

US, NATO and Israel Deploy Nukes directed against Iran

By Michel Chossudovsky

Global Research, September 27, 2007

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

This deployment pertains explicitly to targets in Iran.

Without downplaying the significance of the Barksdale incident, if Washington were to decide to use nuclear weapons against Iran, they could be launched at short notice from a number of military bases in Western Europe and the Middle East. Turkey has some 90 B61 tactical nuclear weapons which are fully deployed. (See details below).

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

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

1. CONPLAN 8022 formulated in 2004. CONPLAN integrates the use of conventional and nuclear weapons.

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

3. The deployment of Israeli nuclear weapons directed against targets in the Middle East

4. Deployment of Nuclear Weapons by NATO/EU countries, directed against targets in the Middle East

1. CONPLAN 8022

CONPLAN 8022 under the jurisdiction of USSTRATCOM sets the stage. It envisages **the integration of conventional and nuclear weapons and the use of nukes on a preemptive basis** in the conventional war theater. It is described as "a concept plan for the quick use of nuclear, conventional, or information warfare capabilities to destroy--preemptively, if necessary--"time-urgent targets" anywhere in the world." CONPLAN became operational in early 2004. "As a result, the Bush administration's preemption policy is now operational on long-range bombers, strategic submarines on deterrent patrol, and presumably intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs)." ([Robert S. Norris and Hans M. Kristensen, Bulletin of Atomic Scientists](#))

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

"CONPLAN 8022 is 'the overall umbrella plan for sort of the pre-planned strategic scenarios involving nuclear weapons.'

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

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

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

There are indications that B61-type tactical nuclear weapons have been deployed to the Middle East following NSPD 35. The B-61s would be used against Iran, if Iran were to retaliate to a US or Israeli attack (See Ibrahim Karagul, "The US is Deploying Nuclear Weapons in Iraq Against Iran", *Yeni Safak*, . 20 December 2005, quoted in *BBC Monitoring Europe*).

3. Israeli Nukes

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

Israel possesses 100-200 [strategic nuclear warheads](#) . In 2003, Washington and Tel Aviv confirmed that they were collaborating in "the deployment of US-supplied Harpoon cruise missiles armed with nuclear warheads in Israel's fleet of Dolphin-class submarines." ([The Observer, 12 October 2003](#)) . Coinciding with the 2005 preparations to wage air strikes against Iran, Israel took delivery of two new German produced submarines "that could launch nuclear-armed cruise missiles for a "second-strike" deterrent." (*Newsweek*, 13 February 2006. See also [CDI Data Base](#))

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

At the outset of Bush's second term, Vice President Dick Cheney dropped a bombshell. He hinted, in no uncertain terms, that

Iran was "right at the top of the list" of the rogue enemies of America, and that Israel would, so to speak, "be doing the bombing for us", without US military involvement and without us putting pressure on them "to do it".

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

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

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

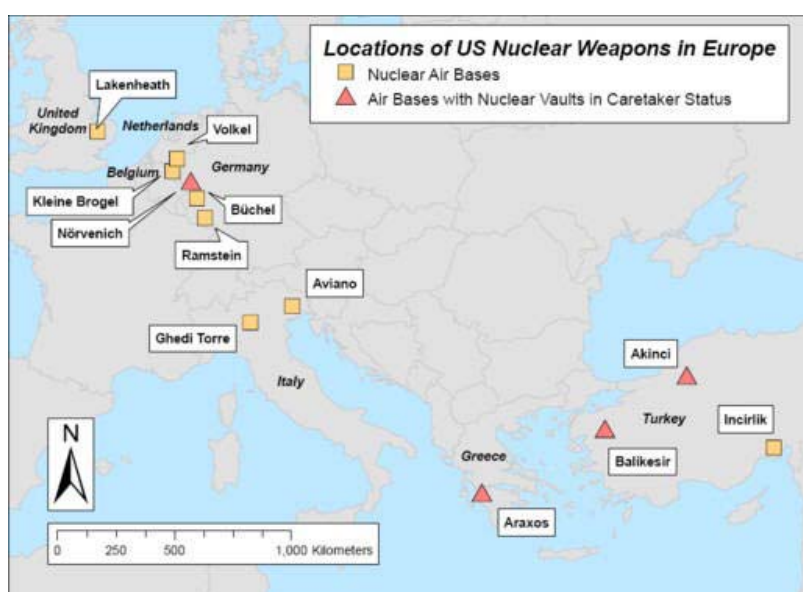
Beneath the rhetoric, what we are dealing with is a joint US-NATO-Israeli military operation directed against Iran and Syria, which has been in the active planning stage since 2004. US advisers in the Pentagon have been working assiduously with their Israeli military and intelligence counterparts, carefully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

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

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

Several Western European countries, officially considered as "non-nuclear states", possess tactical nuclear weapons, supplied to them by Washington.

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



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

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

See Details and Map of Nuclear Facilities located in 5 European Non-Nuclear States

As part of this European stockpiling, Turkey, which is a partner of the US-led coalition against Iran along with Israel, possesses some 90 thermonuclear B61 bunker buster bombs at the Incirlik nuclear air base. ([National Resources Defense Council, Nuclear Weapons in Europe](#) , February 2005). These military facilities are part of the war plans directed against Iran.



B61-11 NEP Thermonuclear Bomb

Consistent with US nuclear policy, the stockpiling and deployment of B61 nuclear weapons in Western Europe are intended for targets in the Middle East. Confirmed by "NATO strike plans", these thermonuclear B61 bunker buster bombs (stockpiled by the "non-nuclear States") could be launched "against targets in Russia or countries in the Middle East such as Syria and Iran" (quoted in [National Resources Defense Council, Nuclear Weapons in Europe](#) , February 2005)

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

"arrangements were made in the mid-1990s to allow the use of U.S. nuclear forces in Europe outside the area of responsibility of U.S. European Command (EUCOM). As a result of these arrangements, *EUCOM now supports CENTCOM nuclear missions in the Middle East, including, potentially, against Iran and Syria*"

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

Moreover, the U.S. military made arrangements in the mid-1990s for the use of these nukes outside the area of jurisdiction of European Command (EURCOM). For EUCOM, this would mean responsibility for the the delivery of nukes within CENTCOM (Central Command) area of jurisdiction, meaning that nuclear attacks on Iran and Syria could be launched from military bases in non-nuclear EU/NATO countries.

.. It is unclear whether [the] parliaments [of EU/NATO countries] are aware of arrangements to target and potentially strike Middle Eastern countries with nuclear weapons based in Europe. (<http://www.nukestrat.com/us/afn/nato.htm>)

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
UNITED STATES STRATEGIC COMMAND

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Subject: NSNF Working Group Meeting Minutes

29 Mar 94

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

10 May 94

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

Documents partially declassified and released under the U.S. Freedom of Information Act reveal that arrangements were made in the mid-1990s to allow the use of U.S. nuclear forces in Europe outside the area of responsibility of U.S. European Command (EUCOM). As a result of these arrangements, EUCOM now supports CENTCOM nuclear missions in the Middle East, including, potentially, against Iran and Syria.

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

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

While these "non-nuclear states" casually accuse Tehran of developing nuclear weapons, without documentary evidence, they

themselves have capabilities of delivering nuclear warheads, which are targeted at Iran. To say that this is a clear case of "double standards" is a gross understatement.

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

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

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

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

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

France has also confirmed that it could use its own nuclear warheads estimated at between 200 and 300 on a preemptive basis.

In January 2006, President Jacques Chirac had announced a major shift in France's nuclear weapons policy.

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

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

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

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

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