-guided semi-autonomous drones simultaneously, utilizing the latest virtual reality, edge processing and AI technology. XOS will allow XTEND's drones to be deployed remotely by military units in various scenarios precisely, intuitively, and immersively.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/56956>

US National Security Advisor to meet with Netanyahu, Abbas

Israel Defense, January 19, 2023

US National Security Advisor, Jake Sullivan, arrived in Israel yesterday (Wednesday), for a series of meetings with top officials. First on the agenda was Israeli President Isaac Herzog, who met with Sullivan last night for the fourth time. The president's spokesperson communicated the meeting was conducted in a "positive atmosphere," and that the two discussed "the strong partnership between Israel and the US, as a cross-party and cross-government issue, and ways to deepen the strategic cooperation between their nations. Sullivan, the first senior US administration official to visit Israel since its latest elections will also meet with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, as well as with the President of the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/56957>

IAI unveils new hand-launched, electro-optical guided missile

Israel Defense, January 19, 2023

Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) have unveiled their POINT BLANK electro-optically guided missile, that can be carried in a soldier's backpack. The system answers the battlefield requirement to provide tactical units ranging in size from small tactical teams to battalion level, with an independent and organic capability to

increase their lethality. POINT BLANK allows these units to attack a variety of targets in real time with great precision and high lethality, without the need for support.

The missile is hand-launched, operated by a single soldier, and can take off from and land vertically back to, the soldier's hand.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/56963>

Successful January for Oshkosh, with int'l transactions worth hundreds of \$millions

Israel Defense, January 22, 2023

January 2023 turns out to be a very successful month for Oshkosh Defense, which won three international contracts worth hundreds of millions of dollars, including in Israel. Last week, the company announced that the U.S. Army Tank-automotive and Armaments Command (TACOM) has placed a \$141 million order for 414 Family of Medium Tactical Vehicles A2 (FMTV A2) and 56 FMTV trailers. With this order, Oshkosh Defense has received orders for 1,412 FMTV A2s and 800 FMTV trailers for a total order value of \$627 Million to date. Early this month, Oshkosh announced that the U.S. Army Contracting Command - Detroit Arsenal has placed a \$102 Million order for Joint Light Tactical Vehicles (JLTVs). The JLTVs will be delivered to Romania, Lithuania, North Macedonia, Brazil, and Montenegro.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/56967>

IDF, CENTCOM launch major war games in Israel

Israel Defense, January 24, 2023

The IDF and the US Central Command (CENTCOM) launched the Juniper Oak 23.2 exercise yesterday (Monday), in order to test US-Israeli readiness and improve the interoperability of both forces. "Exercises like Juniper Oak show that interoperability and integration represent the improved security in the region," said a US Navy statement, adding, in a clear message to Iran, that this will contribute to regional stability. During the exercise, the U.S. and Israeli air forces,

navies and ground forces will conduct coordinated strikes against targets representing maritime threats. Israeli Navy missile boats as well as one of its submarines will maneuver in tandem with an American aircraft carrier.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/57000>

Elbit awarded \$48 million contract to supply Swedish army with mobile comms shelters

Israel Defense, January 24, 2023

Elbit Systems announced today (Tuesday) that its subsidiary, Elbit Systems Sweden AB, was awarded a contract valued at approximately \$48 million by the Swedish Defence Materiel Administration (FMV), to supply Technical High Mobility Shelters (THMS) to the Swedish Army. The contract will be performed over a period of 3 years and includes options for further extensions. Under the contract, Elbit Systems Sweden will manufacture and deliver tactical communication shelters, leveraging Elbit Systems' extensive experience delivering customized communication shelters to armed forces around the world.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/57001>

Elbit to Provide DIRCM Service Center for NATO

Israel Defense, January 26, 2023

Israeli Elbit Systems announced this week (Tuesday) the signature of a five-year in-service support contract with the NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA) for the Direct Infrared Counter Measures ("DIRCM") systems supplied to the Multinational Multi-Role Tanker Transport (MRTT) fleet. The contract includes the establishment of a service center, located at NSPA dedicated facility in Luxembourg, to provide support and logistics to the system. In addition, Elbit was awarded a follow-up contract from NSPA for an additional J-Music system, part of the MUSIC DIRCM family. The laser-based fully autonomous system

provides comprehensive protection against advanced heat-seeking ground-to-air missiles. To date, seven systems are already integrated, certified and operational on NATO MRTTs.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/57021>

