



Missile Defense Briefing Report: No. 314

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Related Categories: Missile Defense; Middle East; Russia

CONGRESS SEEKS TO MAINTAIN MISSILE DEFENSE ASSETS IN ASIA...

House Republicans are trying to prevent the U.S. from removing missile defense systems from East Asia, even if the current tensions with North Korea subside. The move, encapsulated in proposed language to be appended to a forthcoming defense spending bill, comes as a direct response to recent comments by Secretary of State John Kerry, who indicated last month that the U.S. may reduce its military presence in East Asia if North Korea abandoned its nuclear weapons program. (*Fox News*, May 21, 2013)

...AND PREVENT DATA SHARING WITH RUSSIA

House lawmakers have likewise proposed a measure to prevent the U.S. from sharing classified missile defense data with Russia - something the Obama administration is seriously considering. The proposed language, to be appended to forthcoming funding legislation as well, would also instruct the Pentagon's Missile Defense Agency to tell Congress about any instances in which it has taken the step of declassifying data in order to provide it to the Russians. The measure also includes provisions mandating pressure on Russia and China in an effort to limit their proliferation to countries like Iran and North Korea (*Boston Globe*, May 21, 2013)

OMAN TO STRENGTHEN GULF AIR DEFENSE

The Gulf nation of Oman has reached an agreement to buy more than \$2 billion worth of missile defense components from U.S. defense contractors. These include the PAC-3 and THAAD systems, which are designed to destroy medium- and long-range missiles, respectively. The U.S. has made a push to supply missile defense systems to its allies in the Gulf region as a response to the maturing ballistic missile threat from Iran. U.S. defense contractors have already sold systems to Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Kuwait. The Pentagon is also looking into installing an AN/TPY-2 X-Band radar in Oman to help detect any missiles that may be launched from Iran in the event of hostilities. (UPI, May 21, 2013)

A NOT-SO-SECRET ISRAELI MISSILE BASE

In a move sure to roil relations between Washington and Jerusalem, the U.S. government mistakenly released classified information regarding the planned launch site of Israel's new Arrow III interceptor. Details of the missile site were erroneously disclosed in a tender issued by the U.S. Federal Business Opportunities website, which solicited bids from American defense contractors. The information included data on the underground depth of the base, as well as the thickness of the concrete surrounding it. The specifications suggest that the Israeli government is attempting to finish the site by the end of 2014 because of "the nuclear threat" from Iran.

According to *Jane's Defense Weekly*, "Four new launcher buildings will be built on sites cut into the surrounding hills, each containing six interceptors in vertical launch positions and gantry cranes for erecting further missiles. It means Israel could potentially launch 24 Arrow 3 interceptors at an incoming wave of ballistic missiles and then engage any targets that were not successfully destroyed using its Arrow 2 interceptors." (*Times of Israel*, June 14, 2013)

PATRIOTS TO JORDAN

U.S. missile defense systems will be deployed to Jordan in the near future as part of a training exercise dubbed "Eager Lion." But the Pentagon has now indicated that - at the request of authorities in Amman - it will leave Patriot batteries in Jordan longer than previously planned as part of a response to the ongoing war in Syria. Although Jordanian officials insist that the deployments are purely defensive in nature, others are not so sure. Senator John McCain (R-AZ) has told the *Jordan Times* that their deployment represents the "first step" in establishing a no-fly zone on Syrian territory. (*Washington Post*, June 3, 2013)