Report: Israel carried out drone attack on Iranian defense facility

The Times of Israel, January 29, 2023

Israel was behind a Saturday night drone attack that struck a defense facility in the Iranian city of Isfahan, according to a Sunday report. The Wall Street Journal cited US officials and people familiar with the matter to say Jerusalem directed the strike. The report could not be independently confirmed. Israel's Channel 12 news reported Sunday that the site was a weapons production facility for Iran's killer Shahed-136 drones and that the attack drones in operation were launched from an area near the site by "highly-skilled" operators who knew their target well. The unsourced report said the attack incorporated high-quality intelligence and technological ability.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/report-israel-carried-out-drone-attack-on-iranian-defense-facility/>

Elbit Systems presents the Crossbow – its new 120mm turreted mortar

Israel Defense, January 29, 2023

Israel's Elbit Systems presented the Crossbow 120mm turreted mortar at Defence IQ's International Armoured Vehicles (IAV) 2023 conference, held in London this week. According to Elbit, the weapon can be installed in a mission module with minimal protrusion, can be easily operated by a single crew member, and is fused for fully automatic operation. Elbit officials told Janes that the mortar can fire the company's range of mortar rounds, including those with an extended range and precision guidance. It has a range of 10 km and a rate of fire exceeding 12 rds/min, achieving 16 rounds for the first minute. Crossbow is designed to be fired on the move and to shoot and

scoot with a multiple round simultaneous impact (MRSI) capability.

<https://www.israeldefense.co.il/en/node/57044>

K. Saudi Arabia

Iran has an obligation to give up its nuclear program, Saudi minister says

CNBC, January 18, 2023

Iran's announcements in recent months concerning its nuclear development have drawn condemnation and concern from parts of the international community, particularly the West.

But its near neighbor and longtime adversary Saudi Arabia likely feels that concern more acutely. Iran should relinquish its nuclear program, which violates international agreements, Saudi Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Adel al-Jubeir said Wednesday from the World Economic Forum in Davos. "I believe that Iran has an obligation to give up its nuclear program. I believe that Iran must be in compliance with the terms of the International Atomic Energy Agency and Iran, if it wants to be a member in good standing of the international community needs to respect international law, needs to respect international order," al-Jubeir told CNBC's Hadley Gamble.

<https://www.cnbcc.com/2023/01/18/iran-has-an-obligation-to-give-up-its-nuclear-program-saudi-minister.html>

Saudi Arabia, France discuss peaceful atomic energy cooperation

Arab News, January 29, 2023

Saudi Arabia's Minister of Energy Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman held a meeting on Saturday with French Minister of Economy, Finance, and Industrial and Digital Sovereignty Bruno Le Maire in the capital, Riyadh, the state-run SPA news agency reported. The two ministers praised the relations between their two countries and discussed prospects for

cooperation in the peaceful uses of atomic energy. They also discussed future opportunities in various energy fields, including areas of cooperation in renewable energy, clean hydrogen, and electrical interconnection.

<https://www.arabnews.com/node/2240746/saudi-arabia>

UK gov't facing High Court battle over arms sales to Saudi Arabia

Aljazeera, January 31, 2023

A campaign group has launched a courtroom battle against the United Kingdom's arms sales to Saudi Arabia, warning the weapons are worsening a major humanitarian disaster in war-torn Yemen. The United Kingdom's High Court on Tuesday began hearing the case brought forward by the Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT), which says arms exports have contributed to the deaths of thousands of civilians. The UK-based group is challenging the lawfulness of a decision taken by the British government in 2020 to continue supplying weapons to the Saudi-led coalition involved in the nine-year-old conflict in Yemen.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/1/31/uk-govt-facing-high-court-battle-over-arms-sales-to-saudi-arabia>

L. United Arab Emirates

S. Korea, UAE agree to forge strategic defense industry cooperation

The Korea Herald, January 16, 2023

The arms procurement agencies of South Korea and the United Arab Emirates have signed a deal to strategically and substantially enhance defense industry cooperation, which has paved the way for South Korean defense contractors to expand their export horizons to the UAE. South Korean Minister of the Defense Acquisition Program Administration, Eom Dong-hwan, and Secretary General of the UAE's Tawazun Council, Tareq Abdulraheem Al Hosani, signed a memorandum of

understanding on "strategic defense industry cooperation" on Sunday in Abu Dhabi, the DAPA announced Monday. President Yoon Suk Yeol – who made his first state visit to the UAE as a South Korean leader – and Emirati leader Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan were present at the signing ceremony.

<https://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20230116000588>

Korea and UAE agree to expand nuclear cooperation

World Nuclear News, January 16, 2023

Yoon met with Al-Nahyan in Abu Dhabi on 15 January whilst on a state visit to the UAE. This marked the first state visit since the establishment of diplomatic ties between South Korea and the UAE in 1980 and the 10th visit to the UAE by a Korean president. During his visit, Yoon visited the Barakah nuclear power plant, supplied by Korea. "During the summit, the two leaders agreed to deepen and further develop the Special Strategic Partnership between the two countries," a joint statement said. "In particular, the two leaders agreed to strengthen strategic cooperation in four key areas: conventional energy and clean energy, peaceful nuclear energy, economy and investment, and defence and defence technology; as well as in other areas of mutual interest, including space, emerging industries and culture."

<https://www.world-nuclear-news.org/Articles/Korea-and-UAE-agree-to-expand-nuclear-cooperation>

UAE joins South Korea's military transport aircraft program

Defense News, January 18, 2023

South Korea and the United Arab Emirates have signed two memorandums of understanding to improve bilateral defense ties, during a visit by the South Korean president to the Gulf kingdom. South Korea's Defense Acquisition Program Administration and the UAE's Tawazun Council inked the agreements

Jan. 15 in the presence of President Yoon Suk Yeol and his Emirati counterpart Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. The Tawazun Council serves as the acquisition authority for the Emirati military and the Abu Dhabi Police. The first memorandum called for both countries to continue efforts in joint investment, research and technological development to further develop bilateral cooperation in the arms industry, according to a DAPA news release.

<https://www.defensenews.com/industry/techwatch/2023/01/18/uae-joins-south-koreas-military-transport-aircraft-program/>

Abu Dhabi: Barakah nuclear power plant to cut more carbon emissions than expected

Khaleej Times, January 20, 2023

The Barakah Nuclear Energy Plant in Abu Dhabi is spearheading efforts towards achieving UAE's Net Zero by 2050 target by preventing millions of tonnes of carbon emissions annually. As of today, the Barakah plant is the largest source of clean electricity in the region and will prevent more carbon emissions than previously expected. Based on the latest data, the Emirates Nuclear Energy Corporation (Enec) said that the four units of the Barakah plant will prevent 22.4 million tonnes of carbon emissions every year, 6 per cent more than previously forecast.

<https://www.khaleejtimes.com/business/energy/abu-dhabi-barakah-nuclear-power-plant-to-cut-more-carbon-emissions-than-expected>

UAE defense conglomerate invests in Israeli unmanned air traffic management

Breaking Defense, January 27, 2023

The United Arab Emirate defense conglomerate EDGE has announced a "strategic" \$14 million investment in the Israeli firm High Lander, the provider of an unmanned air traffic management system – an investment EDGE hopes will lead to more work together and the latest evidence of the warming between Gulf and Israeli firms. "We believe that our investment in

High Lander is an excellent opportunity for EDGE to take part in the nascent technology space, such as [Unmanned Traffic Management]," an EDGE spokesperson told Breaking Defense of the deal announced Tuesday. "Through this investment, we will be engaging more with the company on various opportunities, which we believe will have mutual benefits for High Lander and EDGE."

<https://breakingdefense.com/2023/01/uae-defense-conglomerate-invests-in-israeli-unmanned-air-traffic-management/>

M. Turkey

Türkiye says Biden admin's will to determine fate of F-16 jet deal

Daily Sabah, January 16, 2023

Türkiye's top diplomat on Monday said the potential \$20 billion sale of F-16 fighter jets would be completed smoothly if the Biden administration proves the will to seal the deal. "The will is with the administration here. If the administration stands resolutely, there will be no problems," Çavuşoğlu told a joint press conference with his Bosnian counterpart Bisera Turkovic in Ankara.

His remarks came after the Biden administration reportedly conveyed to Congress its intention to sell the fighter jets to Türkiye, a move that sparked an immediate objection from a senior U.S. lawmaker who has long opposed the deal. NATO member Türkiye has been seeking to modernize its existing warplanes to update its air force and sought to buy 40 Lockheed Martin F-16 jets and nearly 80 modernization kits from the U.S.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/turkiye-says-biden-admins-will-to-determine-fate-of-f-16-jet-deal>

Türkiye can supply Hungary with HIMARS alternatives: Minister

Daily Sabah, January 17, 2023

Türkiye has alternative defense industry products to the U.S.-made HIMARS

multiple rocket launcher system and is ready to provide them to Hungary, Industry and Technology Minister Mustafa Varank said Monday. His statements came after the Central European country added acquiring such systems to its agenda. "We produce alternative products to HIMARS in Türkiye, and if there is a need for them, we are ready to provide the necessary support for these products," Varank said. Varank, who was in Hungary as part of the official visit, attended the Türkiye-Hungary 8th Term Joint Economic Commission (JEC) meeting held at the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/turkiye-can-supply-hungary-with-himars-alternatives-minister>

Kyrgyzstan says it purchased 4 different combat drones from Türkiye

Daily Sabah, January 17, 2023

Kyrgyzstan has purchased Turkish Aerospace Industries (TAI)-made Anka unmanned combat aerial vehicle (UCAV), said the Central Asian country's Presidential Press Service head, Daiyrbek Orunbekov on Tuesday. Known to have supplied Baykar-made Bayraktar TB2 and Akýncý UCAVs along with TAI-made Aksungur UCAV before, Kyrgyzstan, with the latest procurement, will now have in its inventory all types of UCAVs produced by TAI and Baykar. "Kyrgyzstan bought modern military equipment such as Bayraktar TB2, Aksungur, Akýncý and Anka," said Orunbekov. The Bayraktar TB2 is currently actively used by the Kyrgyz Army.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/kyrgyzstan-says-it-purchased-4-different-combat-drones-from-turkiye>

Baykar inks \$370M export deal with Kuwait for Bayraktar TB2s

Daily Sabah, January 18, 2023

Turkish drone magnate Baykar signed a \$370 million (TL 6.95 billion) contract to export its Bayraktar TB2 unmanned combat aerial vehicles (UCAVs) to Kuwait, the

company said Wednesday. Baykar made the related statement via the company's Twitter account. The contract marks the first export agreement signed for Bayraktar TB2 in 2023. The number of export deals signed for this particular combat drone, meanwhile, has reached 28. The negotiations between Baykar and the Kuwaiti Ministry of Defense started in 2019. The country chose Türkiye's domestically developed, battle-proven UCAV which made a name for itself after being used in several conflicts from Syria to Ukraine, over competitive products of several companies from the U.S., Europe and China.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/baykar-inks-370m-export-deal-with-kuwait-for-bayraktar-tb2s>

Türkiye urges US to expedite F-16 process

Daily Sabah, January 18, 2023

Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşođlu said Türkiye expects the U.S. to approve the sale of F-16 fighter jets, noting that the purchase is in line with the "joint strategic interests" of both countries. Çavuşođlu was speaking in Washington, where he was welcomed by his U.S. counterpart, Antony Blinken. "As we said together before, this is not only for Türkiye but also important for NATO and for the United States as well," Çavuşođlu said, adding that Ankara expects Washington's approval, in line with joint strategic interests of both countries. The Biden administration has expressed its support for the sale of the jets to Türkiye, despite opposition from the U.S. Congress.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/diplomacy/turkiye-urges-us-to-expedite-f-16-process>

Türkiye, US agree to continue to hold F-35 talks

Daily Sabah, January 19, 2023

Turkish and American defense ministry delegations have agreed to continue to hold consultative talks on F-35 fighter jets, said the Defense Ministry on Thursday. In a

statement released following a Türkiye-U.S. meeting in Washington on Thursday, the ministry said the two delegations have agreed to continue to hold talks and plan to hold the next round in Ankara in spring 2023. The first round of talks was held in the capital Ankara in 2021. Türkiye had ordered more than 100 F-35 jets made by Lockheed Martin Corp. In 2019, the U.S. suspended Türkiye from the F-35 fighter jet program after objecting to the latter purchasing the Russian S-400 missile defense system.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/diplomacy/turkiye-us-agree-to-continue-to-hold-f-35-talks>

Türkiye plans to produce 3 new national warships simultaneously

Daily Sabah, January 23, 2023

Türkiye is planning to simultaneously build three new Istanbul-class frigate warships, designed by Turkish engineers. As work continues to build the TCG Istanbul, the first ship of the country's MILGEM (National Ship) I-class Frigate Project, Türkiye has begun work on its sixth, seventh, and eighth domestically built naval vessels, said the head of the country's Defense Industries' Presidency to Anadolu Agency (AA) on Monday. Ismail Demir said business partnerships had been signed with the Anadolu, Sedef, and Sefine shipyards, along with the Joint Venture Commercial Enterprise of TAIS, which is a consortium of Türkiye's top five leading shipyards, and state-run defense firm STM, for the three I-class frigate projects.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/turkiye-plans-to-produce-3-new-national-warships-simultaneously>

Turkish unmanned fighter jet Kızılelma passes another test in 2nd flight

Daily Sabah, January 24, 2023

Türkiye's first indigenously designed and produced unmanned fighter aircraft successfully passed the system identification test during its second flight, the developing company said in a statement on Monday.

Selçuk Bayraktar, the Chief Technology Officer (CTO) at Baykar directed the test flight of the National Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicle System (MIUS), named Kızılelma ("Red Apple"), in Çorlu district, northwestern Tekirdağ province. Bayraktar, also shared a statement on his social media account that read, "Bayraktar #KIZILELMA successfully completed its second flight test. Godspeed."

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/turkish-unmanned-fighter-jet-kizilelma-passes-another-test-in-2nd-flight>

Turkish defense firm STM aims to develop unmanned submarine

Daily Sabah, January 25, 2023

Turkish defense firm STM puts itself on a new target of developing unmanned submarines after delivering the second of the Agosta 90B class submarines owned by Pakistan's Navy in Türkiye's first and only submarine modernization export. Özgür Gülerüz, general manager of STM told Anadolu Agency (AA) that they aim to become a strong player in the international arena with the work they carry out in submarine development. Emphasizing that a submarine is a very complex system in terms of engineering, which includes very high technology, Gülerüz said: "We want to take an intense role in both modernization activities, design and construction activities by using our competence to the fullest," adding that their work is not limited to the manned platforms.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/turkish-defense-firm-stm-aims-to-develop-unmanned-submarine>

Project completed, legal framework ready for Ukrainian Bayraktar TB2 plant

Daily Sabah, January 25, 2023

A project to construct a plant in Ukraine for the production of Turkish drone magnate Baykar's famed Bayraktar TB2 unmanned combat aerial vehicles (UCAVs) has been completed and the

legal framework formed, according to Ukraine's ambassador to Türkiye. "As of today, the entire legal framework has been formed. As you know, the relevant international agreement has already been ratified," Vasyl Bodnar was quoted by Ukrinform as saying during a briefing at the media center. "There is a company that is currently operating in Ukraine, and it has prepared a physical project... We expect that the plant will be put into service within the next two years and will start to produce goods with Ukrainian component parts," Bodnar noted.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/project-completed-legal-framework-ready-for-ukrainian-bayraktar-tb2-plant>

Finland OKs 1st military exports to Türkiye since 2019 amid NATO row

Daily Sabah, January 25, 2023

Finland has issued the first commercial export license for military material to Türkiye since 2019, a key demand for Ankara to approve Helsinki's NATO bid, the country's defense ministry said Wednesday. Riikka Pitkanen, a special adviser at Finland's defense ministry, told Agence France-Presse (AFP) that the export license granted concerned steel that would be used for armor. The move comes amid a spat that saw Türkiye on Tuesday indefinitely postponing upcoming talks with Finland and Sweden on their application to join the military alliance after a weekend protest in Stockholm that drew condemnation from Ankara.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/finland-oks-1st-military-exports-to-turkiye-since-2019-amid-nato-row>

Türkiye's STM to develop 'critical' NATO intel software in landmark deal

Daily Sabah, January 29, 2023

A prominent Turkish defense company has been selected to develop a critical software system that will be used in intelligence flows at all NATO facilities around the world, in what marks one of the most important projects ever assigned by the military alliance

to Türkiye. STM on Saturday said it notched up one of the biggest export successes of the Turkish defense sector in the field of software to date as it has been awarded two major contracts regarding the direction, collection, process, dissemination and use of intelligence information within NATO. The decision was taken by the NATO Communications and Information Agency (NCI Agency), which handles all acquisition, deployment and maintenance of communications and information systems for the alliance's decision-makers and commanders.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/turkiyes-stm-to-develop-critical-nato-intel-software-in-landmark-deal>

Türkiye warns of 'price' if US fails to deliver long-sought fighter jets

Daily Sabah, January 30, 2023

President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan on Sunday said "there would be a price" to pay if the United States fails to supply Türkiye with F-16 fighter jets it has been seeking in return for a payment it made for F-35 warplanes. NATO member Türkiye has been seeking to modernize its existing warplanes to update its air force and sought to buy 40 Lockheed Martin F-16 jets and nearly 80 modernization kits from the U.S., a deal reportedly valued at \$20 billion. Türkiye made this request instead of a refund for the payment it had made for the next-generation F-35 fighter jets. The payment was issued before it was removed from the multinational program developing the aircraft over Ankara's decision to acquire Russian-made S-400 air missile defense systems.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/turkiye-warns-of-price-if-us-fails-to-deliver-long-sought-fighter-jets>

Türkiye inks \$200M deal with S.Korean firm for parts of MBT Altay

Daily Sabah, January 31, 2023

A South Korean firm will supply transmissions for the engines to be used on Türkiye's domestic main battle tank

(MBT) project, Altay, which was on hold after a deal with a German company collapsed.

SNT Heavy Industries will supply Altay producer BMC with a 1,500-horsepower automatic transmission, the company said Monday. It said the export deal includes \$74.9 million of supply until 2027 and has an option for further sourcing priced at \$141 million between 2028 and 2030. The South Korean company said the deal was signed after a test evaluation, including an endurance driving test last year. "It is a valuable achievement through a harsh test evaluation, such as completing a night-based driving of about 200 kilometers (124.27 miles) a day even in the local rough terrain and environment," the company said, adding that their transmission could perfectly replace the German parts.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/business/defense/turkiye-inks-200m-deal-with-skorean-firm-for-parts-of-mbt-altay>

East Asia

N. Japan

Japan to continue sanctions on Russia, support for Ukraine, says PM

TASS, January 23, 2023

Tokyo plans to strengthen interaction with its partners in the Group of Seven (G7) and countries of the Global South as part of a policy of sanctions against Russia and support for Ukraine, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said on Monday. "In order to make sure that the international community cooperates in response to various challenges facing the world, the G7 will unite and strengthen its interaction with the so-called Global South. To that end, we will work together to overcome the energy and food crisis in the global economy. In addition, we will actively promote sanctions against Russia and support for Ukraine," he pointed out in an address to the lower house of parliament. When speaking about Japan's G7 chairmanship, Kishida noted that at the Hiroshima summit, Tokyo intended to show

its resolve to lead international efforts to create a world free of nuclear weapons.

<https://tass.com/world/1565603>

O. South Korea

South Korea president, in UAE, backs return to nuclear power

AP News, January 17, 2023

South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said Monday that his nation's efforts to be carbon neutral by 2050 would rely in part on returning to nuclear power, even though his predecessor had tried to move away from atomic power. Yoon's comments at a summit in the United Arab Emirates, made in front of the country's leader, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, served to underline Seoul's commitment to nuclear power as it works to finish the Arabian Peninsula's first atomic power plant. That could see South Korea in line for lucrative maintenance contracts and future projects in the UAE, which Seoul has grown closer to over recent years. "Korea has ... declared its 2050 carbon neutrality goal," Yoon said in an address at Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week. "To achieve this goal, we are working to rapidly restore the nuclear power system, which supplies carbon-free electricity."

<https://apnews.com/article/iran-politics-south-korea-government-united-arab-emirates-94fc2bffffc8feb75deb3e9f9c533be5>

Experts: South Korea Seeks Enhanced US Nuclear Assurances Against North Korea

VOA News, January 18, 2023

By expressing an interest in acquiring nuclear weapons, South Korea is demonstrating an urgent determination to secure enhanced security assurances from the United States as the nuclear threat from North Korea grows, experts say. South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said at a policy briefing on January 11 that Seoul could either build nuclear weapons

or have them redeployed to the country to counter Pyongyang. While South Korea has discussed over the years the redeployment of U.S. nuclear weapons, this marked the first time a South Korean president had expressed an interest in the arms since the U.S. withdrew them from the Korean Peninsula in 1991.

<https://www.voanews.com/a/experts-south-korea-seeks-enhanced-us-nuclear-assurances-against-north-korea-/6924697.html>

Why are South Koreans losing faith in America's nuclear umbrella?

CNN, January 21, 2023

That is the fundamental argument for South Koreans who want their country to develop its own nuclear weapons. It's about the need to protect themselves from an aggressive northern neighbor that is already a nuclear power in all but name and whose leader Kim Jong Un has vowed an "exponential increase" in his arsenal. The counter-argument, which has long stopped Seoul from pursuing the bomb, lies in the likely consequences. Developing nukes would not only upset the country's relationship with the United States, it would likely invite sanctions that could strangle Seoul's access to nuclear power. And that is to say nothing of the regional arms race it would almost inevitably provoke.

<https://edition.cnn.com/2023/01/21/asia/us-nuclear-umbrella-south-korea-analysis-intl-hnk-dst/index.html>

P. North Korea

North Korea sustains high defense spending with new budget

Ap News, January 19, 2023

North Korea's rubber-stamp parliament has passed a budget that sustains a high level of defense spending despite the country's economic troubles as leader Kim Jong Un pushes for an aggressive expansion of his nuclear arsenal. State media reports indicated Kim didn't attend the Supreme People's Assembly's two-day session that ended Wednesday. Pyongyang's official

Korean Central News Agency didn't mention any comments by assembly members toward the United States or South Korea in Thursday's report on the meetings. The assembly convened weeks after Kim called for an "exponential increase" of nuclear warheads, mass production of battlefield tactical nuclear weapons targeting "enemy" South Korea and the development of more advanced intercontinental ballistic missiles designed to reach the U.S. mainland.

<https://apnews.com/article/politics-united-states-government-kim-jong-un-north-korea-south-d834bdffda0c2277f180e2e749b5e764>

North Korea condemns US sending battle tanks to Ukraine

Al-Jazeera, January 28, 2023

The influential sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has condemned the decision by the United States to supply Ukraine with advanced battle tanks to help fight Russian forces, accusing Washington of crossing a "red line" and escalating a "proxy war" designed to destroy Moscow.

The comments on Friday by Kim Yo Jong underscored North Korea's deepening alignment with Russia over the war in Ukraine while it also confronts the US and its Asian allies about its own growing nuclear weapons and missiles programme.

"I express serious concern over the US escalating the war situation by providing Ukraine with military hardware for ground offensive," Kim Yo Jong said in a statement, her first public remarks in months. "The US is the arch criminal which poses serious threat and challenge to the strategic security of Russia and pushes the regional situation to the present grave phase," said Kim, who is vice-department director of the Central Committee of the Workers Party of Korea.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/1/28/north-korea-condemns-us-sending-battle-tanks-to-ukraine>

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Indian Pugwash Society welcomes research articles from students, researchers and faculties on Space, Missile, nuclear technology, WMD proliferation, arms control, disarmament, export controls and other related issues. Articles should be crisply written and should address contemporary debates in the policy arena. Manuscripts submitted for the consideration of the Indian Pugwash Society should be original contributions and should not have been submitted for consideration anywhere else. For further assistance, please contact us at : indianpugwashsociety@gmail.com

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